

Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting Minutes July 10, 2025

Council Member Attendees:

Eric Evans, Diane Brenneman, Wendy Andersen, Rachel Bussan, Kevin Harris, Charlene Wyatt Sauer, MeLissa Lawson, Caitlin Owens, Julie Bergeson, Dakota Caldwell, Joshua Lawrence, George Thompson, Nicole Nosbisch, Mike Hoenig, Daryn Richardson, Aaron Swartz, Casey Wilkinson

Virtual Attendees: Caitlin Owens, Kimberly VanBeek, Jayde Henry, Mike Dierdorff, Lori Trujillo Rouch,

Council Staff: Brooke Lovelace, Carlyn Crowe, Lindsay Hommer

Council Members Absent: Kevin Harris, Andrea Maher

Members of the Public: Laura Leise – HHS Aging and Disability, John McCalley – WellPoint Iowa, Cathy Helmke – Iowa Total Care

Call to Order:

Council Chair Thompson called the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) meeting to order on July 10, at 10:30 AM. A quorum was established.

Welcome and Introductions:

All meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Agenda Item/Approval of Minutes and Agenda:

Minutes from the May 8th meeting were approved. Hoenig made a motion, Nosbisch seconded. Agenda for the July 10th meeting was approved, Brenneman made a motion, Caldwell seconded.

Executive Committee (EC) Report:

Actions and News Since May and Summary of What was Discussed at EC Meeting

ID Action

- There is a separate account called ID Action that is a nonprofit. It is used to pay for things that can't be paid for with DD Council funds such as prizes at the MYM! conference. It is also used to hold sponsorships for the conference.
 - The EC had a meeting with Capture Marketing who manages this fund and

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a board was established the EC will be sharing structure and financial statements. At a minimum, financial statements will be shared annually.

Orientation

- Orientation is tentatively planned for September 3rd, 10 AM – 12:30 PM. All council members are invited to attend.

Future Funding of the DD Council

- The DD Council is currently listed in the President's budget.
 - Efforts will be shifted to advocate for funding for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and Disability Rights Iowa (DRI).
 - The DD Council is now funding sponsorships.

Budget

- The Council is going to be approximately \$20,000 over budget this year on the Health and Human Services (HHS) Costs line of the budget. These costs help pay for a small percentage of salaries for HHS administration.
- The Council is going to be over budget for the Department of Administrative Services Human Resources (DAS HR) fees line. These costs help pay for a small portion of the costs for HR services for the state of Iowa.
- Accounting was not paying the DD Council staff cell phone bills for approximately one year. We are now currently paid up through March 2025. Phone and ICN costs should be approximately \$120/month.
- The Council will probably go over the budgeted amount for in-state travel due to travel for voting trainings and candidate forums.
- The Council will probably spend the amount budgeted for Council Support which pays for travel, meals, and other necessary items for Council members to attend meetings and events.
- The Council should think of increasing the budgets for the above-mentioned items next year.
- The Council pays for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for the Allies in Advocacy group.

MYM! Conference

- More exhibitors are still needed.
- The conference will be held on September 18-19 in Des Moines.
- Caldwell asked how much it would be for a company to sponsor at MYM! There are different levels of sponsorship that provide different items. Link to brochure: [2025 Sponsor Exhibitor Opportunities](#)
- All proposals were able to be scheduled in the breakout sessions.
- Volunteers are needed to be room hosts, room moderators, pass out/collect questionnaires, pick up evaluations, and guide people through lunch.
 - Richardson volunteered to be a volunteer at MYM!.

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- The conference starts at 8 AM on September 18.
- The Mia Peterson and Rik Shannon advocacy awards are open for nominations.
 - The Mia Peterson award is for self-advocates.
 - The Rik Shannon award is for professionals who have focused their career on supporting people with disabilities or advocating for their rights.
- There is currently \$26,000 in sponsorships.
 - The Arc of Iowa is donating \$10,000 to sponsor the evening meal the first night and hotel stays for attendees.
 - The UCEDD has donated \$5,000.
 - HHS is also a sponsor this year for the first time.

Recruit New Members

- In the fall, an ad hoc committee may be made to recruit new council members.
 - One of the goals would be to make the Council representative of the populations that it is trying to serve.

Public Policy Committee:

Power Point link: [Public Policy Report 7.10.25.pptx](#)

- The Public Policy Committee has voting members, but all members of the Council and public are invited.
- Public policy committee duties:
 - Work with the Public Manager, staff, and Council members to:
 - Propose a public policy agenda and activities.
 - Assist with reviewing and tracking current and proposed legislation.
 - May provide education to the legislature and policy makers.
- The committee must have at least five members.
 - The Chair of the Council serves in an ex-officio capacity.
- Slate of Council member for 2025-2026
 - Wendy Andersen, Chair
 - Caitlin Owens, Vice Chair
 - Kevin Harris
 - Dakota Caldwell
 - Casey Wilkinson
 - Bussan seconded the motion made by the committee to approve the slate of candidates. The motion passed unanimously.
- Summer/Fall focus is on
 - Public Policy Priorities
 - It was suggested by Amy Campbell to make the Public Policy Priorities a 2-year document.
 - It will be decided at the September council meeting if this is what the Council and committee would like to do.

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- Employment Policy Brief
- Strategy work for 2026
 - Most of 2025 was focused on the Work Without Worry bill.
 - There is a need for more data, specifics, and education about people with disabilities who want to be employed and how this is affected by Medicaid.
 - HHS is doing a study on the Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MEPD) program.
 - Listening sessions will be held with members of the DD Council network.
- Youth Leadership Academy (YLA)
 - Crowe would like to find ways to keep YLA graduates engaged after graduation.
- Federal Policy
 - Usually 10% of time is spent on public policy. This year it has been about 90%.
 - The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) works on behalf of the DD Councils for appropriation advocacy.
 - This year there are two separate budget issues.
 - Budget reconciliation
 - This does not happen every year and deals with mandatory spending of the federal budget.
 - Congress does not have control over mandatory spending except when it affects the deficit.
 - This year this is referred to as the "One Big Beautiful Bill".
 - Medicaid work requirements will not start until the end of 2026 for most states.
 - Tax cuts are immediate.
 - There is not a clear timeline of when recipients of Medicaid will be affected by the budget cuts.
 - Crowe suggested to ask members of Congress, during conversations, at work, etc. when and how these cuts will start affecting people.
 - Thompson stated Director Garcia did not anticipate major cuts for most of the categories that apply for provider taxes except for nursing homes.
 - The provider tax goes into effect immediately and changes to 3.5% from 6%.

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- The impact for Iowa could be \$1 billion.
- Budget appropriations
 - Discretionary funding is known as the President's budget.
 - It takes a supermajority of 60 votes in the Senate for this budget to pass.
 - This budget must be passed by September 30.
 - The DD Council is going to be advocating for continued funding of programs and organizations that serve people with disabilities.
- Upcoming event schedule:
 - In the fall there will be listening sessions and Crowe is suggesting advertising these as sessions where legislators can come and listen to issues instead of answering questions.
 - Capitol Chats: August 28, September 26, October 31, and December 5.
 - DD Council meetings: September 11, November 13, January 8.
 - Make Your Mark conference is September 18-19.
 - October is National Disability Awareness month.
 - Legislative open house is January 7 (tentatively).
 - First day of the legislative session is January 12.
 - Legislative Reception will be on January 28, 1-4 PM.
- Hoenig stated that in the future he wonders how Olmstead may be used as a tool to combat institutionalization.

Public Comment:

- John McCalley stated there is a tentative plan to host an event with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) at the end of October to recognize national disability employment awareness month. Lovelace stated the DD Council would like to be a partner on this.
- Wellpoint has created a job connections tool in anticipation of some form of work requirements.

State Plan Discussion:

- The new state plan will be from October 2026-2031.
- A survey was sent out to get feedback. Over 400 responses were received.
- Canary Consulting Group was hired to analyze the results and make recommendations.
- The Executive committee (EC) is the state plan committee.
 - Committee will do a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis.

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- In March the Council will vote on the goals.
 - The plan is open to public comment for 45 days.
 - In May changes are made if needed.
 - In July the Council approves the final state plan.
 - It is due in August.
- Bussan stated that needs that were discovered were very different between the Council needs and the general public needs.
- Some of the survey results are:
 - Providers would like the workforce worked on.
 - Raise awareness about the disability access points.
 - More females than males answered the survey.
 - People that live in rural areas answered the survey more than people that live in urban areas.
 - People like receiving information from the DD Council.
- Caldwell and Wilkinson stated that it is hard to find transportation for long distances.
- Brenneman stated that she thought the DAPS (Disability Access Points) were in the behavioral health system. Lovelace stated they are under the Disability and Aging services.
 - Owens stated that DAPS are where people with disabilities will go. Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's) are where people needing aging related questions will go. The UCEDD's job as the hub is to bridge those worlds.
- Brooke Watson stated it was announced on July 1st, that they're supposed to begin transition meetings for adults that are utilizing cap and non-intensive case management situations, and then it'll go up to December 31st. The public notice link regarding sunseting the Integrated Health Home Program: [PUBLIC NOTICE: State Plan Amendment \(SPA\) IA-25-0030 Public Comment Period for Sunseting of the Integrated Health Home \(IHH\) Program | Health & Human Services](#)
- All school personnel have to have seizure training due to the Seizure Safe bill passing.
- This link provides information on the DAPS and the different providers. It also has where the disability Town halls are. Link: [Disability Services | Health & Human Services](#)
- Thompson pointed out that in the survey results, Page 11, it talks about the development of a statewide IDD mentorship program that the DD Council could potentially participate in. Thompson suggested helping to develop positive material that could be given out to people upon diagnosis.
- Wyatt Sauer stated that PBS held a caregiver program. She wondered if there was any feedback or takeaway that could be shared with the DD Council.
- Hoenig stated that Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) has a panel of self-advocates

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that talk with the current students each year. This model could be used for other events.

- Wyatt Sauer asked if it is in the DD Council state plan to look at tying events and/or messages to national events such Disability Pride month in July.

State Partner Updates and Council Member Updates:

- Laura Leise spoke on behalf of Bergeson:
 - The disability access points went live on July 1st. These services are for people who are not on Medicaid. There are radio advertisements for this.
 - There is a billboard up on I-235 promoting Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's).
 - There are social media campaigns.
 - DAPS had to come up with transition plans to ensure everyone was being served.
 - There was also a behavioral health launch.
 - There are disability townhalls and they are looking for feedback from people.
 - Laura Leise is in charge of updating the state Olmstead plan. It was last updated in 2020. Laura Leise will take a look at all the state plans and incorporate them into the state Olmstead plan. She will be incorporating date into the new plan. In Colorado, the Olmstead plan is codified into their state. Laura Leise is going to have a conversation with a lady in Colorado about this. There are concerns about whether 504 will survive. Lawrence would like Laura Leise to look at data regarding client satisfaction of people that were affected due to the Olmstead plan.
- Brenneman reported on Title five:
 - They are on track to submit their block grant application that they do every five years.
 - They partner with National Resource Center for family centered care to offer family peer support specialist training in the state. They are waiting to hear if peer support specialists will be hired.
 - The Iowa Family Leadership Training Institute (IFLTI) graduated twelve family leaders.
 - This is the tenth year of IFLTI and they will be having an in-person party on September 12th at the UCEDD.
 - Brenneman would like to see if any YLA graduates would want to create a digital story.
 - There are two storytelling trainings being offered in the fall for families to tell their oral story.

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- Digital storytelling creates a three-minute video.
- Evans from Vocational Rehabilitation reported:
 - VR is now under the Workforce Development umbrella.
 - At VR there are people that specialize in working with veterans, working with people involved in the judicial system, working with people that English is not their first language, etc.
 - Director Townsend is currently the Director of VR after James Williams left.
 - A new program was started on July 1st called Core 4. Core 4 involves the four key partners: Youth and dislocated workers, adult education, people assisting with finding employment, both VR programs including Department for the Blind.
 - VR is under the Department of Education at the federal level.
 - VR has a state rehab council that gives VR feedback and ideas and Hugh Kelly is joining the council.
 - VR does not have a waitlist.
 - Evans new email address is: eric.evans@iwd.iowa.gov
- Owens from UCEDD reported:
 - The federal legislation that authorizes the DD Council and DRI is the same legislation that authorizes UCEDD.
 - They are working on the new Aging and Disability system.
 - They are messaging the importance of the UCEDD to federal legislators right now. They are hopeful to continue getting funding.
- Brooke Watson from Medicaid reported:
 - They have the Consumer directed attended care Consumer Directed Attendant Care (ICDAC) transition that's continuing. Iowa was not in compliance with the IRS rules regarding the Federal tax treatment for service recipients in publicly funded Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) programs. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) required that the State structure, their Medicaid funded, self-directed HCBS to meet the IRS requirements, including the tax holding withholding requirement.
 - Members are still going to be able to access CDAC services however, they have to make the decision with their team if they'll be doing that through an agency, or if they'll be potentially looking at doing that through consumer choice options (CCO).
 - They are no longer accepting applications for enrollment for individual CDAC Providers as of July 1st and they're asking that members who are currently receiving ICD to have their choice made on whether they're going to go through an agency or CCO.

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- As of November 30th, for the consumer choice options choice, they are encouraging them to start that as soon as possible.
- Website that talks about the transition for CDAC: [Individual Consumer Directed Attendant Care \(ICDAC\) Transition | Health & Human Services](#)
- They are currently working through the systemic changes to get the fee schedules updated from the most recent legislatively appropriated increases that came down. They start July 1st.
- They have started to dive into the "One Big Beautiful Bill" act, and determining where that's going to impact Medicaid.
- There was a training on the 8th for the importance of benefits, planning, and the new method of providing the service that was a webinar-based training that was provided. So that'll be available on their learning management system platform: [Competency-Based Training and Technical Assistance | Health & Human Services](#)
 - There's are two additional trainings coming up on July 15th from 11 AM-12 PM that is understanding SSI and work incentives.
 - On July 22nd from 11 AM-12 PM, understanding SSDI and work incentives.
- Lovelace asked how many days does CMS have to look over the state plan amendment. Watson stated there is not a specific timeline that she knows of.
- Thompson asked if there is a plan in place for the Medicaid work requirements. Watson stated an update can be provided at the next meeting.
- Film Scene is doing a screening of "Change, Not Charity" on July 23rd.
- Andersen stated the Common Coalition is launching a "504 is Everyone" campaign in celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The launch will be online and in IA and NE. There will be a townhall on July 25th.
- Wyatt Sauer was appointed to the Medicaid Advisory Council.
- They are not going to use the Talent Bank in the future to appoint people to Boards and Councils. They are working with a West Des Moines based software company and are wanting to do a focus group with a couple people familiar with using the Talent bank. Volunteers are Hoenig, Nosbisch, Wilkinson, and Thompson.

Public Comment:

None

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Adjourn:

Nosbisch made a motion to adjourn, and Bussan seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Action Items:

None