

Minutes
Employment Sub-Committee Meeting
May 4, 2005

In Attendance: Andrea Guest, Chair, Penny Chelucci, Eve Austin, Doyle Dobbins, Marie Washington (in place of Janice Dewey)

The meeting was called to order at 10:05. Agenda, minutes, schedule of meetings, the template and other documents were distributed.

We reviewed the status of the Commission's priorities. The Commission members whittled down the sub-committees' priorities to come up with six primary projects. The Medicaid Buy-In Program is the top priority, as it has also been for our sub-committee. These priorities will be forwarded to the governor for fiscal estimates and possible budgeting.

Andrea also reported on the most recent meeting of the Medicaid Buy-In Advisory Board. Concern was expressed at that meeting about the Federal Government's withdrawing close to \$400,000 that had been set aside for systems development.

We discussed the need for grass-roots advocacy to move the Buy-In project forward. The next logical step for the state Medicaid Office is to begin the data system changes that are needed. Andrea will continue a dialog with the Medicaid Office to keep track of the program. Doyle will begin a dialog with the Budget Office to determine the status of funding for the program. We also expect to hear an update at the Commission's meeting on May 26.

The discussion turned to the template of projects and priorities developed by our committee. We looked at Goal #1, Objective #1, and the strategy and action items. Andrea reported on the J&J/Dartmouth grant that will be a collaborative effort between DVR and DSAMH to increase the number of individuals with serious mental illness who gain, retain, and/or improve their employment. There will be an extended period of planning and training to develop the strategies and initiatives the grant will support moving forward. The intent is that grant funded activities and direction will continue once the grant period has ended. The approaches developed under the auspices of this grant will enhance the action steps we identified and will help crystallize the steps necessary for this population.

We discussed the need to build flexible vocational systems to support individuals served by all divisions, and that the funding for these systems also needs to be flexible. In some measure, funding flexibility is consistent with the "money follows the person" philosophy of service. A question was raised about whether Delaware Medicaid funds rehabilitative services, or if it is a medical model only where services are funded when medically necessary. Penny will look into that issue. Another question was raised about the ability of service systems to support not only job attainment, but also job changes.

We agreed that one place to begin identifying the flexibility needs of systems is to identify where the inflexibilities currently lie. We will continue these discussions at our next meeting which is scheduled for **June 2, 2005, in room 349A**, Department of Labor's Fox Valley location.