

Executive Director's Report
April 17-18, 2019 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through February 2019 is included in the packet.

Obligation/Liquidation (Period of Performance) Issue

- The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) issued their final decision and guidance documents for Councils on their new interpretation of period of performance. Beginning with Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020 grant awards, Councils will have to perform all contractual activities within the two-year obligation period. Councils previously had the third "liquidation" year to complete project activities.
- We have already taken steps to put the Council's budget in the best possible posture to mitigate against any potential loss of access to federal funds, however this new interpretation removes any flexibility the Council previously had to account for sometimes unavoidable delays in contract implementation and spending.

Program Performance Report (PPR)

- The PPRs for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017 and FFY 2018 were electronically submitted to AIDD on March 25th. AIDD has been working on a new template for the report for several years, delaying the submission of the FY 2017 report to coincide with the due date of the FFY 2018 report.

Membership Update

- Kim Basile was reappointed by the Governor on March 9th and April Dunn was reappointed on January 18th. Jen Katzman was appointed to represent Medicaid on January 18th.
- Susan Meyers resigned from the Advocacy Center to accept a position with Medicaid. Chris Rodriguez will be the new Advocacy Center representative on the Council and is awaiting appointment by the Governor.
- Hilary Bordelon resigned from the Council and we are currently recruiting applicants to fill her position.

Staff Changes

- Marilee Andrews joined our staff on April 1st as our new Program Monitor. I look forward to you all meeting her at the April meeting.

Ad Hoc Committees

- The Planning Ad Hoc Committee met on February 20th to develop recommendations for FFY 2020 plan activities. These will be considered by the full Council at the April meeting and are linked on the agenda.

LaCAN

- Nine Regional Legislative Roundtables were held across the state with a total of 539 participants and 46 legislators, legislative assistants and/or Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) members participating. Thirteen Council members attended. Council staff attended all of these events and presented the information on the Council's advocacy agenda.
- Our LaCAN Leaders are making legislative visits with LaCAN members and identifying people to testify during the legislative session.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Provided information on the History of Act 378, its guiding principles and the purpose of the program to the 2019 Partners in Policymaking Class.
- Advocated for Family Cost Participation (FCP) in EarlySteps to not be imposed on families with income less than 600% of the federal poverty level in a meeting with LA Department of Health (LDH) Secretary, Dr. Rebekah Gee, and representatives from the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC). Unfortunately, Dr. Gee did not agree to this change. She stated her first priority was funding for the provider rate restoration that was not included in the FY20 Executive Budget.

Education

- Advocated for BESE to direct the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to separate the plan for providing support and technical assistance to all schools on serving students with significant disabilities from the plan to address issues identified in the Special School District. BESE did not take action; however, this issue will be a standing agenda item for subsequent BESE meetings.
- Provided information related to proposed legislation restructuring all statutes pertaining to student behavior and discipline into a single section of law. This proposal is aligned with the recommendations of the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline. The decision on directions to move forward with this proposed legislation have not been revealed yet.

Employment

- Advocated for LA Rehabilitation Services (LRS) to allow Employment Support Professionals to be trained by Certified employees in Customized Employment

General

- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - [DD Waiver Rates Restored Temporarily](#)
 - [LDH Announces EVV Performance Thresholds](#)
 - [Input Needed on Crisis System of Care](#)
 - [Recruiting Strong Advocates for DD Council Membership](#)
 - [LDOE Releases Special Education Monitoring Report, Corrective Action Plans](#)
 - [Additional Meetings on Behavioral Health](#)
 - [Behavioral Health Listening Tour](#)
 - [February SNAP Food Benefits to be Issued Early](#)
 - [Stakeholder Input Sought on Community Choices Waiver](#)
- Provided information through Facebook and Twitter on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families.
 - Most notably was the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month campaign when we posted throughout March to raise awareness of people with developmental disabilities. The campaign reached 29,251 people with 2,357 people engaged.
 - We also continued to introduce our Council members on social media.

Collaborative Efforts

OCDD System Transformation Core Work Group

- Provided feedback on the following:
 - What's working, not working well in the new waiver system
 - Eligibility for children ages birth-3 to be screened for waiver services
- Received updates on the following:
 - Complex Care Service – CMS would not approve this as a separate service; Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) must re-submit as an enhanced rate. It must go out on public comment for 30 days before it can be re-submitted to CMS which then has 90 days to approve it.

- LA Health Insurance Premium Payment (LaHIPP) – Medicaid is still planning to make this available to waiver recipients. OCDD will ask Medicaid for a fact sheet on the program and a timeline for when it will be available.

My Choice Louisiana Advisory Council

- After an investigation of Louisiana’s mental health service system, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) concluded that the State unnecessarily relies on nursing facilities to serve adults with serious mental illness instead of serving them in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). LDH signed an [agreement with the DOJ](#) to:
 - divert individuals with serious mental illness away from inappropriate nursing facility placements by requiring comprehensive evaluations and services designed to enable them to live in community-based settings; and
 - identify people with serious mental illness who have been admitted to nursing facilities but are able to and would like to transition to the community, and provide them with transition and discharge planning and community-based services sufficient to meet their needs.
- The program was named My Choice Louisiana and an advisory council was established to advise LDH in the continued development of the [implementation plan](#) (throughout at least the 5-year term of the Agreement).
- LDH released a [Request for Information](#) to solicit input from stakeholders on the development of a comprehensive crisis system of care.

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

- Passed a motion to send a letter to State Education Superintendent John White requesting that the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission consider the inclusion of infants and toddlers with disabilities and the early childhood gaps that affect this population in the \$8 million grant the state received to expand early childhood education in communities across the state.
- SICC elected new officers. Five Partners in Policymaking graduates and two DD Council members serve as officers: Shanida Mathieu, (Governor-appointed Chairperson), Angela Lorio (Vice-Chair), Bambi Polotzola (Secretary), Mike Billings (Parliamentarian), Michelle Roberie (Parent-at-Large)

Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

Passed the following motions:

- To send a letter to Rep. Pat Smith and Sen. Dan Claitor urging them to assist with getting the state to move forward with making legislative hearing accessible to people who are deaf. Funding was made available for this through [Act 273 of 2017](#) but the service is not yet available.
- To support a rate methodology for disability service providers. This will be offered in legislation by Rep. Malinda White ([HB390](#)).
- To support that people with disabilities cannot be discriminated against in organ donations. This will be offered in legislation by Rep. Malinda White ([HB143](#)).

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC)

- Members requested LA Rehabilitation Services (LRS) develop an on-line accessible list of vendors for services (similar to Freedom of Choice on the LDH website). An agreement was made to initiate this task by having LRS Regional Managers provide a list of Supported Employment providers for their region to the LRC. The LRC will compile the information to disseminate electronically.

Employment First Vision Quest Grant Work Group

- This group was formed upon receipt of an Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program Vision Quest training and technical assistance grant awarded to the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH).
- Discussed the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with multiple agencies (LRS/LDH/OBH) to address Mental Health and Employment

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since January 2, 2019

Meeting with Julie Foster Hagan – January 2

Meeting with Voter Voice – January 7

OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – January 8

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) – January 10

Orientation for Jen Katzman – January 11

Council Meeting – January 16-17

Presentation on DD Council at Partners in Policymaking – January 18

Meeting w/ Julie Foster Hagan, EarlySteps advocates on Family Cost Participation – January 22

Meeting with Voter Voice – January 28

Conference call w/ LA Rehabilitation Services (LRS) re: Customized Employment – January 28

Region I & X Legislative Roundtable – January 30

Meeting with Julie Foster Hagan – February 4

Region III Legislative Roundtable – February 5

Region VI Legislative Roundtable – February 7

Call w/ National Assoc. of Councils on DD (NACDD) re: annual conference – February 8

Region II Legislative Roundtable – February 12

Region IV Legislative Roundtable – February 13

Meeting with Voter Voice – February 13

Conference call w/ NACDD re: obligation/period of performance – February 15

Call w/ Melissa Bayham re: Customized Employment – February 15

Planning Ad Hoc Committee – February 20

Region IX Legislative Roundtable – February 21

Meeting w/ Melissa Bayham and LRS staff re: Customized Employment – February 25

Mtg w/ Dr. Gee, Mark Thomas, EarlySteps advocates on Family Cost Participation – February 26

Call w/ Melissa Bayham and Michael Callahan re: Customized Employment – February 28

LANtec staff training – February 27

Region VII Legislative Roundtable – February 28

Meeting with Julie Foster Hagan – March 6

OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – March 7

My Choice LA Advisory Council – March 14

Presentation at Partners in Policymaking – March 15

Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs – March 19

OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – April 2