

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

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 27, 2025

Time: 3:00pm to 4:00pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Representative Retiree Denise C. Garlick – MA House of Representatives
2	Charlie Carr – Legislative Liaison, Disability Policy Consortium
3	Carl Richardson – ADA Coordinator, Massachusetts State House
4	Oz Mondejar – President, Mucho Gusto Consulting
5	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc
6	Angela Ortiz – Executive Director, MA Health Council
Members Not Present	

Action Items		Person Responsible
1	Circulate drafted goals for members to review before next meeting	Imene
2	Review sent goals	All members
3	Invite external stakeholders to participate in subcommittee discussions and initiatives, including but not limited to: MassHealth, MA Health Council, Health Care for All, BCBS Foundation, Health Equity Compact, and national disability advocacy groups.	Ongoing
4	Compile a comprehensive list of LTSS programs, including funding sources (state, federal, nonprofit).	Imene and all members

Agenda

1. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions

Attendees:

- Commission Chair Garlick
- Chris White
- Carl Richardson
- Oz Mondejar
- Angela Ortiz
- Charles Carr

2. Establishing the Subcommittee's Focus

- Defining LTSS (Long-Term Services and Supports):
 - LTSS enable individuals with disabilities to live independently in the community rather than in institutional settings. Services include Personal Care Assistants, MassHealth-funded programs, and community-based supports.
 - Budget cuts in House 1 pose significant challenges to these services, particularly affecting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD).
- Role of the Subcommittee:
 - Education hub:
 - While the subcommittee cannot endorse specific budgetary measures, it can highlight the real-world impact of these cuts.
 - Identify key resources:
 - Compile a comprehensive list of LTSS programs, including funding sources (state, federal, nonprofit).
 - Engage with MassHealth and other stakeholders:
 - Invite representatives to provide insight into their programs and discuss health equity challenges within the system.
- Key Challenges in Healthcare Equity for People with Disabilities:
 - Medical bias:
 - Many healthcare settings fail to accommodate individuals with disabilities (e.g., inaccessible examination tables).
 - Crisis care disparities:
 - During emergencies (such as COVID-19), medical resources were triaged, often deprioritizing disabled individuals.
 - Dismantling of DEI efforts:
 - Growing opposition to DEI initiatives threatens disability representation in policymaking.
- Building a Unified Voice:
 - Medicaid block grants are under attack, putting critical supports at risk.
 - Coalition-building: Connect with organizations such as the MassHealth Council, Health Care for All, BCBS Foundation, Health Equity Compact, and national disability advocacy groups.
 - Interdisciplinary partnerships: Expand collaboration across healthcare, legal, and disability rights organizations.

3. Goal Discussion

- Develop strong intersectional partnerships that go beyond MassHealth to include broader disability-related services.
- Expand LTSS access and protections for those receiving services beyond MassHealth.
- Re-engage with the Health Equity Compact to ensure disability is included in health equity discussions.
- Support independent living and nursing home choice:
 - Ensure that institutionalization remains a choice, rather than a forced outcome due to service limitations.
- Improve provider education:
 - Address the lack of training for healthcare providers on disability-related care.

- Identify key stakeholders to broaden outreach efforts, particularly in rural healthcare deserts where access is more limited.

4. Expanding Subcommittee Membership

- Invite external stakeholders to participate in subcommittee discussions and initiatives.

5. Election of Chairs

- Nominations:
 - Charlie Carr
 - Carl Richardson
- Motion to Vote: Chair Garlick and Chris White
- Outcome: Both nominated individuals elected unanimously as subcommittee co-chairs.

6. Defining Subcommittee Scope & Outreach Strategy

- Establish parameters for outreach and policy focus.
- Determine if there are specific areas the subcommittee should prioritize or avoid.

7. FY25 Goals

- Imene will circulate a draft for members to review before next meeting.

8. 2025 Meeting Schedule (11:00am to 12:00pm)

- February 24
- April 28
- May 19
- August 25
- November 17