



MINUTES

Transitions Stakeholder Advisory Council

Google Hangout Weblink: meet.google.com/emq-kfpb-aex
Google Hangout Call-in: +1 470-268-2030
PIN: 614 405 288#

Thursday, February 4, 2021
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Clarice Ambler, DRCOG **X**
- Meghan Baker, Disability Law Colorado **X**
- Anne Bartels, PASCO **X**
- Amy Dixon, CPWD **X**
- Monique Flemings, AHOD Services **X**
- Paige Gallaher, Atlantis **X**
- Jennifer Giurgila, Jefferson County
- Fallon Gillespie, Rocky Mountain Human Services
- Ashly Johnson, DRCOG **X**
- Jennifer Krulewich, Focus Cares **X**
- Tracy Martinez, Touch of Care
- Ed Milewski, Jr.
- Jenn Ochs **X**
- Lisa Smith, Team Rubicon
- Neal Waite, ADRC Region 3B **X**
- Miriam White, SJBAAA

Billy Allen, Allison Daley, Sheryl Kessler, Michele Chamberlain, Anne Pierce, Byron Kish, Pablo Sandoval, Shannon Buchanan, Frank Rivas, Michelle Kelly Jones

State Staff: Katy Barnett, John Barry, Nora Brahe, Matt Bohanan, Alicia Etheredge, Peter Pike, Katie Taliencio, Courtney Thomason, Ann Watts

Attendance Link: <https://forms.gle/EDaybu73WZAnPZH7>

1. Welcome and Introductions

2:30 p.m.



- Approval of the January Minutes: Minutes were approved
- Purpose of Today's Meeting: Katy provided an overview of today's agenda with main focus on zero income members that don't have SSI or SSDI which makes it difficult for them to transition and live in the community. Ann Watts with DOLA will discuss housing, Katie Taliercio with HCPF will discuss supported employment, Pablo Sandoval, MS and Byron J. Kish, Esq. with Easter Seals will share information on the programs and resources they provide for supportive employment and navigating disability benefits services, followed by Council updates and open forum.

2. Program Updates

2:35 p.m.

- John Barry, HCPF, provided an update on Office of Community Living (OCL) communications and updates shared recently including an online calendar for the HCPF OCL Stakeholder Engagement Calendar (link below). The Department is very excited about the calendar that lists all meetings that are open to the public and managed by the OCL. The calendar is easy to navigate by week, month or agenda if stakeholders are wanting a particular target audience. HCPF is also using the calendar to avoid double meeting time bookings that may have similar target audiences. The calendar is compatible with Google and Outlook calendars to load into Stakeholders personal calendar. John shared his contact information and invited everyone to sign up for OCL updates via link on the OCL Stakeholder Engagement Calendar.
John Barry, phone 303-866-3173, email john.r.barry@state.co.us
OCL Stakeholder Engagement Calendar:
www.colorado.gov/hcpf/OCL-stakeholder-engagement
- Matt with HCPF shared updates from the team addressing Money Follows the Person (MFP), questions about vaccines for community resources and case management redesign discussions that are currently focused around the new Person-Centered Budget Algorithm (PCBA) assessment tool. There is an MFP schedule conflict with today's meeting so full conversation is not prepared but will provide detailed update in the near future. MFP supplemental opportunity was released by CMS that provides additional funding opportunity to states currently operating MFP demonstration programs. The Department is working with leadership and budget department to submit a proposal by the June 30th deadline and will have more information to share at a later date. Next, update regarding vaccines rollout at federal and state level. There is a wide audience attending this meeting that is diversified across the range of stakeholders. Links included below for more details with vaccine changes to be aware of. Recently, 1B was extended to individuals 65 and older and not just 70 and up. For care workers, please visit 1st website link related to COVID 19 which is organized based on role, providers/case managers, eligibility and PHE planning. Second link



from CDPHE provides a lot of information on vaccines including where to go in each county.

www.colorado.gov/hcpf/covid

<https://covid19.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/where-can-i-get-vaccinated>

Matt continued with update on Person-Centered Budget Algorithm (PCBA) which is currently at a high-level view with a lot more information to come. This week included engaging public discussion around the Case Management Redesign and PCBA single assessment tool regardless of disability or waiver and will help identify the right amount of support for members based on assessed need. The PCBA replaces SIS levels, establishes budget levels and is based on a person's needs. The Department heard from the community, IT and partners regarding concerns with implementing the PCBA on the July 1, 2021 start date and decided the rollout in that timeframe is unlikely and therefore will delay until sometime in 2023 so there is enough data to establish efficacy that generates results people need and rely on. Currently, working with case managers on side by side comparison of the two tools. Senate Bill 16-192 establishes requirements, draft versions of what is being finalized and is great place to gain more info on assessment tool for persons eligible for LTSS including those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

www.colorado.gov/hcpf/colorados-ltss-assessment-and-support-plan

The last thing Matt addressed was the Public Health Emergency (PHE), with the new administration there are significant changes to ways PHE handled. The Department just received notice the PHE will be extended through December 31, 2021 instead of the 3 month increments with the previous administration. Key pieces and priority with the Department is the notice time and this extension builds in notices and when it comes to end. All exceptions that come into play, gives time to figure out how guidance is rolled back so unintended impact is greatly reduced.

Katy provided an update on Transition Services FAQ's to provide more info looking into nuances. Added new section about PACE and how it interacts with Transition Services. Here is link for more details:

www.colorado.gov/hcpf/transition-services-faq

Nora with HCPF gave an update on targeted case manager transition coordinated services and final report of 2020 activities. In 2020, we had 640 referrals to options counseling. Of those 640 referrals, 387 individual are in the active transition process pipeline across the state. Further breakdown by disability type, region below:

Pre-transition services by disability type:

Physical 104



Elderly 30
 Elderly/Dual 159
 Behavioral Health/Physical 61
Pre-transitions services by region:
 Adams 46
 Arapahoe 32
 Denver 123
 Jefferson/Boulder/Broomfield 67
 Douglas/El Paso 72
 Weld/Pueblo/Larimer 39

387 currently receiving pre-transition TCM-TC services
 233 - currently receiving post-transition TCM-TC services
 222 transitions in 2020
 965 transitions between 3/1/2013 - 12/31/2020
 Nora stated that COVID presented a myriad of challenges including visits to nursing facilities. Proud of the number we could transition and those that the Department was able to expedite.

John Barry, HCPF started Q&A Session

Peter Pike with CDLE asked if HCPF has staff that focuses on individuals transitioning from jail or prison to the community. Nora confirmed at this time transition services can't help individuals moving from incarceration.

Allison Daley asked how this program interacts with CDHS' Momentum or Transition Services Planning programs. Nora said she is aware of Momentum that helps support individuals transitioning out of psychiatric hospitals. TCM/TC services don't provide support to individuals in psychiatric hospitals, they provide services to those in nursing facilities to help continue move to independent living.

Frank Rivas asked what if a person was admitted to a Nursing Facility secondary to their mental illness, would Momentum assist with that? Nora clarified that TCM-TC would still be the correct program to help support that individual's transition.

3. Zero Income Member Discussion

2:45 p.m.

Katy started zero income discussion to address housing concerns, how to get a job and navigate support systems to cover basic needs, how to gain income for costs not covered by Medicaid. Will also discuss if transitions for zero income members are feasible and what does it mean for their success.



- Ann Watts – DOLA- provided additional info on Allison's question above in Q&A session. DOLA/DOH provides CDHS's programs with some housing support, not unlike what we do for HCPF. DOLA has program under the Department for homeless state funded voucher opportunities that go with that. However, it is not as large as the program that helps people transition from nursing homes.
- Courtney- DOLA, started housing concerns for zero income members by stating a few points on DOH and DOLA that zero income is a non-issue for transitions. There is a new law in Colorado regarding income source and housing/vouchers that has changed. There is not a landlord in Colorado that can refuse renting based on source of SSI or other factors where individuals don't make 2.5 times rent a month. Some landlords may still be resistant on renting below the Fair Market Rents (FMR) and now is the time to educate them on the new law and discrimination and the source of income for vouchers or low income individuals has changed. If the member has zero income coming out of a SNF or facility, they just have to complete a zero income report to self-certify where they will get needs met. Resources they see on a regular basis are food banks, Salvation Army and other community partners that provide assistance. DOH will cover all funds and fees except for moving costs and application fees. DOH covers the security deposit as long as it is not more than two times the monthly rent and they can do 100% of rental amount. Some people entering the program have zero income due to SNF's taking SSI money for room and board costs. Once they transfer out and SSI is reinstated, DOH does a rental adjustment. If they stay at zero income it's fine but DOH needs to know. Should be 30-60 days when they get SSI and it is important that TC's let DOH know when the individual starts getting income. DOH provides utility assistance payments as long as amount doesn't go over payment standard and the payment goes on an EBT card. Individuals need to budget as money goes on the EBT card but it is not specified what the money is for (utilities, food, etc.). Courtney reminded everyone that the law doesn't discriminate against people that want to transition into the community with zero income.

Frank Rivas shared that he asked Grand Junction Housing Authority about the discrimination and they are under the impression that they can still require that the individual make 2.5 to 3 times the rent. Frank asked Courtney if there is specific language in the law that specifically targets the increased income requirement? Courtney clarified Frank's question that this is incorrect. It's a state wide law. They can't legally require 2.5 times the rent based on the Colorado law.

Peter Pike with CDLE asked if it is accurate to say if there is a reduction in the number of individuals on a housing voucher then there will be an increase in available housing vouchers for others to use? Courtney stated how these programs work. If you submit income and are making enough money to cover higher rental portion, basically graduating from the program and don't need



vouchers any longer, then that voucher is made available to others. Ann also shared that if more people are paying a portion of their rent, then DOLA can help more people with vouchers.

- Katie Taliercio – HCPF, Supportive Employment/HCBS Employment Contract Specialist. Katie started off by stating her and Alicia Etheredge are honored to be a part of the discussion. Alicia is also very knowledgeable on the program and invited attendees to ask questions as they provide an overview on how they can support people and find good job matches for all individuals. Colorado is an Employment First state with initiatives for increased employment outcomes for people with disabilities. Everyone can work and they can collaborate on how to make that happen where individuals can earn income and keep Medicaid and other benefits. Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) is a way we can all come together and talk about supportive employment, healthcare and all other elements of SDOH to achieve goals. Katie shared she has seen Occupational Therapists and Nutritionists working with Medicaid patients that help to open doors to employment for a global picture for wrap around support services. Supported employment ideally meets person where they are, could be someone that never worked before or someone wanting to return to workforce and supports that help them in getting to know themselves better and what is a good match. Technology helps with job fit as well as help getting jobs, keeping jobs and promotions. Supported Employment at HCPF collaborates with other departments including Department of Labor and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Programs offered through Medicaid are focused on DD and SLS waivers but would love to see this grow for people with IDD and behavioral health for those connected to the Mental Health Center. Community partners can be great resources and they have put together a list and invite to have others contribute to the list along with open discussion for people to earn income. Email: Katie.taliercio@state.co.us

Alicia Etheredge concluded by sharing she was involved with launching CCT into the Medicaid waivers. Thanked Katie for doing a great job describing Supported Employment which can be powerful to make folks more independent.

- Pablo Sandoval and Byron J. Kish and – Easter Seals

Pablo Sandoval, Senior Director of Employment Services, thanked the group for inviting them to participate and talk about programs Easter seals offers. Pablo oversees benefits counseling, he is a Certified Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Trainer and Fidelity Reviewer. Pablo is also a Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor (CPWIC), promoting employment and financial stability for Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities. Easter seals provides tools for recovery, from disability, mental health, poverty and community exclusion. They tailor services based on needs of individual and help them understand how going to work will impact benefits and having income will decrease or even eliminate



SSI and SSDI. As a benefits counselor Pablo often hears people want to go to work and will earn more money but they can't give up SSI or SSDI income. Easter seals provides a valuable tool to show how it can all work with evidence-based practices on individual placement and supported employment designed for people with severe mental illness. VRC and others work as a team to help people go to work. Employment becomes part of the treatment plan providing clinical integration with mental health and employment. Easter seals has been very successful expanding this program. In Colorado Springs they offer this with IDD and behavioral health diagnosis, working closely with DVR and The Resource Exchange (TRE). There is another program in Denver with RMHS IDD program that serves individuals with IDD diagnosis. Currently, expanding the IPS program to Fort Collins. Successful implementing IPS with TANF in Jefferson County, entering the 4th year and internal to Colorado Works program. They have discovered contract employment rates have increased and it is a huge savings to county programs. IPS has 8 practice principles to guide supported employment. Other practice is customized employment to help discover what individuals would like to do and then develop a plan to support them on career path. Customized Employment is based on discovery of the applicant rather than on evaluation/comparative processes (non-labeling) driven by a customized plan developed by the applicant's strengths, needs and interests (similar to IPS) Focuses on tasks rather than job titles to negotiate essential responsibilities. All programs align nicely with Employment First Colorado. Easter seals will share other resources including details on ABLE accounts. Pablo summarized in a nutshell what they with applications assistance, supported models and benefits. Byron will discuss program for folks with no resources and disability benefits services program for individuals with SSI and SSDI.

Byron J. Kish, Esq., Director of Disability Benefits Services, shared his main focus is to help individuals acquire disability supports through Social Security. He discusses work early and often with all people Easter seals serves and dispels myth that people can't work and get disability. Byron provides income support and additional benefits with focus on stability and growth. Disability benefits means to stabilize a person's life. SSI pays for persons basic needs. Disability comes with health insurance Medicaid SSI and Medicare with SSDI. Benefits of SSI is that it is a federal program and automatically qualify if individual moves to another state. Programs focus on individual growth including work which provides independence and support. Programs also emphasize physical and mental health, community benefits, reduced drug addiction and boost to the local economy. Byron can help with direct representation before Social Security, there are also webinar trainings and other resources available including the SOAR program and he can help make those referrals and connections. Byron is a SOAR state team lead where he trains and leads other advocates in Colorado. Byron wanted to highlight your transition and the many avenues available to transition youth better than those available for adults. School records and other documentation helps to get benefits, the earlier Byron and Easter seals team can



start working with these individuals the better the outcome. Byron and his team talk to people early and often to get benefits and support for foster kids and other children with disabilities. ABLE account or trust can help keep people on Medicaid, surrounding issues that parents, case managers and others should understand. Documentation is very important with disability process and next steps.

Pablo and Byron shared the following resources and their emails:

psandoval@eastersealscolorado.org bkish@eastersealscolorado.org

Benefits Counseling Guide: <https://apse.org/chapter/colorado/>

IPS Employment Center: <https://ipsworks.org/>

Colorado Able: www.coloradoable.org/

Disability Overview Video:

<https://secure.easterseals.com/site/Calendar?id=55743&view=Detail>

John Barry asked people to put questions in chat. The Department will share questions with Pablo and Byron will share their responses with everyone on the list.

Katy shared we are starting a resource list to help individuals be more successful once they are out in the community and will share more at the next meeting.

4. **Money Follows the Person Update** 3:15 p.m.

- The conversation was postponed due to a last minute scheduling conflict for Matt.

5. **Council Updates** 3:45 p.m.

- Council Engagement- Clarice shared updates including new bylaws and hope to see increase for council member engagement. Interested in more Council led opportunities that members would like to participate in similar to bylaws workgroup and education workgroup led by Paige.
- Google Group Discussion- Clarice provided an overview on developing a Google Group as gathering ground to post resources, questions and other information. If anyone has subject, we are passionate about such as rural issues, housing or transportation we would like to start actionable plan. Want to start seeing discussions we are having and turning them into agendas. Brainstorm ideas on opportunities for discussion and topics people are excited about. Open to everyone not just council members. Would need people designated to oversee information shared to make sure it is PHI/HIPAA compliant. Email Clarice if you are interested or if you have suggestions or questions at cambler@drcog.org



- Neal Waite, doesn't have an update but question on stats for 2020. Is it published anywhere and if not, where can I get more of that data. Katy confirmed numbers are published in legislative report and shared link. Not as robust as numbers Nora shared because it's not a full list. The Council wanted to provide info on more consistent basis every quarter with high level numbers on where program is going. Katy shared team over at data program are working on public dashboard for us including better system for making data visual and gathering data, will hopefully have something to share soon. Legislative Report: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/HCPF%202020%20Support%20for%20Transition%20from%20Institutional%20Setting%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

6. Open Forum

4:20 p.m.

Katy responded to Peter's question, "Is HCPF plan to respond to the Request for Information put out by the Department of Corrections on establishing a new nursing facilitation for this population." Katy doesn't have an answer yet but will get back with more info. Clarice believes she has email with all details and will share.

Peter Pike, CDLE, thanked Easter seals and Katie for all the information shared today. Peter is with DVR and has contracts with non-profits called Centers for Independent Living. In addition, they have worked with Easter seals around SSI/SSDI application assistance and can assist folks applying for jobs. Currently, working on a research project related to zero income individuals.

7. Adjourn

4:30 p.m.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request for persons with disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities and language services for individuals whose first language is not English may be provided upon request. Please notify John Barry at john.r.barry@state.co.us or the 504/ADA Coordinator at hcpf504ada@state.co.us at least one week prior to the meeting to make arrangements.

