



Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board

Monday, January 27, 2020 4:30-6:00 pm
3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham
Health Education Center

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Ken Larson
Russ Sapienza
Kathy Kershner

Arrissia Owen-Turner
Jeffery Hart

Board Members Excused:

Barry McHale
Megen Porter
Kathleen Harrigan

Board Members Absent:

Aaron Perzigian

Guests Present:

Kait Whiteside, Max Higbee Center
Rod Duncan, DDA
Matia Heslig, Cascade Connections

Beverly Porter, Arc of Whatcom
County

Staff:

Jessica Lee, DD Specialist; Emily West, Coordinator

1. Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order and introductions were conducted. Quorum was present.

2. Minutes Approval

Kathy motioned to approve the November minutes; Ken seconded. The motion passed and minutes were approved.

ACTION November 25, 2019 minutes approved. Aye 4, Nay 0, Abstain 1



3. DDAB 2020 Planning

Jessica reviewed the topics discussed by the DDAB in 2019. Highlights included review and approval of the County Plan and DDAB priorities, in addition to presentations on topics related to Social Security/Medicaid as well as housing and supports for living.

Jessica asked the group what worked well and what stood out:

- Prioritizing each issue to get people involved in a collaborative process.
- Including guest speakers
- Hearing from self-advocates.
 - Beverly suggested having self-advocates come to the meeting prior to when they are sharing so they can get comfortable.

The following topics were suggested by the group for 2020.

- Follow-up from Advocacy Day.
- Hearing from service providers – challenges they are facing and things that they are seeing.
- Higher education opportunities for individuals with DD.
- School to work updates
- Community engagement and other community services outside of employment.
 - Kate from Max Higbee Center said she is happy to present on their programs, including community engagement.

4. DD Millage updates

Jessica shared a handout and provided an overview of 2019 local millage and State DSHS/DDA contract expenditures.

- Due to changes in how the county applies indirect administration the program will be unlikely to maintain a millage fund balance as we have had in previous years.
- \$110, 000 in Millage was committed to contracted services, the majority of which was allocated to the Single Entry Access to Services (SEAS) line. The SEAS line provides a single point of referral for anyone concerned about a child's development
- The majority of other millage expenditures are used to extend DSHS/DDA funding for projects such as School to Work and to cover small gaps in employment services funding.



- Short term quality improvement efforts such as consultation for 0-3 providers with an infant mental health specialist were also funded through local millage.
- We will see a small decrease in the amount of funding available to contract through millage in 2020, but Jessica is hopeful that an increase in the state contract will cover the difference.
- We received approval to spend \$200,000 in 2020 for one-time infrastructure projects which were in process at the time that the changes in indirect admin were applied. (matching funds for an affordable housing project and to increase capacity for specialized recreation opportunities by covering some remodeling costs for the Max Higbee Center)
- We will maintain Amber's position as transition Coordinator, which is also funded out of local millage dollars.

5. 2020 Legislative Session Overview

DSHS/DDA provides a caseload forecast every year on trends in DDA services. Jessica provided some highlights.

- Caseloads have continued to increase with the average growth rate of 3.4%.
- There was increased enrollment for children 0-3, as well as transition age youth. We have also seen a higher number individuals over 62, in part because life expectancy has continued to increase.
- The majority of DDA clients live at home with their parents or relatives.
- DDA programs that serve the largest number of clients in the home, such as personal care, are less costly than programs such as supported living (residential services) which are more comprehensive but serve fewer people
- Community Protection provides intensive, voluntary services and 24-hour supervision for those identified as significant risks to the community because of criminal or behavioral history. Whatcom County currently does not have programs that serve clients in community protection.
- Residential Habilitation Centers (State Institutions) have the highest average monthly cost.
- There is currently a bill in the legislature based on the "Rucklehouse Report" which makes recommendations about the downsizing of institutions in order to divert those dollars into community services.
- There continues to be an increase in the number of individuals eligible for DDA, but who receive no paid services. (also referred to as the "no paid services" caseload.) These individuals do not have access to a DDA case manager to help them navigate services.



Jessica reviewed several bills of interest. (There were over 1100 pieces of legislation drafted this session.) This is the second year of a 2-year budget and is typically a short session, making it harder to get bills passed. A list of bills impacting individuals with DD was shared.

- HB2787 moves school district funding for infants and toddlers 0-3 from the Office of Superintendent of public instruction (OSPI) to the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF). DCYF houses the Early Services for Infants and Toddlers program (ESIT) responsible for 0-3 services.
- In Whatcom county, school districts currently contract directly with our ESIT designated Local Lead Agency, the Opportunity Council (OC), to coordinate services and contract with local providers. After funding shifts to DCYF, the state ESIT program will contract directly with service providers, and the OC will no longer act in a coordinating role.

6. Issues Focus – Early Services for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)

Jessica presented a [video](#) on Early Intervention Services (EIS) for infants and toddlers. Some of the highlights of the video were:

- Requirements listed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) part C, which governs services to infants and toddlers 0-3. IDEA Part B governs special education services in school districts for children 3-21.
- Using natural environments (such as the family home and community-based settings such as childcare) and everyday activities (mealtime, bath time etc.) to identify learning opportunities to maximize the child's development
- Data is collected at entry into and exit from services to track program outcomes. Children are compared relative to their same age peers, in such areas as communication and getting their needs met. Family outcomes focus on knowledge of rights and family confidence in helping their child develop and learn.
- In Whatcom County, the Single Entry Access to Services (SEAS) line at the Opportunity Council, acts as a single point of entry for 0-3 services. SEAS navigators help refer families to either the Opportunity Council or Whatcom Center for Early Learning, the two 0-3 providers. The SEAS line accepts calls and referrals for children of all ages, and is not exclusive to children 0-3.

7. Public Comment

- Ken apologized for being unable to attend the last meeting. He shared that he attended the annual People First Convention and his favorite take away



from it was the keynote speaker. He also is now an Advisor for this Special Olympics in this region.

- Beverly gave out calendars from the Arc of Whatcom County.
- Beverly shared that the Arc's Advocacy Day will be Wednesday February 19th, and there will be a bus going down to Olympia from Bellingham.

9. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by Russ Sapienza at 6:08 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 23, 2020. This meeting will be at the Health Education Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway.

Respectfully submitted by Emily West, Coordinator

HD staff

Jessica Lee

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