

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Instructions: [F-01922A](#)

Name of Governmental Body: Governor's Autism Council			Attending: Council Members: Pam Lano, Nissan Bar-Lev, Roberta Mayo (phone); Vivian Hazel (phone); Liesl Jordan (phone). Public Attendees: Rebecca Thompson, Angie Levin, Nathan Halbach, Julie Quigley. DHS State Staff: Andrea Jacobson, Deb Rathermel, Sam Ninnemann, Daniel Yang, Nancy Bills, Tabitha Ramminger
Date: 2/21/2019	Time Started: 10:04 a.m.	Time Ended: 11:50 a.m.	
Location: WI Department of Health Services Building, 1 W. Wilson St., Room 630, Madison, WI			Presiding Officer: Andrea Jacobson, Section Chief, Bureau of Children's Services, Department of Health Services

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions:

- Individual introductions of Council members, DHS staff and general public.

Public Comments:

- Julie Quigley (Autism Society of South East Wisconsin) announced that she re-applied for Autism Council membership with Governor Evers' Office. She reported concerns with worker inconsistency within the waiver; difference within counties for individual services provided; waitlist continuation; and continuous staff turnover.
- Angie Levin (Mercy Health) re-applied for Autism Council membership with Governor Evers' Office. She agreed with Julie's comments and added that staff retention is a major concern and that training new staff creates delays in accepting and serving new clients. She also reported a lack of consistency with prior authorization approvals and challenges in the job market (not getting as many applicants as in past years).
- Rebecca Thompson stated that they are having an easier time obtaining prior authorizations for Forward Health services. Despite the release of the DPD/DHS joint guidance on behavioral treatment in schools, they continue to experience problems obtaining approvals from schools for providers to offer services in this setting.

Operational:

- Approval of pending 2018 Meeting minutes
 - 1) Motion made by Nissan Bar-Lev, seconded by Roberta Mayo, to approve the November 8, 2018, meeting minutes with one correction: change Judy Quigley to "Julie." Motion passed unanimously.
 - 2) Motion made by Roberta Mayo, seconded by Nissan Bar-Lev, to approve the August 9, 2018, meeting minutes without changes. Motion passed unanimously. Pam Lano abstained as she was not present at the August meeting.
- Department of Health Services Enrollment Data (Deb Rathermel and Andrea Jacobson, Bureau of Children's Services)
 - 1) Continuing to move forward to decrease the statewide waiting list. As of January 31, 2019, there were 8,874 children enrolled in the program and 1,069 waiting to enroll in the CLTS Waiver.



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- Department of Health Services management appointments:
 - 1) Andrea Palm, DHS Secretary-Designee
 - 2) Julie Willems Van Dijk, DHS Deputy Secretary
 - 3) Nicole Safar, Assistant Deputy Secretary
 - 4) Jim Jones, Medicaid Director
 - 5) Anna Benton, Deputy Medicaid Director

- Other updates:
 - 1) No Medicaid updates to share
 - 2) Rate setting program being finalized
 - 3) Provider registry has all of the counties in it at this time

Reflection of 2018 Accomplishments and Challenges (Andrea Jacobson)

Accomplishments

- DPI/DHS Joint Guidance was published to aid in clarifying roles/responsibilities regarding individualized behavioral treatment plans for school-age children including provision of behavioral treatment in the school environment.
- This council historically has provided guidance to DHS while transitioning Autism treatment services back to the Medicaid state plan “card.” The council reviewed updates on this transition.
- Received updates on:
 - 1) CLTS waiver elimination of the waiting list, program restructuring, data exploring access to BCS programs based on state proxy of potentially eligible children, provider registry, and rate setting initiatives.
 - 2) Medicaid state plan related to the transition of behavioral treatment, increased rates specific to behavioral treatment (as a result of Council and other stakeholder feedback) Wisconsin’s Medicaid Telehealth Policy.
- Review, discussion and revisions to scope of the Autism Council based on feedback from former DHS Secretary Seemeyer.
- Presentations:
 - 1) Stimmi Caregiver applications
 - 2) Nissan Bar-Lev presented DPI Data for school- aged children’s report
 - 3) Gail Chodron and Maureen Durkin on the Wisconsin Care Integration Initiative geared toward increasing early identification of children with Autism and decreasing disparities through family navigation supports and increasing outreach.
- Safety related discussion – Wendy Coomer shared new technology that can be used to assist children.

Challenges:

- Public comments about challenges with provider shortages and concerns regarding rates of reimbursement for providers.
- Maintaining and replacing membership - the Council currently has 5 appointed members, down from 9 members in 2018 (Council by-laws allow up to 13 members)
- Safety committee put on hold/discontinued with loss of council member

Discussion of the Role and Continuation of the Council (Deb Rathermel and Andrea Jacobson, BCS)

- Governor Evers' Executive Order #6 reauthorized the Governor's Autism Council for 2019. Council members reviewed the role of the Autism Council. Discussed the Council charge and distinctions from other councils. Discussion included exploration of whether this Council should remain a stand-alone body and how this Council is, or could be, partnering with other councils doing similar work.
 - 1) Deb Rathermel distributed copies of other state council's scopes for comparison and explained their membership representation; and meeting/vision priority planning. She went through the re-written Autism Council scope document that was presented to former Secretary Seemeyer, but was not approved as a new charge.
 - 2) Members expressed their support for continuing the Autism Council as a separate entity for the following reasons:
 - a) Autism is a unique disability; the Autism Behavioral Treatment Program is focused on this group's specific needs. Combining with other councils may not serve the purpose that was originally intended.
 - b) Autism community would be best served if the Council is continued until funding and related interests are well-established. Autism community is growing and their needs are expanding.
 - c) Important to be a voice for the families who have a child with Autism who are asking for: early identification/resourcing and better testing options; practitioner education; equitable insurance coverage; more efficient claims reimbursement system; increased eligibility options for low-income families.
 - d) This would be a good opportunity to interface with other councils and statewide groups on autism-related issues. Advocacy groups to consider are: Disability Rights Wisconsin; Family Voices; ABC for Health and Survival Coalition. Council needs to define goals first regarding our future meeting discussion priorities and then include appropriate special interest groups.
 - e) Council could re-write the current scope document to better define what they consider to be their role and purpose or use the Division of Medicaid Services proposed scope.
 - 3) Members reviewed current declining Council membership.
 - a) Consider writing to Governor Evers requesting his appointment of: a parent advocacy representative; Department of Public Instruction representative and encourage him to fill all open Council vacancies as soon as possible.
 - b) Members reiterated their support for including autism service-related specialists and parents of children with autism who can add "fresh voices" to the Council. Research options on how the Autism Council could engage more family participation through remote-member participation by phone or Skype meetings.
 - c) Nissan encouraged all current Autism Council members to contact Cassi Fenilli, (Director of Gubernatorial Appointments) in Governor Evers Office requesting that they be re-appointed to the Council.

Identify Council Next Steps:

- Request Telehealth Update for May 9, 2019 meeting
- Review enrollment data for children enrolled in CLTS and the Medicaid Card
- **MOTION:** made by Roberta Mayo, seconded by Nissan Bar-Lev requesting that Pam Lano draft a letter to Governor Evers requesting an updated Autism Council scope; advising him of some of the Council's identified priorities and asking the Governor for a list of his 2019-2020 priorities for the Autism Council. Motion passed unanimously.
- Pam will draft the letter to Governor Evers consistent with the approved motion and send it to members for their review and suggestions.
- Council members are asked to check in with their respective constituencies to collect input on autism related issues/concerns/suggestions that can be presented during future goal setting discussions.
- Andrea will plan to work with the Autism Council's Executive members to discuss future goal setting ideas.

Adjournment:

- **MOTION:** made by Roberta Mayo, seconded by Pam Lano to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.