Youth at the Crossroads:

The complexity of ASD and mental health in Massachusetts

Kelly English, PhD, LICSW

Julie Welch, MSW, LCSW

Massachusetts Autism Commission Meeting

May 16, 2024

**Made possible with generous support from**

Peter and Elizabeth Tower Foundation

Goals for today’s meeting

1. *Educate Commission members on the purpose and goals of the grant*
2. *Review our high-level service landscape map to identify any service(s) that Commission members are aware of that are working well that we should be highlighting for this project*
3. *Identify if / how the Commission’s work (past / present) may support the goals of the project.*

Guiding questions of the project

1. *How might we identify those programs / practices that already exist in Massachusetts (or other jurisdictions) that are working well, require greater investment or replication so as to have a greater impact and not reinvent the wheel?*
2. *How might we create a system that intervenes earlier so that parents feel supported and youth are able to live safely at home?*
3. *How might we leverage Medicaid to draw down federal financial participation, maximize federal and state dollars and refrain from a scarcity mindset to create a robust service system for these youth?*
4. *How can resources be leveraged and streamlined across child serving state agencies to offer a coordinated approach to these families and youth?*

How we will get there

To help us identify opportunities for earlier intervention

Assist us in our advocacy efforts - hearing from families directly is powerful

Learn what services helped

What didn’t help

To identify strategies, structures or practices we could adapt here in Massachusetts to improve our services system.

Obtain a high-level overview of the service landscape

Use with stakeholders to identify if anything already exists that IS working for this population

Bring together families, advocates, policy makers, academics, etc. to identify high impact and feasible policy and practice solutions for action

Population of focus

*Youth under 22 with level 1 or 2 ASD who also has behavioral health challenges which may have led to:*

* *mobile crisis evaluations,*
* *emergency department visits,*
* *CBAT, YCCS, acute inpatient psychiatric admissions, or*
* *an out of home placement by another child serving state agency*

*These youth are the ones that often “fall between the cracks” of our service systems, because it's not designed well to support youth with co-occurring conditions.*

Service Landscape

Insurance

MassHealth + Commercial

* Applied behavioral analysis
* In-home behavioral therapy
* In-home therapy
* Intensive care coordination
* Family support & training
* Outpatient therapy
* CBHC/urgent care
* MCPAP for ASD
* Partial hospital
* CBAT - ASD /CBAT
* Acute inpatient - SNU
* Early intervention\* (DPH operated)
* Youth community crisis stabilization

Special education (LEA)

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

* In-district services via IEP
* Special education collaboratives
* Out of district therapeutic day schools
* Residential schools

Department of Developmental Services

* Autism Waiver\* (Medicaid)
* Autism Support Centers
* Family Support Centers
* DESE / DDS Residential Prevention Program
* family flexible supports (IFFS) Family support navigation
* Intensive

Department of Mental Health

* ED Diversion
* PACT-Y
* Therapeutic After School
* Flexible support
* Intensive Community Services
* Young Adult Access Centers
* Adolescent Continuing Care Unit
* Merrimack Center IRTP
* Behavioral Health Helpline

Department of Children & Families

* Family Resource Centers
* Medically complex and behavioral residences
* Residential schools and Group Homes
* Support and Stabilization services
* Comprehensive Foster Care

Questions?