**Self-Direction Advisory Board**

**June 5, 2024**

Board Members Attending

Nancy Alterio

Jane Ryder

Elizabeth Sandblom

Robin Foley

Lindsay foley

Liz Fahey

Karla Murphy

Michael Weiner (phone)

Leslie Kinney

Leo Sarkissian

Barbara Pandolfi

Michele Goody

Cindy Thomas

Julie Howley Westwater

Matt Bruening

Dr. Keshrie Naidoo

DDS Staff

Terry O’Hare (phone)

John Lee

Ed Wilson

Amy Nazaire

Julia Wojciechowski

Tim Cahill

Elizabeth Morse

Jaclyn Grant

Victor Hernandez

Kaitlyn Spencer

Materials

Independent Facilitator Draft Definition

Nancy Alterio called the meeting to order. Liz Sandblom took attendance.

Nancy asked for motions to accept the March 13, 2024 minutes.

First Motion: Robin Foley

Second Motion: Michelle Goody

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ryder’s Report

DDS has filed a revised version of our proposed self-direction regulations which set forth the Department’s interpretation and implementation and of the Real Lives Law. We clarified roles and responsibilities to promote consistency considering comments received during our first public hearing in November 2022. We notified all committee members of public hearing on June 18th from 1pm-3pm and are accepting comments through June 18th at 5pm. The regulations are also posted on our website.

We are in the middle of the budget process and things look good. Governor Healy released her budget in January, and the House and Senate budgets are now in conference.

Matt Bruening (OIG) was introduced as a new SDAB member.

Regional Updates- Amy Nazaire

We are actively planning a self-direction conference for October 22nd

The regional managers continue with info sessions twice a month. There are also Spanish info sessions being offered quarterly. We are working on putting together a Vietnamese info session this fall.

We have added 652 new individuals to self-direction this fiscal year and out total numbers for both programs are 2,350.

We have been working with PPL to develop an Adobe Sign provider packet which is currently in pilot stage. We would welcome any feedback from those who are part of the pilot.

The Southeast region is hosting a quarterly AWC provider meeting which include spotlight trainings and roundtable discussions.

Independent Facilitator – Robin Foley & Liz Sandblom

The daft definition of the Independent Facilitator was shared with the board members. Please refer to the definition for more details.

We have been considering introducing the IF before someone turns 22 to support individuals as they set up PDP supports. More consideration is needed to determine if this is possible. We will be updating people as we have a timeline and have updates.

Next Steps

* Develop a workplan
	+ Review and incorporate feedback from today’s meeting and what the benchmarks will be for phases of roll out
* Develop training curriculum
* DDS will be developing the policy and written guidance once the regs are promulgated

Internal considerations:

* How do other states deal with the pay rate?
* Consult with our waiver team for waiver definition and timeline for when it will get into the waiver.
* IT work: getting a new code and developing service system.
* AWC Navigator Analysis: compare AWC navigator roles outlined in AWC manual and see if we can fill in any gaps

Questions/Comments

**Questions**

Michelle Goody: Are any of these duties required and is there a way to be clearer about that? People may need support about when to fire people too.

Robin Foley: We can add an introduction at the top of the list of responsibilities explaining that not all the services may be required. We will add some stronger language in the performance review bullet around firing providers.

Michelle Goody: Will training be available through the Department?

Robin Foley: Yes, and it will be offered virtually.

Mat Bruening: is DDS validating their credentials?

Liz Sandblom: yes

Cindy Thomas: IC language are they going to be freelancers

Liz Sandblom: Possibly, similar to our guardianship list the corporation is the guardian but there are case managers working with individuals.

Liz Fahey: Are we getting rid of the personal agent role?

Liz Sandblom: We have not decided. Under 10 people are currently using the personal agent code. It’s a little more flexible than what we went through now. This is a decision we need to.

**Recommendations**

* Expectations should be set up front.
* It’s nice that there is a menu of services, and we may only pick a few.
* Support in developing a vision and person-centered plan should be listed under responsibilities.

Robin Foley: It will also come up in the training process.

* The responsibilities seem heavy on the administrative side and not how someone will have a good life.
* Some people strongly feel like a social worker could be appropriate for this role.
* Take out word “comprehensive” when talking about the training.
* Important for them to have the ability to communicate in the primary language of the individual.
* The qualifications don’t really match the language about independent contractors.
* Add clarifying language about providing services to that specific person.
* This is a great example of what this board should talk about at future meetings.
* Might benefit from language about how the IC relates to other people in the person’s life.
* AWC is a co-employment model and they have more responsibility and there is a disconnect between the 2 models.

Self-Direction Conference - Jaclyn Grant

We will be having our first self-direction conference on October 22nd at The Best Western Expo and Trade Center in Marlborough. It will be an all-day conference with a focus on community mapping and connections. We will have a keynote speaker, breakout sessions, and vendor expo. We are looking into some AI options for translation services as well where attendees will be able to listen to spoken word translation or read the transcript of what is being said in real time on their smart phone or iPad. We have the flyer and registration form translated into Spanish, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, and Russian.

There will also be a quiet room set up for those who need a break and a fun share your story space with photo booth and craft table. We are looking for volunteers to help individuals create their storyboards and help write their story if they want to share.

Questions/Comments

Liz Fahey: Can we have a list that people can add their names to be connected to others who self-direct?

Jaclyn Grant: We can investigate having something at the registration table for people to sign up for. We are also hoping the conference itself will provide some networking opportunities.

The Path Forward Project

* In the process of training our own assessors
* We hope to reach the halfway point by July 1st
* The Feedback has been positive and the assessment is very comprehensive

Questions/Comments

Leo Sarkissian: What are the barriers?

Liz Sandblom: The length of assessment seems to be our biggest barrier. Once we have our assessors trained, we are hoping we will be able to be more flexible with this.

Michelle Goody: Is the SIS being used for self-direction only?

Liz Sandblom: It will eventually roll out to everyone who receives DDS services.

Nancy asked for motions to adjourn.

First motion: Margaret Abrams

Second motion: Robin Foley

**VOTE:** Unanimous to adjourn the meeting of June 5, 2024

Nancy thanked the committee and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting: September 4, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Jaclyn Grant