

**Commission on Community-Based Alternatives for Persons with Disabilities
Direct Workforce Development Subcommittee**

July 10, 2007
10:00 am – 12 noon
Center for Disabilities Studies, University of Delaware
461 Wyoming Road, Newark, DE

MINUTES

In attendance: Eve Austin (Elwyn), Renee Bean (Center for Disabilities Studies), Penny Chelucci (Department of Health and Social Services), Rebecca Dougherty (Center for Disabilities Studies), Michael Gamel-McCormick (Center for Disabilities Studies), Tony Horstman (Advocate), Ginger Nobles (Easter Seals), John Reiff (Ken Crest), Jamie Wolfe (Center for Disabilities Studies)

I. Welcome

John requested that the group move item V. Review of Commission goals and objectives to item III. Subcommittee members agree.

II. Approval of June meeting minutes

Renee requests that the minutes reflect the “identification or development” of a core curriculum to be used for certification, instead of the “development. The group agreed that this better reflects Renee's group's intent to consider existing curricula.

Eve moved to approve / John seconded / All in favor.

III. Review of the Commission's Workforce Development goals and objectives

The Commission identified five-year goals and objectives. The Subcommittees are charged with implementing action steps to accomplish the goals and objectives.

a. Timeline for objectives

- Tony expressed concern that many of the objectives are scheduled for accomplishment in FY 08.
- John believes that the Subcommittee will be able to move forward on many of the objectives in order to get them accomplished on schedule, if the Subcommittee can identify the needed resources for support.

b. Potential sources of support, resources, or funding for workforce development plans

Membership:

- Other Subcommittees have members in state departments and divisions who have authority to implement steps to achieve their Subcommittees' specific goals and objectives. The Subcommittee members are able to develop and implement policies to ensure that the objectives are accomplished.
- The Workforce Development Subcommittee differs from other Subcommittees in that this Subcommittee's work must consider issues of cross-disability and be inclusive of multiple departments and divisions. It is more difficult to implement policies across multiple agencies.
- Eve suggested that the Subcommittee and Renee's credentialing group needs to recruit a department-level training representative at DHSS.
- DMS should also have a representative.
- All agree that the current Subcommittee members can not do the work that needs to be done to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- Subcommittee members should identify others who could be included in the work and may offer leverage.

Funding Ideas:

- Jamie suggests that the Subcommittee might use new Money Follows the Person (MFP) grant money.
- The Subcommittee could ask for assistance from state agencies and provider agencies to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- DelARF put out an RFP for up to \$10,000 in grant in aid for "staff recruitment" initiatives.
- The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council might be able to offer a small grant. The group could propose a follow-up report to the 2003 UD Solano report.
- DFRC or the Down Syndrome Association might have funding opportunities.
- AARP might have funding opportunities.
- Tony thought that the Family Support Waiver could also offer resources for increasing wages and benefits for direct support.
- Michael motioned that the group develop a general funding proposal / Tony seconded / All in favor. Michael will draft a funding proposal.

Competition/Other Issues:

- The direct support providers still face competition from all other entry-level business because providers can not afford to increase pay and benefits to workers without increased funding from the state.
- The workforce still can not serve the number of people with disabilities that need services. The better the employment rate is, the more competition the direct support field faces from other industries. As long as wages and benefits are not competitive, the direct support field will not be able to keep up with demand for services.
- The aging community is also competitive with the disability community.

Discussion regarding objectives:

Objectives can be divided into two categories

Objectives A, B, & C:

- No resources are identified to do the research and analysis necessary.
- These objectives are instrumental in developing a fair and adequate wage and benefit structure.
- Michael is concerned that even when the Subcommittee does collect this information, the Subcommittee will not be able to implement these recommendations.
- John believes that the Subcommittee members will be able to influence people who can help them achieve these objectives. He believes that data collection will be more difficult.
- Michael suggests that the data collection for Objectives A-C can be completed by September.

Objectives D, E, F, & G:

- Developing and implementation of a standard, entry-level training program.
- These objectives currently funded by the Commission.
- These objectives can be accomplished independently from Objectives A-C.
- Ginger believes that Objectives D-G are in progress and the members should turn their attention to completing Objectives A-C. Ginger thinks that Easter Seals may be able to find staff support for this. Michael thinks that DeLARF might have some information already. Other provider agencies that the Subcommittee has worked with in the past will help; however, that group represents only a small number of provider agencies in the state.
- John suggests the group needs to identify a reliable survey instrument that identifies that type of workers that concern the Subcommittee. If a reliable survey instrument is not used, the data will not be accurate.
- Renee suggested that the DSW Resource Center might have a survey instrument and will offer technical assistance to grantees.
- Michael believes that the Subcommittee can get a survey instrumental form Charlie Lakin from the University of Minnesota. John said the challenge is to get cross-disability, objective survey tool that can be used by an objective agency to collect data. The agencies will need to be ensured that the data will be aggregated and confidential.

IV. National legislation and news

a. H.R. 1279 report and Subcommittee support

Tony proposed that the group write a letter to Representative Castle to support H.R. 1279, the Direct Support Professional Wage Enhancement Bill, in conjunction with the State Council with Persons with Disabilities. The group could also invite Representative Castle to attend a meeting to learn more about the need to increase funding for the direct support field. The group agreed to support this. Michael will draft a letter for review by the Subcommittee members. Subcommittee members should also ask other groups to write a letter.

b. Considerations regarding the Supreme Court decision about home health aide wages and benefits

Any updates can be presented at the Subcommittee's August meeting.

V. DSP curriculum update

Coalition Building:

The Workforce Recruitment and Retention project has ended. The Center's work on this issue will continue. Renee thinks coalition-building, like ones that have been successful in other states, might help to progress her efforts. She has invited that director and founding members of a coalition in Hudson Valley, NY to visit and discuss developing a coalition with Delaware training and provider agency leaders on August 15 with more details to come. Renee reported that five or six provider agencies in Delaware are already interested and is exacted to pursue this further. Ginger is concerned that coalition-building is time-consuming.

Curriculum Development:

Renee has invited a representative from the internet-based training program, College of Direct Support, to visit UD. She would like to identify questions to ask before they visit. These include questions about:

- Cross-disability focus,
- Inclusion of direct support workers and self-advocates in training curricula development,
- Matching the Subcommittees' identified competencies with the College's offered competencies,
- Portability,
- Inclusion of the College's curricula in formal training programs at community colleges and high schools, and
- In-facility/practicum experience necessary for CNAs.

Renee has learned that many of the direct support professional involved in her group "fell into" the profession. Many heard about the opportunity through word of mouth. They seek more educational opportunities and would be supportive of more training.

Michael thinks the curriculum could be incorporated in to the Tech Prep programs offered at technical high schools.

Currently, there is no set curriculum identified by the Department of Labor. They have two programs that are nationally certified – the College of Direct support program and the DOL internship program.

VI. Other items

VII. Next meeting scheduled for August 14, 2007 from 10:00 am – 12 noon at the Center for Disabilities Studies.

VIII. Adjournment