

**DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES QUALITY COUNCIL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**MAY 11, 2010**

*Members Present:* Kathy Bates, NH Council on Developmental Disabilities; Robin Carlson, Enhanced Family Care Provider; Richard Cohen, Disabilities Rights Center; Matthew Ertas, Bureau of Developmental Services; Janet Hunt, People First; Jan Larsen, ABLE NH; Cynthia Mahar, Community Support Network; Kirsten Murphy, Area Agency Board – Region II; David Ouellette, NH Council on Developmental Disabilities; Jennifer Pineo, Family Support Council – Region I; John Richards, Brain Injury Association; and Cathy Spinney, Area Agency Board – Region X

*Members on Conference Call* – Michelle Jarvis, Autism Society of NH and Debra McClure, Family Support Council – Region V

*Not in Attendance* – Jan Bevacqua, Direct Support Provider; Laurie Giguere-Thomas, Family Support Council – Region X; Susan Gunther, Area Agency Board – Region III; Debra Hopkins, Private Provider Network; Chrystal Johnson, People First; and Janet Williamson, Institute on Disability

*Member of the Public* – Laurie Raymond, Direct Support Professional

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

The May meeting agenda for the Developmental Services Quality Council included: follow up on April assignments, vote on Guiding Principles, Standards Review discussion, meeting attendance, and new business. Sue Fox's presentation about the DirectConnect project has been rescheduled for June.

**MINUTES**

Jan Larsen moved, Robin Carlson seconded, and the Council unanimously voted to accept the April meeting minutes.

**POSTING A LINK TO THE QUALITY COUNCIL**

Jan Larsen of ABLE NH and David Ouellette of the Council on Developmental Disabilities reported that they have posted a link to the Quality Council on their organizations' websites. John Richards has asked the Brain Injury Association to post the link and CSNI representative Cynthia Mahar requested that Area Agencies post the Quality Council link on their websites. John and Cynthia will check to make sure these links are up and will report back to the Council in June. The QC link can be found at: <http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/BDS/qualitycouncil.htm>

**QUALITY COUNCILS IN OTHER STATES**

David Ouellette reported that he spoke to the Minnesota Developmental Disabilities Council to see if there is similar Quality Council in their state. He learned that Minnesota has a quality assurance group that is comprised of provider and non-profit agencies; their group has an agency focus and serves a different purpose than NH's Quality Council. David said that Minnesota has a progressive record on disability issues and recommended

that Council members visit the Minnesota DDC website to learn more about what is happening in that state. The website link is - <http://www.mnddc.org/>

Dick Cohen recommended and the group concurred that looking at what other states are doing has not been terribly productive and the Council should just move forward and set its own direction.

### **EMPLOYMENT TASK FORCE**

Deb McClure and Denise Sleeper reported on the recent Employment Task Force retreat. Stakeholders at the retreat raised the following issues:

- Employment programs have limited connections with businesses in NH.
- Less than half of NH adults with disabilities have jobs, the majority of those who are employed are working part time for minimum wage.
- Vocational Rehabilitation services are not meeting the employment needs of many individuals who have disabilities.
- Better training is needed for job developers.
- Better vocational supports and services are needed for youth with disabilities.
- More effort is needed to develop career options for individuals with disabilities.
- Vendors expressed concern that the manner in which services are funded creates a financial disincentive for job placements.
- NH needs a strong mission statement on employment for individuals with disabilities.

Denise said the Employment Leadership Committee will use the information from the retreat to set priorities for its work.

Council members shared the following thoughts about employment for NH's citizens with developmental disabilities and asked Denise to share this feedback with the Leadership Team.

- We need to do a better job setting high vocational expectations for all students, especially those with disabilities. From an early age, children with disabilities should be getting the message that when they become adults they will be expected to work.
- We need to encourage individuals with disabilities to take responsibility for their own employment goals. (To this end, board members of People First will be holding a retreat to review their service agreements.)
- There is a glaring lack of creativity among vocational counselors and job developers. Individuals should be offered a wide array of career options; too often people are steered to inappropriate jobs. (Not everyone is interested in being a Wal-Mart greeter.)
- Students with disabilities leaving high school should have the opportunity to

pursue additional training or secondary education.

Janet Hunt said NH is once again taking part in the Alliance for Full Participation, a national effort whose mission is to make the dream of inclusion, independence, and quality of life a reality in policy and practice. The NH team includes individuals with disabilities, representatives from state agencies, and vocational providers. The team's goal is to double employment for individuals with disabilities by 2015. For information about the Alliance visit their website at - <http://www.allianceforfullparticipation.org/> If you have questions about the NH team, email Janet at [janet@peoplefirstofnh.org](mailto:janet@peoplefirstofnh.org).

### **BDS SITE VISITS**

Matthew Ertas informed the Council that on April 26th the Bureau of Developmental Services conducted unannounced site visits to 98 community residences (staffed residences serving two or more individuals). He shared the summary findings from the site visits with the Council. A copy of this report is included as an addendum to these minutes. Matthew said there were also several pages of observational notes and interview responses that he will post on E-Studio. BDS is currently in the process of organizing findings by region. Kirsten Murphy asked Matthew to please share regional findings not only with Area Agency Executive Directors, but also with Area Agencies Boards of Directors.

Matthew asked the Council to consider how family members might be involved in site visits and other quality assurance efforts. He said in the past, Region 10's Family Support Council and parents who served on the Area Agency Board of Directors regularly visited community residences. Cynthia Mahar, who previously worked in Region 10, said involving families in this way not only helped them to better understand what the agency did, it was also good for staff to see that the Board and Family Support Council cared about their work. Jenn Pineo reported that Region 1 also had good experiences involving families in program evaluation. Dick Cohen suggested that if families assist with quality assurance, it would be good for them to look at services in regions other than the one serving their family member. Kirsten Murphy noted that assuring quality is a collective responsibility and that families can provide a valuable perspective on services.

Dick recommended that the Quality Council first come up with standards of quality and then look at the methods – including the involvement of family members - for assessing quality. The Council agreed that this approach made sense.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

As requested in April, Dick Cohen prepared a summary of the Quality Council Guiding Principles. After discussion, Kathy Bates moved, Robin Carlson seconded, and members voted unanimously to adopt the Guiding Principles.

Dick suggested that the Guiding Principles might be used as a vehicle to help spread the word about the work the Quality Council is doing. He had recently created a power point presentation on this topic for the Area Agency in Region 8. Robin suggested that a

presentation about the Council be made at the Family Support Council and Direct Support Professional retreat in October. The Council agreed that this would be a great opportunity; Robin and Jenn Pineo will look into getting the Quality Council on the agenda for the retreat.

Council members also thought that it would be valuable to have regional meetings to introduce the Quality Council. Meetings should be open to a wide variety of stakeholders including the Area Agency board and staff, the Family Support Council, private providers, families, individuals with disabilities, and interested community members. Denise Sleeper and Cathy Spinney will draft a letter asking Area Agencies to organize regional meetings for this fall. The Council will review the letter at its May meeting.

### **THE COUNCIL'S ROLE IN STANDARDS REVIEW**

Members discussed whether or not the Council should be formally involved in the review process for developmental services rules and regulations. Dick Cohen noted that responding to every review would be time consuming and could distract the Council from its mission. However, there are some rules and regulations where the Council absolutely should weigh in. As the Disabilities Rights Center responds to all standards reviews, members asked Dick if he would be willing to keep the Council informed about what was coming up and let them know when the Council's input would be helpful. Kirsten Murphy and Michelle Jarvis will draft a policy concerning the Quality Council's role for participating in the review process and will share this in the fall.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Cathy Spinney spoke about the importance of having consistent representation on the Council. There have been a few members who have missed a number of consecutive meetings. The Council agreed that in cases where a member has missed 3 or more meetings, the member would be contacted and asked if he/she is able to continue on the Council or if their organization needs to appoint another representative. Denise Sleeper will call members who have missed meetings.

Denise volunteered to look into creating a *constant contact* newsletter as a way to share information about the Quality Council with a wide audience.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Laurie Raymond, a Direct Support Professional, commented that it is difficult for a DSP to provide individualized vocational supports when workers are typically responsible for supervising several individuals at the same time.

### **LONG TERM GOALS**

In March, Cathy Spinney recommended that Council minutes include reference to any long-term goals that the Council has discussed, but is not yet prepared to implement. Long-term goals from the May meeting included:

- Finding ways to include family members in quality assurance efforts.
- Responding to standards review when appropriate (Dick Cohen will keep the

Council informed about this.)

#### **EVALUATION OF THE MEETING**

*What worked* – “I really, really, really appreciate being listened to.”

*What didn't work* – The meeting agenda was too packed.

*What would be helpful for future meetings?* – Future agendas should be more manageable and allow time for thoughtful discussion.

#### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE MAY MEETING**

- Approve May minutes
- BDS/Quality Council link on agency websites – BIA and Area Agencies
- Review letter to Area Agencies about regional meetings
- Guest speaker Sue Fox to talk about the DirectConnect Project
- Complete Council Worksheet for Employment Domain
- Meet in small work groups to set a schedule for looking at remaining domains

#### **ACTION ITEMS –**

*Participating Organizations* – Share information about Quality Council with your networks

*Dick Cohen* – Bring to the QC any issues concerning standards review, arrange for DRC to order lunch for the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*Matthew Ertas* – Post notes from residential site visits on E-Studio. Share regional findings with Area Agency Boards of Directors.

*Michelle Jarvis* – With Kirsten draft a policy concerning the Council's role for participating in the review process for developmental services rules and regulations – to be discussed in the fall.

*Cynthia Mahar* – Check to see that Area Agencies have posted the Quality Council link on their websites.

*Kirsten Murphy* – With Michelle, draft a policy concerning the Council's role for participating in the review process for developmental services rules and regulations – to be discussed in the fall.

*John Richards* – Check to see Quality Council link has been posted on BIA website

*Denise Sleeper* – Contact Council members who have missed 3 or more meetings to see if they will be able to continue on the Council or if their organization needs to appoint another representative. With Cathy Spinney draft letter to Area Agencies asking them to organize regional meetings to introduce the Quality Council. Look into creating a *constant contact* newsletter for the Quality Council.

*Cathy Spinney* – With Denise Sleeper draft letter to Area Agencies asking them to organize regional meetings to introduce the Quality Council.

**THE NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY JUNE 8TH – WE WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 11:00**