

Autism Council Meeting
July 18, 2011

Council Members: Nissan Bar-Lev, Terri Enters, Vivian Hazel, Milana Milan, Glen Sallows, Pam Stoika, Brad Thompson

Facilitator: Kris Freundlich

DHS Staff: Sue Larsen, Julie Bryda, Bill Murray, and Tracey Brent

Guests: Charity Eleson, Luxvida LLC, Peggy Helm-Quest, Department of Public Instruction, Tim Markle, UW Waisman Center-CYSHCN, DHS Secretary Dennis Smith

I. Welcome—Kris Freundlich

II. Public Comment

- a. Tim Markle provided an update on the Connections grant. Funding for it ends on August 31st. Some of the teams have agreed to continue to meet post the grant period, specifically the SE and NE regions. A steering team continues to be in development.

III. Approval of Minutes

- a. Milana Milan made a motion to approve the minutes
- b. Nissan Bar-Lev seconded the motion
- c. All approved.

IV. Updates

- a. Breakdown of numbers as of 7/15/11:
 - i. There are 5,333 children receiving waiver services
 - ii. 912 of these children are receiving intensive treatment
 - iii. 1,510 of these children are receiving ongoing services
- b. Waiver renewal status
The Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) team held a technical support meeting with their designated contractor to help develop performance measures required by CMS. CMS has accepted the preliminary data that was submitted. Waiver renewal is due to CMS by August 20th.
- c. Staff Updates
Sue Larsen has been selected as the new CLTS Section Chief.
- d. Enrollment caps
ADRC of Wisconsin released a memo discussing and describing how enrollment caps will affect Family Care, IRIS, PACE, and Partnership. The memo also describes how this will affect children receiving waiver services and their eligibility.

V. Visit by DHS Secretary Dennis Smith and Introduction of Council Members

- a. Presentation of Council Points—Brad Thompson, Parent of child on the spectrum

Council member Brad Thompson presented the following topics to DHS Secretary Dennis Smith:

1. Wisconsin's commitment to autism

Wisconsin has a unique commitment to autism and is a national leader in developing best practices. Wisconsin has proven to be a good steward of the public dollar and offers families a choice. It's important to note that autism doesn't just affect the individual, but the whole family as well.

2. Funding

Funding for the waiver should not be cut because these programs and services are essential in helping these children function and reach their capacity to be as independent and capable as possible. The number of children with autism is growing; the number of providers is not.

3. Scope of Council

The scope of this council has changed over time, whereas it started by discussing waiver issues, it has now evolved into broader lifespan issues. Membership of this council is a concern. Many seats are vacant, and require appointment by the Governor. The council would like Secretary Smith to consider moving the council from a Governor's Council to a Department Council.

Secretary Smith believes that councils are important and is open to what this Council recommends as far as being a Department council and continuing to have a broader scope. Secretary Smith strongly supports self-direction in long-term care and believes that eligibility needs flexibility. The goal should be that everybody gets the health care they need. The issue is not the cost of health care; it is the excess cost of health care, citing that 5% of MA recipients spend 59% of the budget. Secretary Smith believes that waivers are not the way, and that new benefit packages should be created to target populations.

VI. Compass Wisconsin: Threshold—Charity Eleson

Compass Wisconsin: Threshold is a pilot program in which a consolidated point of intake is done to determine eligibility for a number of children's long-term support programs including the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver, the CLTS Intensive Waiver, the Family Support Program (FSP), the Katie Beckett Program, and the Community Options Program (COP). Threshold was launched in April of 2010 in Racine and Walworth Counties. In June of 2011 Threshold expanded into Kenosha and Waukesha Counties as well. Of the 208 applications that were submitted to DHS, 92% of them received at least partial eligibility and 8% of them were denied.

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VII. Center-based treatment—Group discussion

The Council held a robust discussion on center-based treatments and a motion was made by Nissan Bar-Lev for DHS to consider center-based treatment as an option for families to choose from. Milana Milan seconded the motion and all approved.

XI. 80 Hour Minimum—Group discussion

The Council held a discussion on the current 80 hour minimum requirements for intensive treatment, and following much discussion Vivian Hazel made a motion for DHS to consider a variety of treatment options to include “tiers” of varied treatment hours. Terri Enters seconded the motion and all approved.

XII. Parental Involvement—Group discussion

The Council held a discussion on the importance of parental involvement and building parental confidence and skills. Though the Council lacked a quorum while this discussion took place, the present members suggested going ahead with developing this issue.

XIII. Secretary’s Council vs. Governor’s Council

Due to the difficulty the Council has experienced in getting members appointed, the group discussed the value in being a Secretary’s Council vs. a Governor’s Council. The group discussed the benefit of such a transition and discussed the following questions:

- a. Should the Council carry on as a Governor’s Council or should it be switched to a Department Council?
- b. Should the Council still be considered a Council focused on waiver services or should the focus be broadened to include lifespan issues?
- c. Should the Council consider expanding its membership to others?

Based on prior discussion and agreement on this issue, the remaining members (some left early due to schedule conflicts) suggested DHS proceed in developing this transition. Council members can expect to receive more information.

XIV. Adjourned 2:44