Autism Commission Birth to Fourteen Years Old

Subcommittee Meeting

August 27, 2021 10:00am- 11:30 am

Via Webex

Present on webex: Co-chairs Russell Johnston and Michele Brait, Joan Rafferty Butterfield, Michelle Jenkins, Shari Krauss, Beth Jerskey, Erin Sherman, Julia Landau, Carolyn Kain.

Dr. Russell Johnston called the meeting to order and welcomed all members of the Birth to Fourteen Years Old subcommittee meeting. Dr. Johnston reviewed the meeting norms. The subcommittee members present unanimously voted to approve the July meeting minutes.

**Subcommittee Recommendations and Priorities for 2021-2022**

Dr. Johnston asked the subcommittee members to share ideas about focus areas for the upcoming year. He also wanted the group to review previous recommendations and priorities for updates.

Topic suggestion included:

* Staffing shortages
* Compensatory services delivery
* Data review (EL, age of dx, inclusion levels) to examine racial inequities of services that exist
* Data review to examine the racial inequities of services during the pandemic to be sure of a more equitable recovery
* The supplemental budget legislation enacted to direct the Autism Commission to study the impact of Covid on individuals in the Black, Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Native American, and other individuals of color with a diagnosis of ASD
* Early Intervention data, including number of children receiving services, the level of intensity of services, the percentage of in person services, broken down by language and race
* Pre and post pandemic EI data analysis
* Numbers of children EI eligible but not receiving services
* Assessment metrics for EI
* Emphasizing the priority of in person services across ages
* ABA agencies across the state--review to see how non-English-speaking families are being served
* Looking at profile of students who are repeatedly denied IEPs and where the difficulty is for parents to getting one
* ABA service wait list time broken down by language and race
* Lack of reimbursement for interpretive services for ABA
* Covid recovery issues
* Oversight of ABA center-based agencies
* Contacting some diagnostic centers to get services sample data
* Disciple rates and concerns for school age children with ASD, will students be punished or if parents will be asked to remove them from school due to behaviors
* Lack of intensive care facility beds, families not trained to manage challenging behaviors at home resulting in DCF involvement
* Access to resources and materials to provide support to families in the home

Dr. Johnston reviewed with the subcommittee the prior year recommendations and priorities, and requested feedback about whether they should continue to be on our list of recommendations for the upcoming year, and if they should be updated in any way.

After further discussion, it was decided that the Birth to Fourteen Years Old Subcommittee would continue to keep the following 2019-2020, 2020-2021 recommendations made to the Autism Commission:

1. Access to Augmentative /Alternative Communication devices for children with ASD- that data be obtained and broken down by race and language spoken in the home
2. Inclusion level of students with ASD (full/partial/sub separate)- that data be broken down by race and language spoken in the home

Additionally, the subcommittee would like to change the language and focus on these prior recommendations, which will remain priorities for the upcoming year:

3. Children in DCF care with ASD- that DCF implement the recommendations outlined in the OCA report to address needs of children with ASD

4. Covid recovery: Impact on students with ASD- to find solutions to the following issues: staffing shortages, compensatory service delivery, prioritizing in person learning, discipline rates, and family supports, with particular emphasis on prioritizing and addressing racial inequities that exacerbate each of those issues.

The subcommittee also decided to add one additional recommendation for the upcoming year:

5. Early Intervention - to obtain data related to the number of children in early intervention, the intensity of services being delivered, the percentage of in person and remote service delivery, the number of children with ASD receiving EI services, all broken down by race and language spoken in the home

The subcommittee decided to keep the age of diagnosis prior recommendation as a topic to further pursue when the availability of data in this regard is better known.

Ms. Butterfield advised the subcommittee that she will be retiring in November and suggested that Emily White would be a good addition to our subcommittee.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 11:10 am.