

Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting Minutes May 11, 2023

Council Member Attendees:

In Person: Hugh Kelly, Steve Steveson, Rob Roozeboom, Julie Bergeson, Kevin Harris, Eric Evans, Brady Werger, Kristen Aller, Amber Gale, Jean Willard, George Thompson, Judy Warth, Roxanne Cogil, Mike Vratsinas, Alecia Balduf

Virtual Attendance: Matthew Conaway, Carol Cross, Mark Smith, Scott Lyon, Mike Hoenig, Paula Motsinger

Council Staff: Brooke Lovelace, Carlyn Crowe, Lindsay Hommer

Council Members Absent: Brittney Drinovsky, Kitty Hedderich

Members of the Public: John McCalley - Amerigroup, Tonia Heiman – Iowa TotalCare, Amy Campbell, Melissa Lawson, Lisa Yunek, Ed Palmer, Connie Fanselow, Jennifer Vermeer, Julia Ganda, Jill Villalobos

Call to Order:

Council Chair Werger called the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) meeting to order on May 11, 2023, at 10:32 AM. A quorum was established.

Welcome and Introductions:

All meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Agenda Item/Approval of Minutes and Agenda:

Balduf motioned to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2023 meeting, and Aller seconded. Motion approved. Vratsinas motioned to approve the agenda for May 11, 2023, and Kelly seconded. Motion approved.

Executive Committee (EC) Report:

Actions and Recommendations since March Meeting:

The Legislative committee has had several meetings since March.

The DD Council is not meeting in July. Budget information and the workplan will still be sent in July.

Current Budget Review:

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Lovelace reviewed the April budget sheet. There is new line item called “interpreter costs.” The DD Council has been supporting Allies in Advocacy and we need an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for this. Interpreter costs going forward will be used out of Projects, Relief Grants, and Conference Sponsorships. Will need to approve the 2024 budget at the September meeting. We will need to increase Council Support for the 2024 budget. We have \$2605.73 left for this year. We are doing more activities at the capitol now. We will also need to increase the out of state travel budget. Aller asked if we will have interpreters for MYM!. Lovelace stated we will.

Harris asked if there will be computer upgrades this year. Lovelace stated we will be receiving new laptops this summer.

Lovelace reviewed the Spending chart. All work for 2022 needs to be done by the end of September to spend the remaining \$158,365.84. We are on track to spend this. A no-cost extension is being offered for DD Councils from the Association of Community Living (ACL). Requests would need to be in by the end of August. We may put in for a \$10,000 extension just as a safety net.

Lovelace reviewed the Obligation chart. We are over obligated which is good. If we need, we can spend from future year funds. It says there is \$5,824.38 not obligated but this is spent on ASL interpretation and sponsorship funds. Hoenig asked what the Project Relief Grants are. Lovelace stated there is \$10,000 sponsorships that are awarded and \$20,000 that is at the discretion of the Executive Director to do other projects. We have sponsored the Spinal Cord Association, Autism Society of Iowa, Epilepsy Foundation, two sponsorships for Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), Brain Injury Alliance, the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) publication, and the Allies in Advocacy.

Administration Cap should read: 30% of \$774,176 which is \$232,252.80. We are currently spending approximately 21% and we can spend up to 30%.

Workplan Review:

Lovelace stated we were able to do five capitol day advocacy grants this year.

We need help from the Council to get people connected to the DD Council network. Lovelace would like DD Council members to like and share Facebook posts. Werger asked if Capture would be able to do educational video about what DD Council does and share on social media. Warth suggested to use pictures and videos from the MYM! conference to promote the DD Council. Yunek suggested to target posts to organizations such as the Arc’s. Thompson suggested using a QR code to take people to the DD Council Facebook page or website. Roozeboom suggested the QR code and recap videos be shared by Infonet also. Roozeboom suggested having a social media team at the MYM! conference to take pictures and videos.

The Council is recruiting for Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) that will take place in July. Informational meeting is on May 24. The last day to apply is June 16th.

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Make Your Mark update:

The MYM! Conference will be August 30-31 in Coralville at the Hyatt Hotel. Will need volunteers to help with conference such as moderators to introduce speakers and hosts to help with seating and accessibility issues. There are usually two people in each room. All speakers are lined up for breakout sessions and the keynotes. We still need a family advocate on the advocacy panel. We have a request for Director Garcia and/or the Director of Aging and Disability Services to be the keynote speaker over lunch. Registration and save the date will be sent out in June. T-shirts will be charged for this year. Attendance will be free. Raygun is making the t-shirts this year.

Recruiting of New Council Members:

Lovelace stated we have a slate of candidates to fill all our openings. Caitlin Owen with Center for Disabilities and Development (CDD), Diane Brenneman with Title V, Motsinger and Vratsinas will stay on, Melissa Lawson with the Department of Education, Emma Bouza who spearheaded the disability proclamation, and Joshua who is a brother-in-law of a person with disability. Orientation for new council members will be August 23rd. We are asking that EC members be in-person for this meeting and all other council members are asked to attend virtually or in-person.

Election Committee Report:

Stevenson stated that Werger would like to remain as chair, Kelly would like to remain as vice-chair, Roozeboom would like to remain as at-large member. Cogil and Hoenig nominated as at-large members. Warth seconded. Motion passes.

Policy Update:

Campbell stated that she and Crowe spent a lot of time this year at the capitol regarding educational related items and children with disabilities.

The legislature left \$1 billion not spent and it is their priority to cut taxes.

Medicaid funding was increased by \$33 million. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reviewed other states Medicaid payments last summer and increased Medicaid behavioral health services by \$13 million.

Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) received \$5.5 million funding for the last quarter of the next year (the rest of the year will be funded from federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds). Next year, it will cost \$21 million for the whole year to remain at level funding.

Rent subsidies were increased for individuals receiving HCBS waiver services by \$215,000. Campbell stated that accessible and affordable housing is hard to find.

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The Department of Aging has a public guardian division. This division was increased by one-third and \$500,000 was added to their budget to address the backlog in requests for public guardians.

The mental health disability services (MHDS) regions were fully funded this year at a cost of \$6.5 million.

Legislators exempted waiver homes from having high-cost sprinkler systems installed which is bill number SF 561.

A resolution was passed designating March as Disabilities Awareness Month in Iowa.

Campbell stated that no action was taken on the waiver waitlist issue but, this is probably due to the waiver redesign that is being worked on now by HHS. Werger stated that he had heard President Biden signed a bill supporting HCBS. Campbell stated that there are proposals in Congress that would get rid of waiting lists. Campbell stated that many years ago there was a bill introduced for a one waiver system and no waiting lists. The costs were excessive though and the bill did not go anywhere. Now, costs are being quoted more accurately.

Campbell stated that in Iowa, if a bill does not pass in the first year of the two-year general assembly, it can be brought up during the second year. When a bill is reintroduced, it starts where it stopped previously and does not have to go through the whole process again. Bills of interest in this category are:

HF 243 is an insurance mandate that prohibits age limits and max benefits on autism coverage. This bill passed the House 99-0.

HF 275 aligns intellectual disability (ID) and brain injury (BI) waiver home and vehicle modification caps. HF 562 requires insurance coverage of repairs and maintenance to complex rehab wheelchairs without prior authorization. Currently insurance will not cover these costs.

On With Life residents at the Glenwood campus will relocate to Polk City to a nursing facility that was purchased by On With Life.

SF 7 (introduced by Senator Zaun every year) and HF 264 introduced by Representative Wilson would exempt direct support professionals' wages from state income tax. Legislators are looking for creative ways to increase the number of direct support professionals rather than increasing wages.

HF 685 uses a tax on Managed Care Organizations (MCO) to draw down additional federal funding, generating between \$100 - \$120 million per year beginning in 2025.

Campbell stated a confusing thing is the increase of funding to institutions when there is supposed to be a focus on HCBS.

Scholarships for accredited comprehensive transition programs, HF 252, passed the House. This bill did not go any further because the Senate doesn't want to support bills from certain members of the House.

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Campbell stated that Area Education Agencies (AEA) funding was reduced by \$29.5 million. Vratsinas stated that he is a paraeducator and he sees the budget crisis impact and the shortage of paraeducators and special education educators. Campbell stated DD Council needs to be at the table next year. Crowe stated we need to think about priorities for next year as well as how we can position ourselves as the resource for legislators. The “Seat at the Table” message was a good one and we should build on that message. Legislators are looking for innovative ideas, not simply requests for more money. Roozeboom suggested legislators live in the shoes of a person with a disability for one day. Lovelace stated “Take Your Legislator to Work” is a good way to engage legislators. Campbell stated legislators want specific asks. She heard the Governor state that when people were asking for minimum wage to be increased, a \$1 minimum wage increase equals \$60 million in state cost. Private businesses can increase their wages at any time and the governor can’t control what private businesses do. The Governor did not raise minimum wage for these reasons. Crowe stated that if people are staying home to care for loved ones, it is contributing to the overall workforce shortage and we should be communicating with the corporate sector too. Gale stated there is also money available that is not being taken into account in the State budget. She stated that her family is approved for nursing services and respite care and the State has appropriated this money as such but, she cannot find DSP’s to work all the hours she is approved for. Lovelace asked to share Gale’s story next year. Crowe stated the legislative committee needs to meet and talk about agenda for next year. The goal is to have a draft by the MYM! Conference. Crowe will send an invite to the entire Council to see who wants to be on the committee. Current Council and committee members asked for a time other than Fridays at 2 PM.

Recognition of Leaving Council Members:

Judy Warth, Jean Willard, Mark Smith, Scott Lyon, Carol Cross

Molina Health Care Discussion:

Jennifer Vermeer – Plan President, Jill Villalobos – Vice-President for Healthcare Services

Vermeer stated that Molina is the new Managed Care Plan and they start up on July 1st. They have prepared for transition and clients will not experience any delays in service and will receive a warm hand-off process from the other two MCO’s. In June case managers will be outreaching to members. In regards to the provider network, Molina is doing well with contracting with the providers.

Villalobos stated that the case management system Molina uses is the integrated case management approach. This means that case managers are expected to get to know their members, the members caregivers, and the members providers. They have face-to-face interactions with the members on a regular basis and address the needs of the members.

Lyon stated that he has represented many waiver recipients whose services have been reduced or denied by MCO’s over the years. The issue they have run into is that the case manager knows the

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members the best and is asking if Molina has a policy in place for when case managers get called as witnesses in administrative hearings. Vermeer stated they would get back to him. Villalobos stated the case manager comes up with a service plan with the member, member's caregiver, and member's providers and case utilization cannot override what that case manager has put in place.

Cogil asked if there will be case management available to consumers with Medicaid with Molina that are not currently on an HCBS waiver. Villalobos stated that there will be. Members can request a case manager or be referred.

Aller asked about people with pre-existing conditions. Vermeer stated this would not be a barrier to receive care.

Villalobos provided contact information as:

Jill Villalobos VP of HCS - jill.villalobos@molinahealthcare.com
515-564-9583

Public Health Workforce Project with Center for Disabilities and Development Update:

Julia Ganda – Center for Disabilities and Development

Julia will provide a second stage report on the project. The project is a two-year project to provide interventions across Iowa related to people with Intellectual Developmental Disability (IDD), Developmental Disability (DD), and mental health.

First stage was to develop networks and intervention. There was a lot of research conducted.
Second stage is developing and refining the outreach toolkit and the test interventions.
Third stage is developing mental health ambassadors.
Fourth stage is providing interventions.

Second stage has been interesting regarding how to develop the outreach toolkit and getting focus groups together to do this. Next week Ganda is meeting with Systems Unlimited. Ganda will travel to hold the focus groups instead of having the focus groups at CDD because transportation can be a barrier for people to attend. The toolkit will have two parts. Training ambassadors will be the first part. This will include roles, listening skills, and creating boundaries. Hoenig asked who the ambassadors will be. Ganda stated the ambassadors would be people with DD or ID and would be there for others to reach out to in the future to support them. Each county will have an ambassador. Warth asked if the rollout of finding ambassadors could be done at the MYM! conference during a breakout session or have an exhibitor table. Cogil asked if the focus groups were one time sessions or if Ganda wants the same people at multiple focus groups. Ganda stated it will depend on the needs. Werger asked what the role of each ambassador would be. Ganda stated that the main goal would be for them to share their lived

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experience and be a peer support. Werger asked how someone can become an ambassador. Ganda stated to reach out to her. Julia-ganda@uiowa.edu

State and DD Network Updates:

Evans - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is moving under Workforce Development. They will be losing 25 support staff. Last year, these support staff completed 14,000 authorizations for VR, ordered supplies, and completed case notes. VR is worried about losing these people. The State also wants to close a building that was built for Vocational Rehabilitation and is accessible. Cogil asked if they are working with the disability resource coordinators at Workforce Development. Evans stated that they are. Hoenig asked if they are asking to close the Jesse Parker building. Evans stated they are. They are moving next door but, the building is not accessible for field staff to bring clients in that building. Field staff may move to a different building. Warth stated advocacy efforts are needed within Workforce Development for people with disabilities. Warth also suggested inviting someone from Workforce Development to a DD Council meeting. Crowe asked that with the reduction of VR staff, if Workforce Development staff is going to pick up the work that the 25 VR staff were doing. Evans stated that due to being under rehabilitation services administration at the federal level, VR staff has to direct the work that is being done and cannot hand off the work to another department. Warth asked if VR is currently drawing down all of their federal dollars. Evans stated they are not. Lovelace noted that this new arrangement still needs Federal approval and Evans agreed.

Motsinger - Suggested that someone from the DD Council be present at a member townhall meeting regarding Medicaid and explain what the DD Council does. They are held the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 4 PM – 5 PM.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) project Improves the quality and access to HCBS in Iowa by drawing down federal funds. Iowa has invested \$305 million of state and federal money of which, \$125 million is state funding. There was \$67.8 million invested in HCBS provider rate increases. All of the ARPA funds must be used by March 31, 2024. \$19.8 million was invested in the waiver waitlist buydown. \$6 million was invested in employee training and scholarship grants. \$125 million was invested in recruitment and retention grants. \$7 million was invested in remote monitoring and support. \$29.8 million was invested in health information and technology (HIT) and infrastructure. \$40 million was invested in the community-based services evaluation and future implementation. There are two other projects that they have not spent any additional funds on yet. They are getting ready to release two requests for proposals (RFP's) for these. The first project will be for a provider training platform for \$3 million. The second project is a direct support employment network and hiring resources for \$3 million. A 4.25% rate increase was given to providers last year. This needs to increase next year. Hoenig stated that landlords are raising rent to an extreme amount due to people moving out of Glenwood and this may be housing discrimination. He asked if this is being investigated. Motsinger stated that she did not think this was discriminatory but was opportunistic. Cogil thought that with the federal setting rule, providers could not own the home and rent it out. Motsinger stated that this is allowed. Thompson asked what the agencies do with the 4.25% rate increase. Motsinger stated the recruitment and retention grant dollars had to go directly to direct support professionals.

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IOWA DD Council

Preparation, Participation, Power

In 2022 Medicaid partnered with the Harkin Institute and Mathematica to conduct an evaluation of Iowa's overall services for long term services and supports. There were three main takeaways from this.

1) Streamline screening and processes 2) Our need to align services with actual needs 3) Maximize access to services and support. If you are interested in attending a feedback session: [Community-Based Services Redesign: Feedback Session Interest Form | Iowa Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Website link: [Overview of the Community-Based Services Redesign | Iowa Department of Health and Human Services](#)

The public health emergency (PHE) unwind is happening. Telehealth services need to be maintained. HCBS flexibilities will remain until November 11, 2023. Habilitation services of home delivered meals, companion services, and homemaker services are ending today.

Being considered is, adding medical daycare for children, and a similar service for adults to a waiver. As well they are trying:

To get approval for parents of minor children to provide direct services to their children.

Reminder that the state is sending out communications to members for member redeterminations.

Lovelace asked Motsinger if she thinks they will get approval to extend the medical daycare for children, adult daycare, and parents providing direct services to their children past November 11, 2023.

Motsinger stated she is fairly confident medical daycare and adult daycare will be approved past this date.

Lovelace stated that we are worried about the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) bill and that it may limit people on Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities (MEPD) from saving and people with IABLE accounts. Motsinger asked that she meet with Lovelace and HHS staff about this issue.

Harris stated telehealth cannot be used with providers out of state and asked if Medicaid can allow this.

Motsinger stated she will have to check into this.

Motsinger shared that Liz Matney (Medicaid Director) was selected for the Relentless Advocate of the Year award from IACP.

Willard – Writing annual block grants now for Title V. Willard would like public comment from the DD Council members on these.

Lyon – Continuing to watch the transition with Molina coming on as a provider. Leaving DRI to work at a private law firm at the end of May.

Lawson – Department of Education, a lot of discussion about the legislative session.

Warth – Money Follows the Person (MFP) has expanded and its staff has tripled.

On Track project is helping youth transition from pediatric care to adult care. There will be a symposium on August 25th bringing self-advocates together with physicians.

There is an emerging project that involves diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Partnering with VR on a disability innovation fund project. It is designed to prevent people from moving into subminimum wage employment.

Council Updates:

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Evans stated he attended Disability Rights Iowa's conference on service animals. He learned from this that things you can ask people with service animals are: Do you require the animal due to a disability and what tasks does the animal provide for you. Evans stated another takeaway was to leave people alone that have working animals with them. Animals aren't allowed in some areas such as during surgery or in prison. Animals can help people reduce their medications or go off of them completely. Hoenig asked if they got into the topic of people claiming animals are service animals when they aren't. Warth stated to contact animal control if the animal is problematic. Gale stated there is no formal certification for a service animal. Lyon stated there is a different set of laws that apply to emotional support animals than to service animals. The full video from the conference will be posted on the DRI website.

Balduf stated she will share with the Arc the dates for MYM! and will ask them to attend.

Werger stated that Governor Reynolds said she would meet with him this year. Werger suggested that members of the DD Council join him during this meeting when it is set up.

Reminder that there is no DD Council meeting in July.

Werger went to Washington DC two weeks ago. He met with Ashley Hinson, Chuck Grassley, and Joni Ernst. It was a great experience.

Public Comment:

John McCalley is the Health Equity Director with Amerigroup Iowa.

They are in the process of continuous enrollment being ended that was tied to the public health emergency. Look for communications about this in the mail.

Amerigroup Iowa is in a member MCO choice period.

They are in the third year of helping state resource center Amerigroup members transition to HCBS environments. Amerigroup has provided three grants to providers to buy accessible vans to help with these transitions.

He stated there is a new partnership with the UCEDD. They are developing a web-based training on health equity aimed at the Long-term Services and Supports (LTSS) stakeholders. These trainings will begin in September.

Amerigroup is refreshing the value-added benefits. Look for information about this on their website and on social media.

<https://www.myamerigroup.com/ia/iowa-home.html>
john.mccalley@amerigroup.com

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Lisa Yunek – Yunek stated she was under the impression that IABLE would not affect MEPD and SNAP benefits. Lovelace stated that with the new bill it is unclear now.

Adjourn: Aller made a motion to adjourn, and Gale seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:35 PM.

Action Items:

DD Council members like and share Facebook posts and encourage people to join our network. Lovelace will work with our Advocacy Management team to develop QR code to make it easier for people to sign up.

Volunteers are needed to help with MYM! conference. Please let Lovelace know if you can volunteer.

Crowe stated the legislative committee needs to meet and talk about agenda for next year. Crowe will send an invite to the entire Council to see who wants to be on committee.

Motsinger suggested that someone from the DD Council be present at a member townhall meeting regarding Medicaid and explain what the DD Council does. They are held the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 4 PM – 5 PM.

Werger will reach out to the Governor's office about a meeting.

Motsinger will check into if telehealth can be used with Medicaid providers from out of state.

Balduf will share with the Arc the dates for MYM! conference and will ask them to attend.

Addendum: Information received from Jennifer Vermeer re: Lyon stated that he has represented many waiver recipients whose services have been reduced or denied by MCO's over the years. The issue they have ran into is that the case manager knows the members the best and is asking if Molina has a policy in place for when case managers get called as witnesses in administrative hearings

During the Molina presentation to the DD Council, Scott Lyon asked about Molina's policy relative to participation of care managers in appeal hearings. I check with our Appeals and Grievance team and the following is our response:

Yes, for state fair hearings (SFH) all members of the care team are welcome and encouraged to participate to get to the facts or the best outcome for all involved.

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However, administrative law judges who use their discretion frequently on SFH cases and may only include certain individuals, such as licensed MD, Legal Counsel, RN's etc... and may limit or restrict the number of individuals participating in the case to licensed clinical professionals and legal counsel only. We of course defer to the administrative law judge in their direction on who may participate.

From Molina's perspective, we will include those from our care management team that can contribute to the successful resolution of the case.

I hope this information is helpful. Please do reach out if there is anything else we can provide or if you have any follow up questions.