**Governor’s Commission on Intellectual Disability**

**December 16, 2020 (Remote)**

The Governor’s Commission on Intellectual Disability met remotely on December 16, 2020. Those attending were Members: James Brett (Chair), Amy Carnevale, Marjorie Cohen, Aaron Stone, Anne Fracht, Joanne Jaxtimer, George Ford, Doreen Cummings, James Cassetta, JoAnn Simons, DDS: Jane Ryder, Elizabeth Morse, Christopher Thompson, Christopher Klaskin, Tim Cahill, Liz Sandblom, Nick Dantzer and Victor Hernandez.

Chairman Brett opened the meeting at 4:00pm.

1. DDS staff updated the Commission on DDS’ response to the pandemic and anticipated surge. In the provider and state-operated community, surveillance testing is in place. If there is one person testing positive in a group home, everyone is tested. DDS has established a partnership with Commonwealth Medicine. Commonwealth Medicine has designed a self- assessment tool for agencies to complete on their congregate care sites around infection control. Commonwealth Medicine will provide follow-up and technical assistance after a review of the self-assessment. Commissioner Ryder talked about the activities of the Service Coordinators reaching out to individuals to check on their needs and safety. She also thanked staff particularly direct care staff for their work at this time and is optimistic about the hopeful news of vaccines. The Commissioner also reported that Governor Baker will share the prioritization plan for the vaccines. DDS continues to advocate for those IDD individuals.
2. Members viewed the video *Preventing Financial Abuse in the Self Directed Service Model* (<https://youtu.be/x6oemj1tlwk>) . When self-directing their services our individuals have the opportunity for empowerment and independence with service models that offer flexibility and the ability to customize services. There are also responsibilities that come with managing or overseeing a budget, especially when the funds are distributed by a state agency. This video is a tool for individuals, families, and DDS staff to be more aware of fraud.
3. The DDS self-direction programs have steadily increased since March by about 1.5% per month. There has been an 11% increase overall with over 150 new enrollments. Most of the enrollments were in individual day supports and individual home supports. The regional self-direction managers have offered more training opportunities to families and staff.
4. Day programs are currently running open at 64% with occupancy levels at 30-40%. Many are working with the space (distancing) issues along with the transportation issues. Programs are still working with in person and hybrid instruction challenges. EHS is looking at fiscal relief options for providers. Goal is to support various service models as flexibly as possible.
5. The Regional ABI Directors along with their teams and our partner residential providers have made exceptional progress moving individuals with acquired brain injuries out of nursing facilities into the community over the past several months. After an unavoidable pause for 2 ½ months in the spring due to the pandemic, the ABI teams have increased their efforts. This extraordinary effort improved the quality of life of those ABI individuals by allowing them to live in the community and pursue their vision and goals once again. It has also allowed us to meet our obligation under the Hutchinson Settlement Agreement.
6. With the holiday season quickly arriving DDS is asking families to be aware of the serious risks that face everyone. As plans are made to celebrate the holidays with family members, DDS is encouraging those to celebrate virtually or visit their loved one at their residence, in line with the program’s safety guidelines. We are reminding families to be prepared for the possibility of a residential program limiting visitation if a resident or staff member tests positive, or the program determines that visitation cannot occur safely.
7. Members of the Commission inquired on the status of the revised “Photo Release Policy”. They were assured that it will be finalized as soon as possible.

Chairman Brett adjourned the meeting at 5:55pm.