Massachusetts Autism Commission

Adult Subcommittee Meeting

Virtual - via zoom

September 25, 2024

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

**Remote Participation**

Dr. Kathy Sanders (Co-Chair), Chris Hubbard (Co-Chair) Carolyn Kain, Dianne Lescinskas, Cynthia Berkowitz, Maria Stefano, Michele Brait, Beth Zick, Janet Barbieri

Meeting Minutes: Carol Garcia

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chris Hubbard opened the meeting with introductions. Ms. Kain made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from our prior meeting on May 22, 2024. Ms. Stefano seconded the motion. Ms. Zwick abstained as she did not attend the prior meeting. With no objections, the meeting minutes were approved.

**Priorities and Recommendation Discussion**

A draft of priorities and recommendations was circulated to the subcommittee. Ms. Hubbard also drafted a summary of work from last year going into this year as a refresher.

1. **Expand Access to Resources for Aging Autistic Individuals, including those who were not eligible for services prior to 2014, and their Aging Caregivers and Support Networks**

* The priorities will continue to be about aging individuals on the spectrum whether they are already involved in services or need to get into services.
* Create a recommendation to optimize the use of support centers. There are adult and children support centers in each region of the state. The centers can help folks with their eligibility application to DDS.
* Our service authorization teams (entry points) need to know about the support center resources

1. **Examine Barriers to Accessing Services, including Healthcare Services, Created by Late Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

* Create a recommendation that funding be increased for adults with ASD who are not captured in the turning 22 class so they may access services to meet their needs.
* Older adults with autism who are without a formal diagnosis who have been relying on family.
* Consult with Dr. Neumeyer on her insight on diagnosis and advocacy. Ms. Berkowitz to reach out to an internist about diagnosis.

1. **Continuing to Track Issues with Medicare Coverage for Dual Eligible Individuals with Autism and other Autistic Individuals Covered by Medicare**

* Dr. Sanders and Ms. Kain agreed this recommendation be moved to the healthcare subcommittee.

Dr. Sanders recommended having one main priority and 2 or 3 recommendations at most. Ms. Kain and Ms. Hubbard to meet and get a draft recommendation out to the committee.

The subcommittee congratulated Dr. Sanders on her well deserved retirement. Dr. Sanders and DMH would come up with a replacement.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.