

**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities  
Long-Term Services & Supports and Health Equity Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes**

**Date of Meeting:** Monday, August 31, 2026

**Time:** 11am to 12pm

**Location:** Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

| Commission Members Participating Remotely |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                         | Charlie Carr (Co-Chair) – Disability Policy Consortium                   |
| 2                                         | Chris White – Road to Responsibility, Inc                                |
| 3                                         | Ann Lynch – Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office                      |
| 4                                         | Oz Mondejar – Mucho Gusto Consulting                                     |
| 5                                         | Nancy Garr-Colzie – Your Access Advocates                                |
| 6                                         | Rep. John Marsi – Massachusetts State House                              |
| Commission Members Not Present            |                                                                          |
| 7                                         | Carl Richardson (Co-Chair) – Massachusetts State House                   |
| 8                                         | Hon. Denise Garlick – Commission Chair                                   |
| 9                                         | Gyasi Burks-Abbott – LEND Fellowship, Boston Children’s Hospital         |
| 10                                        | Rachel Kaprielian – Triangle, Inc.                                       |
| 11                                        | Representative Lindsay Sabadosa – Massachusetts House of Representatives |
| 12                                        | Leo Sarkissian – The Arc of Massachusetts                                |
| Advisory Council Members Present          |                                                                          |
| 8                                         | Nora Bent – The Arc of Massachusetts                                     |
| 9                                         | Linda Long Bellil – University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School      |
| 10                                        | Jody Nash – Cardinal Cushing Centers                                     |
| 11                                        | Sarah Peterson – Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services      |
| 12                                        | Laura Stout – Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts                    |

| Action Items |                    | Person Responsible |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1            | Discuss FY27 Goals | All                |

## Agenda

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Approval of Minutes
  - Motion and approved
2. [Healthcare Access Presentation](#) by Dr. Jill Pineda, licensed clinical psychologist at the Lurie Center for Autism and a clinical instructor at Harvard Medical School
  - Presentation highlights:
    - A member asked what percentage of physicians and nurse practitioners receive training on caring for patients with ASD/IDD and what alternatives are available when a patient is unable to tolerate a medical procedure.
    - Dr. Pineda noted that she did not have data on how many providers receive this type of training. She emphasized that restraint should be a last resort and referenced [Operation House Call](#) as an example of efforts to improve provider training and understanding.
    - A member commented on the importance of trauma-informed care and asked how healthcare providers accommodate patients who may need additional time during an appointment, including whether providers know in advance that a patient is autistic or has other accommodation needs.
      - Dr. Pineda explained that this information may be available through the patient portal or disclosed by the patient or family, but not every patient is identified in advance. Accommodation needs can also be documented in the medical record so that providers can plan ahead.
    - An Advisory Council member shared that, in addition to Operation House Call, DDS is exploring ways to engage the broader medical community, including medical and dental schools, around disability-related training. Recent discussions have also included training for psychologists.
    - Child Life Specialists were identified as another resource that can help patients prepare for and navigate medical procedures.
    - Members discussed the need for more healthcare supports and accommodations for adults with disabilities. One example involved coordinating multiple medical needs while a patient is under anesthesia when procedures such as earwax removal are otherwise difficult to tolerate. The discussion also referenced sensory rooms developed in hospitals with input from patients and families and concerns that similar resources may be available on the pediatric side but not to adult patients.
    - A member noted that disability-related content has been required in dental school education in recent years.
    - A member asked how healthcare providers can better recognize when what appears to be “behavior” may actually be a person communicating anxiety, distress, pain, or another unmet need, particularly when the person may not communicate those needs in a typical way.
    - Dr. Pineda emphasized taking time to understand the individual, including potential barriers and triggers, and developing a patient accommodation

care plan. She also stressed the importance of collaborating with other providers and looking not only at what has gone wrong during previous healthcare experiences, but also at what has worked and when the individual has been successful.

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### 3. Adjournment

### **2026 Meeting Dates**

- November 16, 2026