

MEETING

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 14, 2003

Family Outreach Conference Room

1212 Helena Avenue

Helena, MT

Members Present: Kelly Johnson (Chair), Ted Maloney, Anne Marie Johnson, Lucy Hart-Paulson, Barb Stefanic, Sandi Marisdotter, Ron Herman, Denise King, Sandy McGennis, Susie Morrison, Dan McCarthy, Patti Russ, Liz Harter, Barbara Smith, Cris Volinkaty, Sylvia Danforth

Members Excused: Mike Cooney, Brian Lenhardt, Dr. Mary Anne Guggenheim, Lynda Korth, Gerald Pease, Novelene Martin.

Others Present: Richard Van Haecke (Part C Coordinator, DDP), Jackie Emerson (DDP Admin Support)

WELCOME

1. Kelly called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests.
2. Those present introduced themselves.
3. Changes were made in the agenda: Cris Volinkaty was at the Legislative Session and would be arriving later and Jeff Sturm, Director of DDP, would be arriving at 10:00 to update the Council on DDP activities and legislation.

There was no quorum at the start of the meeting but Kelly was aware of several who would be arriving later so voting issues were postponed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Committee reports:

Public Awareness: (Ted)The Child Find Grant is in its 4th and final year but they will see if there are funds to extend it. Projects for the year included a Public Service Announcement (the advertisement was shown) for Child Find. The phone number shown is for PLUK who refers the callers out to the regional offices. Data will be available showing the number of calls attributed to the Announcement. The ad was produced in conjunction with Rolling Dock Production Company.

Personnel Preparation Grants are being applied for by the University to supplement the funds from Part C which are not enough to support the program. There will only be 2-3 grants awarded in Early Intervention in the nation. The University will apply in partnership with North Dakota, as it must be a partnership across state lines. The majority of the funds from the grant would go to student stipends. Ted handed out copies of 2 abstracts. The other grant would develop a model for in-service training that would be web-based and asynchronous (at the learner's own pace) and would be based on the core content for Early Intervention and core competencies for FSS certification. Again there are only 2-3 grants to be awarded in the nation and the University would be partnered with North Dakota.

DDP Update: Jeff Sturm arrived to update the Council on legislative issues and activities of the DDP.

Budget: The Subcommittee decision packages show that there will be \$4 ½ million in General Fund cut from the DDP budget but the Program will be allowed to make up the amount in refinancing consumers from General Fund to Medicaid services/dollars. Jeff feels

confident that the \$1.6 million for this year can be made up through refinancing the group of consumers being converted. The next group to be refinanced will be more difficult. DDP is currently working on a new 1115 Concept or Demonstration Waiver to be able to finance consumers with Medicaid funds who will be eligible for the current Waiver.

Eligibility issue: The Legislative Finance Analysts feel that DD should have changes in their financial and eligibility standards. Have not heard new discussion lately but still may become an issue.

Rates meetings: The DDP has begun holding meetings to work towards establishing a rates methodology for reimbursements that is more fair, equitable and defensible than the current system used. The ability to port services was made very difficult because of the wide variation in rates among providers. There will be a more defined rate for services. The system change will be primarily for adults now. Making this change in rate structure will require a reallocation of funds across provider organizations and DDP is looking at the impact this may have on provider agencies.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome funds: DDP has been asked to provide fiscal information to the Subcommittee on the issue of adding a tax to alcohol sales to replace the General Fund dollars for those funds the Program uses for folks who have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Respite Bill is a great victory. Cris and the group that worked hard for the bill did a great job.

Portable Services: By July 1, all Medicaid services will be portable. There will be an RFP for other services such as adaptive equipment, evaluation and diagnosis, TRIC/PLUK, PASARR, and Case Management services.

Quality Council: The Program has formed a Council of 17 people to review policies and services in order to guide the department in improving quality of services. The group will consist of parents, providers, advocates, and consumers who will meet quarterly. This group will be looking at services for both adults and children and will need to coordinate their activities with the functions of the FSSAC.

Incident Reporting System: DDP is in the process of developing a statewide, standardized web-based system for providers to use in reporting and tracking incidents.

Respite Standards: As of this morning the respite bill has been sent to the Governor for her signature that would make it law. It passed both Senate and House floors with no opposition. A committee will meet on the 19th to create State Standards for Respite Care Providers, an Agreement Form to be signed by the provider agency and the respite worker, and a Respite Payment form for the family to submit that will allow the agency to directly pay the respite worker. The new standards and forms need to be in place as of July 1, 2003.

Jeff will be placed on the agenda for the May 30th meeting to provide an update to the Council.

Review and approval of minutes from the most recent meeting: The spelling of Steve Gettle's name will be corrected from "Goettle". With that correction noted the motion was made by Ted Maloney to approve the minutes, Patti Russ and Dan McCarthy seconded the motion, and the vote passed unanimously.

(Committee Reports)

Complaint Procedures:(Richard) The purpose of the committee is to provide suggestions to help the division know how to respond when they get complaints. The committee members are: Dan (Chair), Ted, Mary Anne, Kelly, and Sylvia. The 3 who are present today will meet to set dates for future meetings of the committee.

Parent Representative Nominations:

Region 4: Sandi Marisdotter nominated Micah Mitchell and Matthew Rotar from Helena to replace Jay and Shelly Korth. The Council voted unanimously in favor of the nomination.

Region 5: Cris Volinkaty nominated Diana Colgrove from Eureka to replace Gwen Beyer.

The Council voted unanimously in favor of the nomination.

Region 1: Sylvia will contact a parent to replace Krista Bodvig. Ted suggested contacting those on the committee with the nomination and allowing them to vote before the next meeting so the appointment can be completed prior to the next meeting. He suggested that members only respond if against the nomination.

Children's Special Health Representative: Barb Smith has agreed to serve on the Council.

Governor's appointment: Richard will submit the names of the new appointees to the Council to the Governor's office for her approval and signature.

Legislative Update:

Budget: (Cris) The Committee did a good job and worked hard to get together on the budget and save as much as possible. Senator John Cobb is to be commended for his hard work on behalf of DD. Now we hope there can be some agreement on what they have put together – it is not adequate but will allow the Program to limp through until the economy changes.

(Barb Smith) CHIP is holding a hearing next Wednesday that will look at dropping services to those over the age of 18. This would affect 435 children in the State.

(Patti) Childcare went into the Session looking at 40% cut. Much of the funds have been restored. There have been \$15 million over the biennium to replace TANF funds.

(Dan) A Bill has been introduced by OPI to make the Montana statutory definition identical to Federal definition for special education for the purposes of Child Count. Montana currently uses the term “cognitive delay” while the Federal term is “mental retardation”.

This will have no impact on services but will help with IDEA reauthorization.

Workgroup reports:

Orientation Manual: The manual has been updated. The bylaws have been amended as per the last meeting. A copy of “Go Ask Alice” will be put back in to the manual.

Website: The website was updated in January. Kelly noted some corrections that need to be made. The amended bylaws will be added along with a link to ARM. If anyone has information to add or updates to the website, contact Jackie.

Brochure: (Patti) The information was given to Jackie today to do the layout for the brochure.

FSS Certification Issues: (Richard) The committee will meet between now and the May meeting to discuss the issues that have been noted. The committee members are Ted, Susie, Brian, and Richard. If issues are not resolved or changes made to the certification process, the current process will be used for the next certification event.

NEW BUSINESS:

Part C Coordinator's Report (Richard)

Child Count: The Child Count was down to 574 during the reporting period – it was at 600 last year. The difference was due to the December date of the count since the count was 633 on February 11. The change was still not considered significant.

Annual Performance Report for 2002: A copy of the draft of the new requirements was handed out. The new report requires the development of a continuous improvement planning process. Richard is in the process of collecting what information is available at the provider

level and putting the information into the format. A workgroup was formed at the state child and family meeting to aid with information gathering.

Procedures for Receiving FY03 Grant Award under Part C: A copy of the procedures were given to each member of the Council. Richard remarked that they look the same as the ones for last year.

State Sponsored Child and Family Meeting on February 11th: Copies of the minutes from the meeting were distributed so Council members could look at the issues that were dealt with. A workgroup was formed to work on the referral packet and another group to help with the Performance Report. The next FSS Certification event will be held in June and the agencies reported that 9 people would be applying for certification.

Agency Reports:

Childcare - Patti: The Good Start Grow Smart early childhood initiative to develop early learning guidelines focuses on 3 & 4 year olds. The handout included a letter of overview and invitation/application to participate in a working retreat to develop a draft of the process.

HeadStart - Anne Marie: Everything is changing. The focus is literacy with training and mentoring to help teachers provide literacy. There is talk of moving the funding from Federal to State and moving administration to block grant allotments.

Speech Therapy - Lucy: There is no change in recreating the speech therapy program due to lack of funding.

OPI - Dan: Some of the issues that the reauthorization of IDEA will address are the issue of streamlining paperwork by moving to 3-year IP's, accountability for results in classrooms, identification practices that promote earlier intervention, and increased choices and meaningful involvement for parents.

The Head Start Policy Book Executive Summary can be found online at www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/hspolicybook/text/summary.html.

Yellowstone Cooperative Education - Barb Stefanic: The Headstart in Laurel should be operating by 2004. Laurel still needs a speech pathologist. Laurel will be involved in a longitudinal study called PEELS (Pre-Elementary Educational Longitudinal Study) which will study the efficacy of special education in childhood by following a sample of children ages 3 to 5 with disabilities through preschool into early elementary school.

Family Outreach - Sandi: Region 4 is not seeing any decline in Part C kids and at the current rate Family Outreach will be billed out in March due to overserving.

Medicaid - Denise: There has been a reduction in mileage reimbursement to \$.13 in community health care.

Children's Special Health - Barb Smith: We are working on better advocacy for children with special needs.

MSDB - Sandy McGennis: There will be a SEE Signing Workshop in Missoula on May 16-18 that will have intensive workshops for learning beginning through advanced signing. The cost is \$150 but there are scholarships available.

Universal New Born Hearing Screening of babies uses a referral form on which Montana School for the Deaf and Blind is listed so the school is now getting forms with referrals. All hospitals in Montana are now participating in the screening process.

Personnel Preparation - Susie: There are now 5 students in Early Intervention that have applied for an FSS certificate. And there are 14 enrolled in the practicum.

DEAP - Sylvia: Spent the morning at Legislature testifying for HB750 that would raise revenue through an increased cigarette tax and the use of the coal trust principal. The Governor said she would support \$29 million.

Part C appears to be safe. Families are actively advocating.

THE NEXT MEETING HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM FRIDAY MAY 30TH TO THURSDAY
MAY 15TH.