Self-Direction Advisory Board

September 2, 2020

Attending: Nancy Alterio, Jane Ryder, Liz Sandblom, Rich Santucci, Barbara Pandolfi, Margaret Abrams, Val Bradley, Julie Westwater, Karla Murphy, Jeffrey Paquette, Anne Fracht, Keri Mahoney, Julie Flaherty, Meghan Hamilton, Jeff Keilson, Kim Truong, Robin Foley, Lindsey Foley

DDS Staff: Victor Hernandez, Jennifer Benoit, Bev McGovern, Pam Hickey, Ed Wilson, Tim Cahill, Teryl Smith, Gail Gillespie, Laney Bruner- Canhoto, Elizabeth Morse, Anne Marie Stanton

Guests: Alixe Bonardi

Members not present: Andrea Lunden, Carol Bird, John Nadworney, Leo Sarkissian, Lesley Kinney, Tom Sannicandro

A role call was taken by Liz Sandblom.

Nancy Alterio asked for acceptance of the 06.10.20 minutes. The minutes were accepted.

DDS UPDATES

Commissioner Ryder welcomed the committee and gave the following updates:

<DDS staff are working in the “new” world, many remotely.

<Slowly services are being brought back. Day services are slowly opening. About 50% of day programs are opened. Service Coordinators are starting to do visits to homes in a limited way. Investigations and Quality Assurance staff are beginning more in-person work.

<Massachusetts as a whole is doing well with keeping the spread of the virus down. DDS is closely monitoring positive cases, insuring infection control, and doing regular testing.

<DDS has been partnering with DPH and has begun discussions with Commonwealth Medicine around consultation and more planning around infection control.

<DDS is inventorying the stock of personal protective equipment (PPE) and will do further stocking of appropriate PPE to be prepared if there is an increase in positive cases.

<The FY 21 budget will be out soon; and planning will begin for FY 22.

SELF-DIRECTION MOVING FORWARD

Liz Sandblom talked about self-direction in the past five months and going forward. DDS staffs have been very busy with new enrollments. There has been a renewed interest in self-direction reflected in an increase of (386) new enrollments since March. Many of those enrollments reflect since the closure of many services during the pandemic.

Liz also has drafted the annual legislative report. That report will be available to the board in the December meeting.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Pam Hickey/ Central / West

Pam talked about the increase in self-direction enrollments. Family meetings are being held frequently; and there has been a higher attendance because of the accessibility of remote meeting platforms. Family members are connecting with each other and sharing more of their experiences with each other. Discussions include person-centered thinking and pursuit of visions. Pam also talked about the role of diversity in self-direction.

Ed Wilson/ Southeast

Ed hosts presentations twice a month at different times and provides hands-on technical training to families and to support brokers. He has been in contact with Kevin Shea, a videographer, who has done videos on self-direction. Kevin will start to work on new videos in October.

Bev McGovern/ Northeast

Bev talked about the variety of activities that individuals have accessed through self-direction in a remote way. Examples include karate and electronic assembly. She reported that the leads have been meeting frequently and have appreciated the involvement of Liz in their work groups.

Jen Benoit/ Metro

Jen echoed the common themes around enrollment and talked about new work that is going on. The participant leadership group will resume soon on a remote basis.

Questions/ Comments

Karla Murphy: Is the increase in self-direction enrollments due to new individuals ‘s interests or individuals moving from day programs because of the pandemic?

A: Both groups are accessing self-direction options.

Kim Truong: How is diversity incorporated in self-direction?

A: Self-direction focuses on the individual’s vision and points to customized services and meeting the unique needs of that person. Charting the Life Course is a curriculum that focuses on that.

Robin Foley emphasized the breadth of knowledge of the self-direction leads and how they have fostered an increase in participation.

Liz Sandblom: talked about an initiative between DDS and ArcMass involving the development of 1-2 minute videos on Charting the Life Course. They may be available to view in the December meeting.

HSRI FINAL REPORT

(Please refer to the power point provided for the meeting.)

General comments not included in the power point:

Val Bradley stated that the results don’t reflect the activities occurring during the pandemic.

Alixe Bonardi gave an overview of the first two years of evaluations. The first year focused on training and outreach; and the second year looked at systems and infrastructure. Alixe reflected that there is now an opportunity to expand self-direction. She also recommended spending time reviewing data.

Alixe has videos on Charting the Life Course that she will send to Liz.

Val Bradley reviewed results from Year 3. Among many other recommendations in the report, Val emphasized the need to streamline the technical process, to focus attention needed on building support broker capacity, and to increase the transparency of the allocation and budgetary process.

Val will send Liz a white paper on independent facilitation. Alixe shared a website for the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems:

<https://ncapps.acl.gov/covid-19-resources.html>

Questions/ Comments:

Jane Ryder thanked HSRI for their report.

Robin Foley commented that the report was thorough and is looking forward to learning about the practices of other states.

Barbara Pandolfi thought the report was very helpful and would like the board to take a position on the capacity issue.

Margaret Abrams commented that her son received excellent services even though he could not attend his day program because his family is directing his services.

Anne Fracht expressed concern about caregivers who may be exposed to COVID. Committee members made suggestions to use PPE and follow guidelines on [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)

Keri Mahoney talked about a webinar called “Welcome People Back in Your House” that could help individuals who will have caregivers back in their homes.

A question was raised about mandating and or coordinating testing for caregivers who go to homes of individuals. Jane Ryder explained that DDS was working on the coordination of congregate care as the first priority.

MASS ADVOCATES STANDING STRONG UPDATE

Anne Fracht reported that MASS is had regular virtual meetings and trainings. A virtual conference is being planned for February.

DDS WEBSITE- SELF-DIRECTION

Victor Hernandez talked about a few changes in that section of DDS’s website. A few videos have been included. Victor would like feedback from the board on the website and would appreciate volunteers to test additional features.

Questions/ Comments

Robin Foley had the following comments:

<Information on contacts for the regional managers needs to be more prominent.

<Families want to know how to get started in self-direction. A list of FAQs would be helpful.

<DDS should look at materials from other states. New York has a great guide for families.

<The schedule of support broker/ family forums should be posted on the website.

Please contact [victor.hernandez@mass.gov](mailto:victor.hernandez@mass.gov) with your feedback or if you have interest in getting more involved.

FUTURE AGENDA

<Discussion of data to take a look at who is self-directing in order to identify individuals who may need more outreach or information

<Follow-up to website discussion

<Review of annual report to the legislature

<Discussion on Charting the Life Course

<Board recommendations around increasing capacity/ support for individuals to self-direct

Next Meeting: December 2, 2020, 10:00- 11:30

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Gillespie