Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Act 378 Subcommittee Meeting Summary
July19, 2023 10:15 AM - 12:00 PM

You can watch the meeting here: https://www.youtube.com/user/LADDCouncil/videos

View meeting transcript.

Members Present: Nicole Banks, Julie Hagan, Hyacinth McKee, Bambi Polotzola, Brooke Stewart, Mary Tarver, Erick Taylor

Members Absent: Libby Airhart, Kim Basile

Staff Present: Brenton Andrus, Rekeesha Branch, Stephanie Carmona, Amy Deaville, Ebony Haven

Others Present: Brandi Croft, Nicole Flores, Jill Hano, Ashley McReynolds, Kelly Monroe, Kristin Savicki, Renoda Washington, Lauren Womack

Bambi Polotzola called the meeting to order at 10:21AM. A quorum was established.

Approval of the January Meeting Summary passed by unanimous consent.

Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) / Arc of LA – Kelly Monroe

In State Fiscal Year (SFY23) Fourth Quarter / Year-End:

- 100% of funding for the State Personal Assistance Services (SPAS) program was spent assisting 57 individuals. Normally only 41 – 42 individuals are served, but due to remaining funds additional individuals were served.
- There are currently 77 people on the waiting list, an increase of 9 from last quarter. There are individuals from all regions on the wait list. Wait list time is estimated to be approximately 2 years.
    - Some individuals are receiving services from other sources while waiting, but most are not. Ms. Monroe stated she will add information about this to her next quarterly report.
    - $1.8 million needed to serve all individuals on the waiting list.
- Concerns shared by some committee members that asking individuals about race or income during the application may cause individuals to not want to apply. Per Ms. Monroe, the application is set by OAAS and the income portion is a requirement. She will bring these concerns to OAAS. She also stated some individuals choose to not share information about race and it does not impact their application status or eligibility.

Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) – Kristin Savicki

Children/Adolescent Program

In SFY23 Fourth Quarter:

- 89% of funding for the Consumer Care Resources (CCR) program and 99% of funding for the Flexible Family Fund (FFF) program was spent assisting 1,025 individuals in the CCR and 375 in the FFF programs.
- Concerns shared for Florida Parishes (FPHSA) who only expended 49% of CCR funds. FPHSA will be submitting information to OBH about barriers preventing expending funds which will be shared at the October meeting.
- Those Local Governing Entities (LGEs) having expended less than 95% in CCR or have not filled at least 90% of slots in FFF will be asked to submit a corrective action plan to OBH
- It was noted all June invoices were not submitted prior to this report being compiled, but a final update will be provided at the October meeting.

As a follow-up to the last meeting, Dr. Savicki shared eligibility requirements to apply for CCR. Eligibility is based on behavioral health needs identified by a qualified professional that would put that individual at risk for out of home placement. CCR services are meant to maintain that individual in the home. Dr. Savicki stated the eligibility and services provided are quite broad.

Committee also discussed the needs of individuals with co-occurring disabilities and ensuring "no wrong door" policy was being implemented at all LGEs. Ms. Hagan shared that the department has partnered with the Arc of Louisiana to develop a guide to assist families as they navigate the system. It provides information about available resources, where to get those resources and how to apply. This guide will be available in the coming week and shared with the public.

It was also noted that the OCDD Resource Center was an available resource for individuals with co-occurring disabilities. The center can be contacted at Resource.center@la.gov and the information provided will be triaged to the correct contact. Individuals and families can also call 225-567-1254 or 318-487-5395. The committee made it known that an 800 number is necessary to prevent individuals seeking assistance from paying long distance call fees. It was also shared the department's website is not user friendly and difficult to navigate for available resources. This is something Ms. Hagan stated the department is working on.

Adult Program
In SFY23 Fourth Quarter:

- 100% of funding for the adult program was spent serving 272 individuals.

Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) – Brandi Croft
In SFY23 Fourth Quarter:

- 92% of funding for the Individual and Family Support (IFS) program and 100% of funding for the FFF program was spent assisting 3,592 individuals in the IFS and 1,953 in the FFF programs.
- It was reported that not all June invoices had been processed, so the amount expended in IFS is likely higher than indicated in the report. The final report will be presented to the committee in October.

- LGEs that have not expended 95% of funds will need to submit a corrective action plan. Most LGEs have stated they will meet the 95% threshold.

Committee discussed utilizing state general funds (SGF) through programs like IFS and FFF for ongoing services. Members felt a waiver may be more appropriate for those individuals and allow the state to capitalize on federal funds. Ms. Hagan stated

- Training for Screening for Urgency of Need or SUN screeners has occurred over the last year to ensure more accurate assessments
- This will help the screener to accurately determine if the individual would be better suited via waiver services than IFS or FFF.
- Ashley McReynolds stated in Region 2, their Regional Advisory Council or RAC has noticed more individuals who were utilizing IFS for vocational supports have been offered Supports Waivers, so the training of SUN screeners may have been beneficial.

At this time, all LGEs, with the exception of Acadiana (AAHSD), have appropriated an amount equal to or greater than 9% of their State General Fund (SGF) to DD services as required in Act 73 of 2017.

- Ms. Hagan explained AAHSD received supplemental funds for a special project which inflated their SGF. Those funds were not utilized and AAHSD is working with the department to determine how those funds can be returned and the impacts this has on Act 73 compliance.
- It was noted if those additional dollars were removed from their SGF, AAHSD would have appropriated well over the 9% minimum to developmental disability services.

Members also had questions about what the IFS and FFF programs were and eligibility. Ms. Hagan stated the department will compile a list of the OCDD and OBH programs along with eligibility requirements and share that with the committee at its next quarterly meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM by unanimous consent.