

## DS State Program Standing Committee (SPSC)

January 19, 2023

Meeting held virtually by Microsoft Teams

### Attendees

**Committee Members:** David Ballou, Max Barrows, Chad Cleverly, Dawn Danner, Bethany Drum, Barbara Lee, Ed Place, Karen Price, Karen Prine, Cheryl Thrall and Susan Yuan

**Guests:** Todd Bauman, Chuck Medick, Jess Moore, Colette Wilson, Elise Haydon, Kim McClellan, Ann Schumaker, Jessica Stehle, Katrina D, Elizabeth Slighter, Kara Artus, Kirsten Murphy, Susan Aranoff, Amber Schaffer, Jen Hayes, Marie Lallier

**State Employees:** Julia Abrahamson, Hilary Conant, June Bascom, Jennifer Garabedian, Jeff Coy, Chris O'Neil, Jessica Bernard

### Roll Call and Review of Agenda

A roll call was completed, and the meeting agenda was reviewed.

The December meeting minutes were reviewed, and Ed Place mad a motion to accept the minutes and Dawn Danner seconded to approve.

### Re-Designation – Northwestern Counseling and Support Services (NCSS)

Jeff Coy presented the re-designation reports to Committee.

There are 16 categories of Designation and NCSS meets all standards with the exception of Administrative Rule 4.9, Consumer Support, Treatment and Records. Action needed: Regular evaluation and adjustments as needed, of the NCSS proposal currently in place to increase the effectiveness of oversight of contracted provider services to assure the health and safety of consumers.

### Highlights

- Corporate status – all paperwork was in place.
- Governance – Board of Directors, bylaws applied. All in order
- Organization admin – positive staff morale, stakeholder – all in order
- Self-advocacy group is very active.
- Quality outcomes plan – has been responsive.
- Personnel practices – all job descriptions were in place and NCSS has extensive training.

NCSS meets regularly with GMSA

Max had a concern: They reduced their advocacy position from full time to part time. Samantha Thomas, DS Director at NCSS explained the reason for reduction was very pandemic specific related. They are looking at all areas where they made reductions and having discussions about where they are now. NCSS is committed to having everyone safe.

Emergency facts sheets – Barb Prine feels that this “needs to be improved” and there should be a Plan of Correction. Clients not seeing their case manager for 6 months, go back to old standard in having in person meetings.

Samantha Thomas offered her contact info to Barb Prine for clients calling indicating that they are not seeing their CM/Service Coordinator.

Sherry Thrall - CCS and NCSS doing a “Risk Management “training tomorrow.

## **Director’s Updates**

### **Legislative update:**

H720 was passed and became Act 186. Passed the wrong administrative language and will correct the language this legislation.

Testified HHS last week. Updated Committee members on the Act 186.

Legislative Request from DDSD: Asking for a different date for our annual report. Looking to change the due date to February 15 from January 15.

### **System of Care Plan (SOCP):**

Implemented this on time. Jennifer thanked everyone involved in getting this plan completed. A special thank you went to Clare McFadden, Hilary Conant, June Bascom and Melanie Feddersen for all their help.

Final draft highlights:

- Align with changes of Act 186.
- Does not address payment reform, conflict of interest management, housing models.
- The plan can be updated at any time if proposed changes are submitted to SPSC Committee at least 60 days before a change becomes effective.
- Eligibility section now includes a full-scale IQ score of 70 or below or up to 75 or below when taking into account the standard error of measurement to determine intellectual disability.
- Adjusted the number of hours for home support from 8 hours to 12 hours
- Section Three – added the Encounter Data Submission Guidance
- Funding – changed the authority of the Department with the requirement to get input from providers and SPCS.

There are 9 Special Initiatives in the plan. DDS has already started to work on the following initiatives:

- Housing options alternatives
- Support direct workforce – workgroup formed and will meet next.
- Exploration of Ombudsman program
- Development on plan language documents HCBS

Max of funding to individuals with IDD who need support for parenting – increased \$10,000.

The creation of an IFC/IDD: removed the language related to the amount of nursing associated with the setting.

### **Valued based Payment Model – Global Commitment Register:**

To provide additional 1% of funding that the provider agencies can earn based on outcomes measures. Funding above their regular 8% rate increase from last year. This is not related to payment reform at all.

They meet goals they get the additional funding.

Some areas where you can get the additional funding.

- In person in home service coordination visits
- Critical incident reporting – will help us meet the CMS Assurances

Also allows our reporting system to be evaluated and that people are recording time correctly and properly.

AHS tasked DMH, DAIL and the Division of Substance Abuse with including valued based payments in our Provider agreements.

Reporting metrics in provider agreements – 1st 6 months additional 8% rate increase applied as a flat 8%. 4 Reporting metrics that 2% of the provider rate is connected: Encounter Data claims reporting, Flexible Family Funding, One Time Funding, and Wait List. During the end-of-year reconciliation process, will determine if agency has met and if they have met the goals, they will receive 2%. Can earn partial credit and partial funding toward the 2%.

There was some concern that agencies who struggle will not get the full 8% with this.

Because this is the first year for Value Based Payment model, used very reasonable measures. Historically, all agencies have submitted these reports.

### **CMS Settings Rule:**

Guidance related to Locks on Doors for Privacy and public input sessions will be coming out shortly.

### **Legislative Advocacy – Dawn Danner and Cheryl Thrall**

Vermont Care Partners (VCP) is asking the SPSC for their support in addressing Workforce Crisis and surge in Acuity and Demand for Community-based Mental Health, Developmental and Substance Use services. They are asking SPSC to write a letter to four legislative committees to request a 10% Medicaid Rate increase to strengthen developmental Disability services.

Susan Yuan, David Ballou and possibly Max (he will think about it) will draft the letter focused on a 10% increase for wages for direct care workforce and service care coordinators. The draft letter will then be shared with SPSC co-Chairs, Barbara Lee and Bethany Drum within 2 weeks. Then the letter will be shared with the remaining Committee members for comments. The Committee was all in favor of this.

### **Payment Reform – Jessica Bernard**

An e-mail was sent out this morning to SPSC about the Communication Support question to the SIS A assessment supplemental questions. The new question was drafted with the help of the Vermont Communication Task Force (which includes June Bascom and Hilary Conant) who advised the Standardized Assessment Workgroup about support needs, language and the overall approach the question should have.

Engagement Sessions are coming in February and March. A flyer will be coming out with details.

Public Consulting Group (PCG) is administering the SIS-A.

Next item to work on is the need to bring more context into the assessment and person-centered planning process. The Standardized Assessment Workgroup is currently working on a document they hope will help achieve this.

2<sup>nd</sup> edition of SIS A coming out January/February. March is a “go live” date. American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) are the authors. Once its released PCG will make some system changes and then train assessors on the new tool.

Take 100 people that took the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and compare to people who took the first editions –

The 500 person sample finished up in 9/22. Those assessments went to our contractors, and they are reviewing those results now.

Barbara Lee asked how people get a full report of their assessment. The report that gets sent to the Service Coordinator, or anyone else who wants a copy and shares their email with the assessor, receives a copy of the full report.

## **Other updates**

**GMSA:** 3 weekend series leadership completed. Upcoming Voices for Choices conference will be in person at the Double Tree 4/25 and 4/26.

**DD Council:** awarded 3 grants from HCBS (FMAP) coalition cultural competency, customized employment, organize training around CMS Settings Rule, and families on abuse and neglect, GMSA to do some training on this as well.

**Vermont Care Partners:** Workgroup on strengthening and stabilizing crisis support services sent out a survey recently. This group is also coordinating with hospitals.