

**ADMH Division of Developmental Disabilities  
Coordinating Subcommittee Zoom Meeting Summary  
February 2, 2021**

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**Participants:** There were 265 Participants, which included DD Subcommittee Members, Provider Network, and other Stakeholders.

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**Voting Members Present:**

Connie Batiste, ADMH/DD 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  
Jamie Herren, Alabama Council/MH Centers Representative  
Ken Oliver, Alabama MH Centers Representative  
Rita Wingard, ADMH/DD Representative

**Voting Members Absent:**

Andy Slate, ADMH/DD Representative  
Susan Ellis, People First of Alabama Representative  
Steve Meggs, People First of Alabama Representative  
Jane Cameron, Arc of Alabama Family Representative  
Ann Riddle, Arc of Alabama Representative

**Non-Voting Member Present**

Diane Durbin, ADMH/Advocacy

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**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. Reese and seconded by Mr. Oliver. The motion was approved.

**3. Approval of January 5, 2021 Minutes**

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

**4. Electronic Visit Verification (Monica Abrams/Alabama Medicaid Agency)**

Ms. Abrams provided an overview of the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) System Initiative. The EVV automated system is used to verify all personal care and home health care services as required and mandated by CMS for financial reimbursement. She indicated if Alabama (or any state) is found non-compliant with this mandate, there is a reduction in federal funding. This would be devastating for waiver recipients, providers, the Alabama Medicaid Agency, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, and the Department of Senior Services. It is extremely important that everyone stay on top of the regulations and meet this mandate. As of January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Medicaid received a letter of compliance from CMS. This

was definitely great news to hear since many states did not receive the same notice. Special thanks to operating agencies, and to their providers/contractors, for their hard work during this difficult time to make it possible to meet this mandate. It was already a challenge, but to complete this initiative during this pandemic was really remarkable.

This year, the current EVV vendor's contract expires December 31, 2021. Medicaid is in the process of transitioning to a new EVV vendor and also switching models. Alabama currently operates on what is called a closed state mandated model, which means there is one EVV system that serves the entire state. All providers are using one particular system. Alabama is transitioning to an open model, which means if providers have their own added solutions, they will be able to interface with the new EVV vendor system. The goal is to ensure the new system is user friendly, the mandates are being met, and the desires of the providers and the recipients who use the system are also being met.

Alabama State Purchasing has not released the name of the vendor yet. Please note, the new system will be able to interface with the new DD System. Once the vendor is officially announced, Ms. Abrams will present more information at a future DD Subcommittee Meeting.

Providers, stakeholders, recipients will be involved in the transition and design process. The current billing system will be used until the end of this year. The projection is perhaps between October and November 2021, when everyone will fully see a transition from the old system to the new system, because of course we can't wait until January 1, 2022 to fully engage with the new system. Medicaid wants to make sure everything has transferred correctly and everything is working properly. If you have any questions outside of this meeting, please feel free to email [Monica.Abrams@medicaid.alabama.gov](mailto:Monica.Abrams@medicaid.alabama.gov)

#### **5. Associate Commissioner Comments/Updates (Terry Pezent)**

**The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL):** The initial meeting was held with CQL to begin the process of reviewing certification and compliance tools. An email was received from CQL requesting a list of stakeholders' advocacy groups and family coalitions. Please send your recommendations of advocacy groups to participate in stakeholders' engagement activities to [Shirley.Hicks@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:Shirley.Hicks@mh.alabama.gov).

- **Operational Guidelines:** Feedback from stakeholders were received regarding the effective date listed on the cover of the operational guidelines' manual. Please note that the implementation date of any new operational guidelines commence after training has been conducted. In regard to the feedback about having stakeholders' engagement in the development of guidelines, DD continues to create opportunities for stakeholders' engagement. As mentioned on a consistent basis, the division always welcome and solicit feedback from stakeholders not only on guidelines, but on other activities and projects as well. If you have any questions or challenges related to the guidelines, please email [Terry.Pezent@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:Terry.Pezent@mh.alabama.gov) or send questions to [ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov).
- **Administrative Code:** Florine Croxton will send out a clean version of the Administrative Code. The recent approved Administrative Code effective date was January 14, 2021.
- **Quality Enhancement (QE) Council :** The QE Council is in the process of reconvening, perhaps by April 2021 or May 2021. The purpose of the QE Council is to develop a data management booklet to track data, to improve tracking data



related to incidents and performance measures data related to demographic information, and to review all data for system needed changes.

Ms. Batiste presented the QE Council proposed membership composition. Mr. Nelson suggested that a representative from Alabama Medicaid Agency be added. It was also suggested by a DD subcommittee member that a representative from the Alabama Department of Public Health be considered to serve on the QE Council. In addition, Ms. Turnage recommended that two family members, who currently receive self-directed services, be added. She feels there is not equitable representation for families, as oppose to the representation for providers. Associate Commissioner Pezent will consider this recommendation. If there are any associations not included on the proposed membership composition, please submit associations' names to [Connie.Batiste@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:Connie.Batiste@mh.alabama.gov).

- **National Core Indicator (NCI) Staff Stability Survey:** The NCI Survey report has been posted to the NCI website at [https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/upload/core-indicators/2019StaffStabilitySurveyReport\\_FINAL\\_1\\_6\\_21.pdf](https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/upload/core-indicators/2019StaffStabilitySurveyReport_FINAL_1_6_21.pdf). The Quality Enhancement (QE) Consumer Satisfaction Survey is important and will be incorporated into the data management booklet. Ms. Batiste is scheduled to provide a presentation at the DD Subcommittee meeting in April 2021.
- **Statewide Transition Plan:** The next Statewide Transition Plan meeting with Medicaid is February 17, 2021. After this meeting, DD will schedule a HCBS meeting to get back on track with data validation. Other avenues are being explored for educational training for waiver services, self-directed services, operational guidelines, performance measures, and HCBS compliance and monitoring. If you have any suggestions for educational training, please send suggestions to [ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov).

## 6. COVID-19 Workgroup

The workgroup continues to meet. We might consider using the DD Subcommittee voting members as the group to make decision on other projects.

- **Appendix K:** Ms. Croxton shared information related to the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) vaccination portal from ADPH website. She did a step by step walk through of the vaccination portal which is entitled "COVID-19 Vaccination Eligibility". ADMH providers and individuals are able to find out if they are eligible for the vaccine and schedule an appointment through the portal. Dr. Ferguson thanked ADMH for advocating on behalf of the providers and individuals with intellectual disabilities to receive the vaccination.
- **DD Provider Vaccination Survey Data:** Ms. Waren presented a PowerPoint presentation on Provider Vaccination Survey data beginning January 18, 2021. Based on the presented data, it appears that most individuals were not being vaccinated because of challenges related to not having access to appointments and not meeting the age criteria, but with the recent released vaccination portal from ADPH, the provider vaccination data will likely increase. It was suggested that the vaccination survey data be updated within the few next weeks.
- **COVID Funding:** Associate Commissioner Pezent indicated that a meeting was held with the DD Subcommittee voting members. The top 3 funding recommendations for the CARES Act funding were: 1) continuation of reimbursement for PPE, 2) the continuation

of the PPE funding for that cost and funding overtime and hazard pay for staff working directly with waiver services participants who have tested positive, and 3) subsidy payments for stand-alone day programs.

- Commissioner Boswell thanked the providers who worked behind the scene to get the CARES Act funding back (\$1.2 million). She provided a brief summary of the Budget Presentation that she attended last Thursday, January 28, 2021. One big funding item for DD is the newly dual diagnosis program. ADMH might have a good shot at the budget request. The General Fund is \$73 million requested, and \$33 million of it was requested by ADMH. Comments were made and questions were entertained. Dr. Ferguson expressed her thanks on behalf of the Providers Association and noted that she understood from one of the budget chairs that ADMH was going to be a priority this session.

#### **7. Community Waiver Program (Kevin LaPorte & Harrison Black)**

March 1, 2021 is the targeted enrollment and implementation date. All applications have been responded to, and the division is awaiting on the approval date from CMS at this point. The waiting list outreach continues and is going well. One challenge is the scarcity of existing phone numbers for some people on the waiting list. The division is working diligently to locate individuals and contact them. CWP support coordinators will be following up and getting contact information. In regard to provider readiness, monthly CWP training was provided which also included services billing and financial literacy. QuILTTS Institute is the company that will be coordinating standardized training for direct services professional.

#### **8. ID/LAH Waiver Updates (Rita Wingard)**

Ms. Wingard provided an update on Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and the Living at Home (LAH) waiver amendments. She also indicated that waiver services training is in the process of being developed and is forthcoming. In addition, she provided a PowerPoint presentation on Assistive Technology Services (ADMH-DDD ID/LAH Waivers).

#### **9. Support Coordination Services (Francilla Allen)**

Ms. Allen presented a PowerPoint presentation on Person Centered Planning, ID/LAH, CWP, and Self-Directed Services.

- **Person-Centered Planning:** The next PCP Training will be held March 30–April 1 and April 7, 2021. The MH-Support Coordination Teams Channel is still available and is monitored by staff for questions regarding PCP. Quarterly meetings regarding updates and trainings with support coordination supervisors will reconvene. The Roles and Workflow Workgroup was thanked for their hard work. Participants from this workgroup has been rolled into the Strategic Planning Committee, which is composed of direct services providers, support coordination providers, advocates, and DD staff. This committee is charged with bringing forth recommendations for certification for PCP operational guidelines and identifying training. The process of redetermination was explained. The updated version of the PCP Assessment & Plan in ADDIS is available.
- **ID/LAH:** Support Coordination agencies are asked to submit the names, positions, email addresses of all support coordination supervisors and support coordinators. The revised support coordination monitoring will be shared with providers.
- **CWP:** Twenty days (20) of training have been completed. Formal and informal training will continue through February. Also, providers will be contacted to participate in a mock person-centered planning sessions and meetings.

- **Self-Directed Services:** The new FMSA Go Live Date is February 1, 2021. Support coordinators are asked to share information about PPL with individuals and their families. The PPL brochure will also be sent to support coordinators.

#### **10. Nursing Delegation Program (NDP) Updates (Beverly Jackson)**

Ms. Jackson presented a PowerPoint presentation on ADMH & Alabama Board of Nursing (ABN) Annual Data to be collected. Annually, providers with a certificate from ADMH is required to complete the NDP form whether they participate in NDP or not. The form captures data from April 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year through March 31 of the current year. This year, the process is being changed regarding how data is being collected. Instead of paper, providers will be notified by ADMH/NDP Coordinator, via, email with instructions to open a link in Google forms. If there are any questions please email [Beverly.Jackson@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:Beverly.Jackson@mh.alabama.gov) or contact her at (256) 552-3737.

#### **11. Provider Transformation Update (Byron White)**

Mr. White provided a PowerPoint presentation on Provider Transformation. The formal provider transformation initiative began more than 6 years ago through a partnership with the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) were identified by ODEP to introduce transformation and provide technical assistance to agencies interested in making substantial change in both their service delivery and philosophy. Since 2015, nineteen (19) agencies have participated. Request for Proposals (RFPs) continued to be released through FY2020 for provider agencies to apply for technical assistance. As agencies were forced to support people virtually due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the division planned virtual training events and developed pre-recorded webinars which are located on <http://employmentfirst-alabama.org/webinars.html> and other webinars are located on the DD website. If you would like more information on Provider Transformation and on how your agency might benefit, please email [Byron.White@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:Byron.White@mh.alabama.gov)

#### **12. Alabama Medicaid Agency (AMA) Updates/Questions**

There were no updates or questions.

#### **13. New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **14. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

#### **15. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held March 9, 2021.

  
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 Terry L. Pezent, Associate Commissioner/ADMH/DD

  
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 Shirley Hicks, Recorder, ADMH/DD