

**Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Self-Determination and Community Inclusion Committee Report
May 23, 2019 Council Meeting**

Rate Restore

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) [announced](#) on April 1st rates for the four home and community based DD waivers and support coordination were restored to 2008 levels through June 30, 2019. Since this rate restoration is only temporary, funding will need to be appropriated by the legislature for the next fiscal year to continue these rates, and to also restore rates in the waivers for people served through the Office of Aging and Adult Services, Long Term Personal Care Services, EPSDT Personal Care Services, and other services for people with disabilities. This issue was added to the Council's legislative agenda, and a [fact sheet](#) was developed. The Revenue Estimating Conference recognized additional revenue which will add nearly \$15 million to the NOW Fund. This would be enough to restore DD provider and support coordination rates for FY20.

MOTION: The Self Determination and Community Inclusion Committee recommends using \$15 million of the NOW Fund to continue the rate restoration for DD providers and support coordination in FY20 and is offering this motion for the Council's consideration.

Non-Contractual Updates

- Due to substantive changes required by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), the NOW amendment for the complex care enhanced rate has been reposted for public comment until May 11th.
- The Flexible Family Fund (FFF) final rule will be published in the April 20th issue of the [LA Register](#). The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) will be training the regional human services districts and authorities staff on May 3rd and 15th with full implementation on June 1st.
- The Council's [recommendations](#) for changes to the Individual and Family Support (IFS) and Consumer Care Resources (CCR) programs have been submitted to LDH Legal for review.
- LDH Secretary Dr. Rebekah Gee is not in agreement with the Council's recommendation to raise the Family Cost Participation in EarlySteps to at least 600%. She indicated her first priority was funding the provider rate restoration.
- OCDD Deputy Assistant Secretary Charles Ayles reported the department supports the idea of Direct Support Professionals being allowed to reside in the home of waiver recipients. OCDD is currently researching/exploring all available options to make this a reality, and Mr. Ayles hopes to have additional updates at the July meeting.

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- Medicaid Deputy Director (Policy & Waiver Division) Jen Katzman provided follow-up information on the [Medicaid Purchase Plan Program](#) (MPP). It was reported program enrollment dropped from approximately 3,500 to 2,900 individuals once the income limit was decreased with an approximate savings of \$9 Million. Currently there are 1,200 participants in the program.

LA Special Education Center

Chris Rodriguez of the Advocacy Center discussed the Special School District's [preliminary findings of special education review](#) and a [findings report](#) of the LA Special Education Center. The report detailed concerns submitted by parents and staff of the center. It was also reported there were two pieces of pending legislation: one moving the center under the oversight of LDH ([SB151](#)) and the other increasing the age to qualify for residency ([HB277](#)). The legislative auditor has begun an audit of the Center and the Advocacy Center will be opening an investigation on the Center. Mr. Rodriguez thanked Ms. Winchell for bringing this report to his attention and stated it was a good example of the collaboration between the Advocacy Center and Council called for in the DD Act.

Healthcare Provider Continuing Education Modules

The committee discussed ways the Council could assist with additional promotion of the healthcare provider continuing education modules developed by the LSU Human Development Center with funding by the Council. Last July, a letter with information about the modules was submitted to all nursing schools in the state promoting the continuing education opportunity. Patti Barovechio reported an increase in viewings of the modules after the letters were sent. She also attributed the increase to no longer requiring a test after the modules to receive education credits. An additional increase in viewership was noted after the first of the year which may correlate with nursing school faculty adding the modules to their curriculum. Dr. Barovechio recommends the modules be resent to nursing programs and include other allied health programs. She also recommends the Council consider updating the content in a few years.

Strengthening and Supporting Self-Advocacy

Council member Lilian DeJean has been hosting teen-advocacy trainings around the state. She hosted a training in Lafayette in March and participated in a Transition Fair hosted by the Rapides Parish School District. Over 150 students participated in this event. She will also participate in the Orleans Parish School District's Transition Fair in May. Also, People First of LA has scheduled their annual conference for August.

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Contractual Activities

The committee received multiple updates on contractual activities (refer to [Status Report](#)). It was reported the 2019 Partners class is down to 21 participants. Members also discussed researching available opportunities to have LaCAN and Council materials translated into Spanish. An [update](#) on the Council's initiative to increase self-advocates' and their family members' understanding of the issues that lead to and ways to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation was also provided. Six trainings have been completed with 23 self-advocates and 74 family members or caregivers in attendance.