

**ADMH Division of Developmental Disabilities
Coordinating Subcommittee Zoom Meeting Summary
March 9, 2021**

Participants: There were 207 Participants, which included DDD Subcommittee Members, Provider Network, and other Stakeholders.

Voting Members Present:

Connie Batiste, ADMH/DDD Representative
DeAnna Ferguson, Ph.D., Other Providers–VOA Representative
Jo Poates, AADD Representative
Arvy Dupy, AADD Representative
Darryle Powell, Sr., Alabama DD Council Representative
Wade Reese, ACE/Arc Representative
Timothy Cooper, Arc of Alabama Representative
Jamie Herren, Alabama Council/MH Centers Representative
Ken Oliver, Alabama MH Centers Representative
Rita Wingard, ADMH/DDD Representative
Susan Ellis, People First of Alabama Representative
Steve Meggs, People First of Alabama Representative

Voting Members Absent:

Jane Cameron, Arc of Alabama Family Representative

Non-Voting Member Present

Diane Durbin, ADMH/Advocacy

1. Welcome and Called to Order

Associate Commissioner Pezent called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented by Mr. Dupy and seconded by Mr. Reese. The motion was approved.

3. Approval of February 2, 2021 Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Reese and seconded by Dr. Ferguson to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was approved.

4. Associate Commissioner Updates (Terry Pezent)

AC Pezent reminded everyone about the National Core Indicator (NCI) Survey Data. The link is sent directly from the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS). Providers are encouraged to complete the NCI survey because it is useful for budget request when advocating for funds.

Ada Katherine van Wyle, ADMH/Legislative Office, provided an overview of the Senate Bill that supports Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services during the COVID emergency.

5. COVID-19 (Terry Pezent)

- **COVID 19 Statewide Data:** As of March 9, 2021, a total of 2,793 individuals were tested 905 tested positive, 186 hospitalizations, 56 deaths. The numbers are trending down.
- **Appendix K:** Appendix K is being reviewed for a phased-out plan and other things that are not currently being utilized.
- **DD Provider Vaccination Survey Data:** Ms. Waren shared data from the survey. A little over 1,200 staff were vaccinated and over 500 individuals receiving services were vaccinated. It appears there are challenges with finding vaccinations, but people have to make an asserted effort to schedule the vaccinations. AC Pezent asked providers to share some of their experiences with getting individuals vaccinated. In response, some providers are experiencing more challenges in some counties than others.

For example, it was noted that some individuals with disabilities are going to MS and TN because they are eligible in those state. It was noted that there is a transportation issue for individuals to get to vaccination sites which have leftover vaccinations. Also, the residential home individuals qualify for vaccination, but the individuals with ID/DD who are living at home with families do not qualify for the vaccination under the current guidelines.

Mr. Tucker shared his concerns and disappointments regarding no initiative being made for individuals with ID/DD to obtain the vaccination. Last week, ADAP cosigned a letter with Alabama Arise and the Disability Coalition of Alabama. The letter was sent to Alabama Public Health Officer, Dr. Harris, with a copy to the Governor's Office. Mr. Tucker was notified by Public Health stating they were in the process of reviewing the letter, but a formal reply has not been received yet. ADAP is advocating explicitly that ID/DD has a designated qualifying portal by which individuals get access to the vaccine. Once he receives more formal information, he will share with Shirley Hicks to share with DDD stakeholders.

AC Pezent indicated DDD will be reviewing guidelines centered around the infectious disease policy and will be discussing internally how the process should work in regard to reopening day programs and reintegration into the community. Everyone was encouraged to continue to follow their emergency infectious disease plans.

- **COVID Funding:** A meeting will be held with the COVID 19 workgroup this afternoon to discuss COVID Funding. Voting members of the DDD Subcommittee are the participants on the workgroup.

6. HCBS Waivers

ID/LAH Waivers (Rita Wingard)

Overview of Specific Services: A presentation was provided on the following available services: community experience (transportation is provided through this service), community day hab, personal care and companion care, pre-employment and employment related services, supported living services, and remote support services. The service codes for remote support services are being developed, and the billable services codes will be available soon. It was pointed out that there is only one supported living service provider, Cahaba. AC Pezent indicated the remote provider and the direct support provider are two different services. Ms. Ellis recommended that success stories be shared regarding support services since other people might be interested. There was an inquiry regarding the name of the assistive technology vendors. Knight Owl and Simply Home are the current vendors.

Individuals not Receiving Services Status: There are individuals enrolled in the ID/LAH

waivers with no recent claims. There is a total of 383 individuals for the ID waiver and a total of 222 individuals for LAH waivers, with a total of 605 individuals with no recent claims. Lyndie Watson sent a request to all regional offices for a status of individuals receiving services.

Other Waiver Information: Amendments for both waivers are being worked on. The services being reviewed reflect the questions and comments that were received. The goal is to have it posted for public comments by April 1st. A list of the bulleted items that are being edited for waiver amendment will be sent out.

Community Waiver Program (Kevin LaPorte)

Enrollment and Providers: The Community Waiver Program (CWP) is on track for enrollment, April 1, 2021. In reference to the waiting list outreach effort, the Community Services Directors (CSDs) completed the process to reach everyone on the waiting list in the piloted areas. The CWP support coordinators are currently collaborating with the 310 agencies for updated information for individuals who were unable to be contacted. To date, 288 people confirmed they want CWP services.

CWP Marketing Material: The final draft for edits and approval of the marketing material was received. The material will be sent out very soon.

7. Support Coordination Services (Francilla Allen)

- DDD leadership began the monthly meetings with Support Coordination (SC) agencies. The next meeting will be held April 15, 2021 at 11:00am.
- The SC agencies were reminded to complete and submit the spreadsheet which includes SC executive directors and SC supervisors contact information by March 5, 2021. A formal reminder was emailed yesterday.
- The quarterly meeting with SC supervisors will begin on March 25, 2021.
- The PCP training is a 4-day training for new hires in the agencies, scheduled for May 30-April 1 and April 7, 2021. Any SC executive directors or support coordinators supervisors who have not attended the training are encouraged to register. Once individuals complete the 4-day training, they will be added to the MH Team Channel. Training is also open to DDD staff who have not completed the training. Please note, you must complete the entire training in order to receive a certificate of completion.

8. Office of Certification/Application Process for Services and Settings (Connie Batiste)

A detailed presentation on the application process was provided. An application is required for any changes to the organization which included new executive director, new setting, new services, change in settings, change in setting occupancy, address change, name change of setting, and name change of the organization. The application is initially submitted to ADMH Office of Certification, Debbie Popwell, then Ms. Popwell forwards the application to DDD Certification Office for review and recommendation. The application and a setting review form is then sent to the DDD regional offices for review and recommendations. The regional office visits the setting and review the site for HCBS compliance. The regional office completes the setting review form and return the form along with the application back to the DDD Certification Office with recommendation. The recommendation is either approved or not approved by the regional office. The property must meet the Life and Safety guidance as well as the HCBS compliance guidance. It is extremely important to note that Life Safety should not inspect your property without an approved application because once you have acquired the property and it doesn't get approved because you did not follow the process, ADMH/DDD is not responsible. There is guidance in the operational guidelines regarding the application process.

9. Office of Community Services (Vivian Waren)

Statewide Regional Meeting: The regional provider meetings will reconvene. Instead of having five separate regional meetings, it has been decided to have just one statewide quarterly provider meeting on March 18, 2021 at 9:00am. The quarterly provider meetings will be a more

in-depth meeting which will include standing agenda items such as Community of Practice, Community Waiver Program, Person Centered Planning, and Operational Guidelines. The plan is to solicit feedback and provide training on the operational guidelines at the regional meetings. Hopefully, the operational guidelines will be sent out prior to the March 18th meeting.

Service Gaps & Expansion of Needed Services: A presentation was provided regarding service gaps. The Support Coordination agencies were surveyed regarding the available services and the service gaps based on the current waiver services. The combined data responses from the survey indicated crisis intervention, day and community-based services, employment (job developing and job coaching), are the needed services, respectively, with home respite as an ongoing needed service. The barriers are rural areas and limited resources with no providers. The urban areas have more providers. Service capacity need to be developed in the rural areas. AC Pezent indicated if providers are interested in providing the needed services, please let DDD know.

10. Alabama Medicaid Agency (AMA) Updates/Questions

EPSDT Services: Ms. Wettingfeld stated there was no update, but everyone will be notified in ample time and given a provider number to switch over to EPSDT services for those individuals. There is no change needed at this time.

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) Vendor: There was no update at the moment. It is anticipated that Ms. Abrams will provide an update next month.

Mr. Nelson indicated Medicaid will be updating the COVID vaccination dashboard.

11. Advocacy Updates

ADMH (Diane Durbin): Across the board, advocacy has been impressed with DDD, its providers, and the information disseminated to everyone. Advocacy will be using a different method of monitoring which consist of using a tablet, without a recording mechanism without entering programs. A pilot program was conducted in north Alabama. Information will be sent to everyone regarding the monitoring process. Advocacy has always provided abuse, treatment, and neglect training, and this training is available for everyone. Please contact ADMH/Advocacy if anyone is interested. Sometimes Advocacy does joint presentations and training with ADAP.

People First of Alabama (Jenny Lux): Ms. Lux shared the following activities that People First of Alabama is engaged in providing waiver services in the form of family empowerment navigators and peer specialists. This program was started through the ACDD program but now it is self-sustaining. They have a Voluntary Participatory Advisory Board within the Young Emergent Leaders structured to decide what topics should be covered and assist with conducting the meetings. This meeting occurs every other month on the even months. The next meeting is scheduled for April. People First is working on strengthening their Chapters, which meets quarterly. They are working on voting rights for individuals. Videos and website information are available. In addition, they are assisting individuals with completing CARES Act requests online related to COVID.

ADAP (James Tucker): Any additional information regarding the vaccination portal for ID/DD individuals will be shared. The Commissioner was thanked for the FY22 budget continue support for ESPDT improvements by ADMH and Medicaid. If anyone is working with a child who is EPSDT eligible, please feel free to contact ADAP for additional information.

ADAP is also doing a lot of outreach training funded by the ACDD Council during the current fiscal year on "HCBS waiver, waiver eligibility, what having a waiver means, what

are your entitlements, and etc.” because most individuals don’t know how the waiver system works. ADAP is also working to diversify and increase the geographical area and is aiming to reach people with disabilities and self-advocates directly for this training. If you have an audience that will benefit from this training, please let him know. Thanks goes to Darryle Powell, ACDD Council, for funding this effort. Thanks to AC Pezent for all of her work as well.

12. New Business

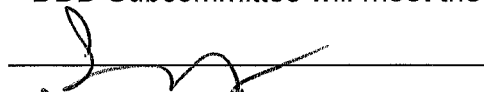
There was no new business.

13. Announcements

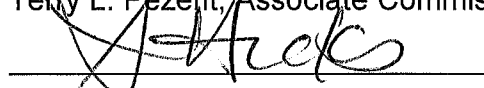
There were no announcements.

14. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held April 6, 2021. During the month with five Tuesdays, the DDD Subcommittee will meet the second Tuesday during that month.



Terry L. Pezent, Associate Commissioner/ADMH/DD



Shirley Hicks, Recorder, ADMH/DD