

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: Governor's Autism Council			Attending: Council Members: Christina Krasovich; Robert Johnston; Rose Cutting; Dr. Rebecca Thompson; Margaret Fairbanks; Lindsay McCary; Vanesa Carmona-Lewis; Kevin Scholz Excused: Daysi Jiménez; John Jahnke; Alejandra Apreza-King; Katy Morgan Public Attendees: Sarah Cridelich; Angie Grandt DHS State Staff: Nicole Miller; Dan Kramarz; Julia; Kathryn Miller; Julia Thoe; Debra Borquist-Conlon; Kelsey Vincent; Laura Knott; Katie Dill; Laura Zimmerman; Kirsten Norby; David Feyen; Susan Seibert; Rachel Vander Wiele; Cynthia Anderson
Date: 11/10/2022	Time Started: 10:03 a.m.	Time Ended: 12 p.m.	
Location: Zoom Meeting https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1609667985			Presiding Officer: Deb Rathermel, Bureau of Children's Services, Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)

Minutes

Public Comments

Nicole Miller shared an email from a mother of an autistic child regarding SNAP benefits. The commenter stated that Families who receive SSI payments due to their child's disability should automatically be eligible for the full SNAP benefit amount based on household size unless their income is over 300% of the federal poverty level.

Operational

- Approval of the August 11 meeting minutes.
MOTION made by Lindsay McCary, seconded by Robert Johnston, to approve the meeting minutes as drafted. Motion approved unanimously.
- Approval of proposed 2023 Autism Council meeting dates: February 9, 2023; May 18, 2023; August 10, 2023, November 9, 2023. Dates approved unanimously.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Updates:

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for Home and Community-Based Services (Dan Kramarz, BCS)
 - [ARPA initiatives related to home and community-based services](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arpa/hcbs.htm) (includes list of those awarded grants)
 - DHS has awarded the first round of grants consisting of \$12 million to 43 applicants
- Public Health Emergency Unwinding Update
 - The federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) is set to expire on January 11, 2023. The federal Department of Health and Human Services will provide a 60-day notice before the end of the PHE. If there is no announcement the PHE will be extended for another 90 days. Program flexibilities remain in place until the end of the PHE.
- Katie Beckett Eligibility Process Changes (Laura Knott, BCS and David Feyen, Bureau of Clinical Policy & Pharmacy, or BCPP)
 - Presentation on recent changes to the application process for [Katie Beckett Medicaid](#).
 - The application process has been revised to improve family experience and increase timeliness of determinations.
 - Changes include a central intake process, working with one eligibility specialist through the whole process, and a streamlined disability determination process.
 - These changes are intended to result in Katie Beckett eligibility determination within 90 days of the application.

- Updates from the Bureau of Benefits Policy (Julia Thoe and Kathryn Moore)
 - Review of behavioral treatment (BT) benefit utilization from January 1 through November of 2022

Council Member Updates and Discussion:

- Becky Thompson – Shared update on survey of behavioral treatment providers on the waitlist for services
 - In August 2020, there were 1,300 children on waitlists.
 - In September 2022, there were an estimated 2,500 children on waitlists. Wait time for younger children and older children is about the same: approximately 1,250 for each group (under 6 years and 6 years and older).
 - 75% of providers have at least a six-month long waitlist and 44% have at least a year's wait to provide services.
- Vanessa Carmona-Lewis – Suggested trying to attract technicians statewide through training or outreach or the addition of other benefits such as more PTO and tuition reimbursement.
- Margaret Fairbanks – Hearing from families that the turnover of providers can be frustrating for families.
- Christina Krasovich – Addressed retention of providers. Suggested exploring ways of making the job more appealing by benefits such as pet insurance, more flexibility with personal time, support to prevent burnout or other ideas.
- Kevin Schultz – Mentioned his concern for hospitals having lists of banned patients and interested in getting a letter going to the governor. Nicole can connect those interested in creating a letter outside of the meeting.
- Lindsay McCary – Shared links to [Autism Internet Modules](#) which provide free online professional training for those who support, instruct, work with, or live with someone with autism and [ADEPT \(Autism Distance Education Parent Training\) Interactive Learning](#). She suggested these as resources for the No Wrong Door project. Shared link to research articles/topics in [Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders](#)
- Lindsay McCary – Wondering what others have heard as far as waitlist for evaluations. Margaret mentioned she's been hearing six months to one year. Lindsay has noticed an increase in waitlist for older children.
- Becky Thompson – Shared a draft letter to the governor with topics including common goals of the council, describing challenges, increasing service capacity, increasing reimbursement rates for diagnostic evaluations, provide concurrent billing, continuing education for service provider, navigation of services, and budget recommendations.
 - Vanessa – Asked if something regarding building community awareness on careers could be included.
 - Becky Thompson – Suggested forming a task force to pull together ideas together and to have a single point of contact for families. Maybe advocating for family navigation for autism separately.
 - Robert Johnston – Suggested adding to the letter the needs of adults with autism. He would like to see the scope of the Council expanded to include adult as well as children's services. Becky suggested a handoff from the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program to IRIS instead of a re-application process for the adult population who still need support.
 - Becky Thompson – Will send a draft letter to the Council members to review. Feedback will be due to her on November 25. She will provide a final letter to the Council members by December 2.

MOTION made by Christina Krasovich, seconded by Robert Johnston to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting on February 9, 2022.

Prepared by: Laura Zimmerman on 11/15/2022.