

## DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES QUALITY COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 5, 2009

**Members Present:** Jan Bevacqua, Direct Support Provider; Robin Carlson; Enhanced Family Care Provider; Richard Cohen, Disabilities Rights Center; Matthew Ertas, Bureau of Developmental Services; Laurie Giguere-Thomas, Family Support Council – Region X; Pat Fair, Community Support Network; Michelle Jarvis, Autism Society of NH; Chrystal Johson, People First; Debra McClure; Family Support Council – Region V; Kirsten Murphy, Area Agency Board – Region II; Jennifer Pineo, Family Support Council – Region I; John Richards; Brain Injury Association; Gordon Allen, NH Council on Developmental Disabilities; and Janet Williamson, Institute on Disability

**Members Not in Attendance** –Kathy Bates, NH Council on Developmental Disabilities; Susan Gunther, Area Agency Board – Region III; Debra Hopkins, Private Provider Network; and Cathy Spinney, Area Agency Board – Region X.

**Quality Council Coordinator** – Denise Sleeper, Bureau of Developmental Services  
**Facilitator** – Susan Covert

The state's Developmental Services Quality Council met November 5<sup>th</sup> at the Council on Developmental Disabilities in Concord. Deb McClure baked the world's best coffee cakes for the Council meeting. The agenda for the meeting included: a follow up on a question from the September meeting, introduction to E-studio, lessons learned from the Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders, governance for the Quality Council, and discussion of how to set priorities for the Quality Council.

### SERVICE COORDINATOR TRAINING

“Is the two day seminar for new Service Coordinator orientation training?” was a ‘parking lot’ question from September meeting. Denise Sleeper reported that this training is not mandatory. She said that BDS is looking into how many coordinators have taken advantage of this training and she will report back to the Council in December. Matthew said that BDS offers a quarterly ‘hot topic’ training to keep Service Coordinators about emerging issues and that these have been very well attended.

### E-STUDIO

Ken Lindberg from BDS did an introduction to E-studio, an electronic format that members of work groups can use to communicate with one another. Ken offered the following E-studio information:

- You can get on the E-studio site by going to:  
<http://nh.same-page.com/studio/v7/>
- Your log-in and password has been emailed to you from E Studio. If you can't find it, the usual convention is: Log-in using your first name and last name – with no spaces and no caps; password is your first initial and last name – with no spaces and no caps. Passwords can be changed after logging in by clicking

on your name in the upper right of the screen. Contact Ken if you have trouble logging in.

- In sending out information or using the email feature, be careful to select the Quality Council or an individual Council member. Do NOT click “Everybody” as this will send your message to all 280+ people who use the BDS E-studio.
- It is possible to set up closed work groups, this is a good arrangement for sharing and revising draft materials. Ken can set up these groups for the Council.
- Documents can be posted to and downloaded from E-studio.
- Links to websites can be put in under URL.
- Don’t use the Sign Out button as this can cause you to “lock out” items.
- If you need help with using E-studio you can call Ken Lindberg at 271-5111 or email at [klindberg@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:klindberg@dhhs.state.nh.us)

#### **LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE COUNCIL ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

Quality Council members Michelle Jarvis and Kirsten Murphy also are associated with the NH Council on ASD. Michelle is the Council President and Kirsten works part time as the Council’s Administrative Director. The Autism Council, which like the Quality Council was created by State legislation, has been meeting for the past year. Michelle and Kirsten shared the following lessons from their experience with the Council on ASD.

- It was extremely helpful to set up an organizational infrastructure before jumping into the work. It gave the Council a way to organize and focus its efforts.
- With more than 70 people serving on 8 work groups, the Council needed a good organizational structure. At the top is the Council on ASD with 17 formally appointed members; this is the body that has decision-making authority. The full Council meets bi-monthly. The Coordinating Council is made up of the chairs of the 8 work groups, some of these individuals are also Council members and others are volunteers. As described by Kirsten, these are the “worker bees.” This group meets monthly and sets the agenda for the full Council meetings. The work groups focus on specific areas (i.e., education, transition and adult services, insurance) and meet as needed, typically monthly.
- The Council and work group meetings are open to the public. Any person interested in working on an issue can become a member of a work group.
- Public Comment is always an agenda item for meetings.

- The Council is NOT a forum for individual complaints, but rather focuses on systemic issues. The Council's charge is to: 1) work on implementing the 44 recommendations that came out of the NH Commission on ASD report, 2) follow through on the responsibilities detailed in the enabling legislation, and 3) help to facilitate and advise initiatives that will improve NH's infrastructure for supports and services.
- The Council work groups used a prioritizing tool to decide which issues to tackle first and each work used a standard template to develop their work plans.
- Several Council members are high-level officials and do not always have time to attend Council meetings. By law, these individuals cannot appoint a representative in their place. This has been problematic and needs to be addressed.
- Every two years, organizations with representatives serving on the Council are asked to submit a letter formally stating who will be representing them on the Council.

Matthew Ertas observed, that while having a strong organizational structure has been helpful, the reason the Council on ASD has been effective is because of the commitment and energy of Council members and volunteers and the effective leadership provided by Michelle and Kirsten.

#### ***GOVERNANCE FOR THE QUALITY COUNCIL***

Members reviewed the Autism Council By Laws and agreed that these could serve as a template for the Quality Council. Members recommended the following items be added to the Quality Council By Laws:

- Tenure – Membership should be renewed annually. Members with a certain number (yet to be determined) of unexcused absences should be asked to step down.
- Duties of the Council – Include those required by enabling legislation and review SB 138 to see if there are others that should be added.
- Operating Procedures – The Council should meet a minimum of 6 times a year.
- Officers – Chair and Vice Chair
- Committees – Add a requirement for a Committee work plan.
- Public Right to Know – Post notice of Council meetings on DHHS', Disabilities Rights Center's, and Council on Developmental Disabilities' websites.

- Administrative Support – Add the following from HB 483: The groups represented on the Council are encouraged to provide, according to their ability, the in-kind and other resources necessary for the Council to succeed. The Council may request information and analysis from the Department of Health and Human Services, Area Agencies, and providers. The Council shall have access to all non-confidential information on quality for services funded all or in part by public funds.

Dick Cohen, Gordon Allen, Deb McClure, and Kirsten Murphy agreed to put together a draft of the By Laws for the Council's December meeting.

### **PRIORITIES FOR THE QUALITY COUNCIL**

At Gordon Allen's suggestion, the Council agreed that for any major topic or at the end of the meeting we go around the table and ask each person for their comments. The Council discussion of how priorities should be determined included the following perspectives:

- Dick Cohen – would like to see the Council consider:
  - 1) Does the system have clear standards to measure quality?
  - 2) What are the mechanisms to determine quality? Do these need improving?
  - 3) Are Area Agencies and providers meeting the standards?
  - 4) Is there a feedback loop; do individuals and families know how services measure up and do they know they can exercise choice in who provides their services?
- Kirsten Murphy – suggested using a three-tier approach to looking at quality. Is the person safe; does the person have adequate services; are the person's dreams and aspirations honored? Kirsten defined this as a "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness hierarchy." We also need to communicate better with families about the quality of services. You can go on line and find out who is a good plumber, but you cannot find out anything about the quality of your child's services.
- Gordon Allen – recommended that the Council start with the basics, looking at staffing for services and the planning process. How can it work better? Where do things break down?
- Janet Williamson – said she was still in an absorption mode. She found the most recent *NH Quality Outcomes Report* helpful and suggested it would be a good resource for the group. Denise will put this on E-studio.
- Jennifer Pineo – is still in the information gathering stage
- Laurie Giguere-Thomas – Taking it all in.
- Pat Fair – is still trying to focus in what we can influence and change.

- Matthew – would like to hone in on III (f) in the legislation regarding recommendations to improve “structures, policies, rules, and practices, including staffing or organizational changes, to ensure that the developmental services system works as intended in RSA 171-A, including:
  - 1) Ways of supporting values based and person-centered planning, and provision, as well as problem solving, innovation, and learning;
  - 2) Recognizing and disseminating what is working well (best/model practices); and
  - 3) Reviewing, interpreting, and disseminating data and information on a regular basis to bring about transparency for all stakeholders, and the public.”
  
- Jan Bevacqua – would like to feel more grounded about why we are here. How will what we recommend make a difference? Dick pointed out that by law, the Council’s report that includes recommendations and actions that have been taken on previous recommendations goes to the Governor, Speaker of the House, the Senate President, members of the House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Elderly Affairs, and to members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Kirsten said that members of the Council represented a variety of different organizations and constituencies and that members should be taking back ideas and recommendations to these groups.
  
- Robin Carlson – wanted to know what will be the Council’s impact statewide, how will this affect the people we support and care about? How do we make our system truly values based and person-centered? Are we about being a watchdog or are we about best practices?
  
- Denise Sleeper – noted that she is not a Council member, but in her role as Coordinator she will help the Council make connections with work that is relevant to the Council’s interests and agenda.
  
- Chrystal Johnson – is taking it all in. Robin asked Chrystal if she could talk to People First members and ask how they feel about their lives and their services and bring that information back to the Council. Chrystal agreed to do this.
  
- Deb McClure – is concerned that the Service Coordinators for her grandson have not been as experienced and knowledgeable as they should be. She thinks we need to get back to basics.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

Members agreed to meet monthly for the next few months. Meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month from 11:00-1:00 at the Council on Developmental Disabilities Conference room. A bag lunch will be provided. The following meetings have been scheduled: December 8<sup>th</sup>, January 12<sup>th</sup>, February 9<sup>th</sup>, March 9<sup>th</sup>, and April 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

none

## **EVALUATION OF THE MEETING**

*What worked* - Having a timed agenda. Going around the room and giving everyone an opportunity to have input. Getting a meeting date that worked for people.

*What didn't work* –Finding the conference room for the first time.

*What would be helpful for future meetings?* – Receiving any information that will be discussed at the meeting at least 2 days ahead of time so that people can come in prepared.

## **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE DECEMBER MEETING**

- Defining what the Council means by “quality”
- Adopting Guiding Principles for the Council
- Deciding on the Council’s Mission
- Review and vote on draft By-laws prepared by the work committee
- Prioritize the duties of the Quality Council that are in the law – using Kirsten’s prioritizing tool
- Setting a fall back date (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month?) in case there is bad weather on the regularly scheduled 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month meeting.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

- Dick Cohen, Kirsten Murphy, Deb McClure, and Gordon Allen will draft bylaws for the December meeting.
- Kirsten will come to the December meeting prepared to explain how to use the prioritizing tool.
- Chrystal Johnson – will ask members of People First how things are going in their lives, if they are satisfied with their services and how things could be better and will bring this information to the next Council meeting.
- Denise Sleeper: 1) Will find out how many Service Coordinators have taken advantage of the BDS training for the next meeting. 2) Will put the *NH Quality Outcomes Report* on E-studio. 3) Will send Council members any relevant materials at least 2 days before the meeting.

***THE NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> 11:00-1:00 AT THE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES CONFERENCE ROOM – A BAG LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED***