

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: Governor's Autism Council			Attending: Kim Bruessel, Margaret Fairbanks, Bob Johnston, Lindsay McCary, Christina Krasovich, Rebecca Thompson, Rose Cutting, Katy Morgan-Davies, Kevin Scholtz, Vanessa Carmona
Date: 8/10/2023	Time Started: 10 a.m.	Time Ended: 11:45a.m.	
Location: https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1608990182			Absent: Daysi Jimenez
			Public Attendees: None
			DHS Staff: Nicole Miller, Jess Ford-Kelly, Beth Gullickson, Jacqueline Neuohr, Alexandra Renk, Autumn Linsmeier, Debbie Borquiest-Conlon, Andy Forsaith
			Presiding Officer: Deb Rathermel, Bureau of Children's Services, Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions:

- Individual introductions of Council members, Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) staff and general public.

Public Comments:

- No attendees from public present

Operational

- Approval of the February 9, 2023, meeting minutes
 - **MOTION** made by Christina Krasovich, seconded by Robert Johnston to approve the meeting minutes as drafted. Motion approved unanimously.
- Vote held for three open positions on the Executive Planning Committee to serve for a term of one year. The three candidates each received eight votes:
 - Vanessa Carmona-Lewis
 - Margaret Fairbanks
 - Becky Thompson

Updates from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)

- **Bureau of Children's Services (BCS)**
 - Public Health Emergency Unwinding Update Presented by Beth Gullickson, BCS
 - During the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE), people were not disenrolled from Medicaid programs and other temporary flexibilities were allowed by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).
 - The COVID-19 PHE was ended on 5/11/23.
 - The goals of the Public Health Emergency unwinding are to implement a successful return to routine operations and ensure Wisconsin residents continue to have health care coverage.
 - Most Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus members have renewals scheduled between June 2023 and May 2024, but not all members must complete renewals.
 - New renewal status webpage: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/renewalstatus.htm>
 - Katie Beckett Medicaid (MA) renewals are occurring from June 2023 to May 2024.
 - Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources, and Treatment. (START) Project Update presented by Jackie Neurohr, Bureau of Quality and Oversight

- In 2022, DHS contracted with the National Center for START Services: <https://centerforstartservices.org/> to evaluate the state's service system for people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs.
- Called the [START Scan](#) (PDF), this evaluation helped us learn how effective services and supports are for people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs in Wisconsin. Around 1,380 partners participated in this process.
- The START Scan recommended ways to improve systems and services for people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs. There are five themes:
 - Improve crisis services
 - Expand training and education for providers
 - Increase availability of outpatient and preventative mental health services
 - Improve coordination between service systems
 - Improve supports for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs so they have a better quality of life
- Next steps for the project are to begin selecting subcommittee members, draft an action plan, and publish a report with recommendations
 - Visit the Wisconsin START Initiative webpage to learn more and see how to get involved: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dms/start.htm>
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grants for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) presented by Ali Renk, BBP
 - DHS has concluded two rounds of ARPA grants to fund initiatives for providers that serve the home and community-based programs in Wisconsin to find innovative ways to address service delivery and worker shortage.
 - In the second round of grants, DHS selected 89 applicant projects and will disburse over \$12.4 million in project funding. Combined with the first round, nearly \$30 million has been awarded as a result of this grant program.
 - The grant awardee success story website has been launched: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arpa/hcbs-grant-success.htm>
 - For information about the grants initiative and funded projects, visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arpa/hcbs-grantsopportunities.htm>
- **Bureau of Benefits Policy (BBP)**
No updates

Interpretation Services Presentation by Autumn Linsmeier, BBP

- Medicaid providers are required to provide interpretation services to members when needed.
- To promote accessibility of interpreter services, Wisconsin Medicaid will reimburse providers directly for interpretation services.
- Members should ask for an interpreter right away when contacting provider to schedule a medical appointment but can request an interpreter at any time, even during an appointment.
- An interpreter will attend the health care appointment in person, over the phone or on the computer.
- An interpreter will interpret the conversation between the member and the provider, not replace the conversation and maintain Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act/Protected Health Information (HIPAA/PHI) standards.

Council Member Updates, Discussion, and Emerging Topics

- Christina Krasovich: Shared that she is interested in understanding more about the Parental Payment Limit for the Children's Long Term-Care Support (CLTS) Program. She has heard from some families seeking to understand why there can be a long delay between provision of services and billing as providers can bill up to a year after services are provided. She would like to know if there are options for families to have more insight into their projected costs.
- Margaret Fairbanks: Asked for more information about CLTS enrollment wait times in different areas of the state. She is interested in understanding why some counties have a delay and how this relates to funding.
- Rebecca Thompson: Shared an update on the requested rate increase for behavioral treatment providers during the recent budget development. The rate increase was included in the governor's proposed budget, but it was not included in the final version of the budget passed by the legislature.

- Bob Johnston: Asked for an update on his inquiry related to expanding the scope of the Council to include adults with Autism.

Presentation on No Wrong Door Launch by Debbie Borquist-Conlon, BCS

- The vision of this ARPA funded project is to support families in finding their right next step after learning their child has a delay, disability, or special health care need.
- This project will enhance and expand the services currently provided by the information and referral specialists in the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program.
- The five CYSHCN regional centers will continue provide information and referral services, links to community providers, support for parents and guardians, technical assistance, and trainings.
- Wisconsin Wayfinder will provide a single contact for families to be connected with the regional centers:
 - 1-877-WiscWay
 - [Dhs.wi.gov/wiscway](https://dhs.wi.gov/wiscway)
- The program will launch statewide in October 2023

2023-2025 DHS Budget Update presented by Andy Forsaith, Office of Policy Initiatives and Budget

- Governor Evers has signed the 2023-25 biennial budget passed by the legislature.
- The legislature passed a new behavioral health crisis model of \$10 million that will be drafted into separate legislation.
- The legislature did not approve Medicaid expansion.
- The legislature did not adopt increases for outpatient health and day services or increases in autism rates.
- The legislature did not adopt behavioral health MA school-based services and community services.
- The budget continued the ARPA HCBS increase that was implemented in January 2022, which includes a 5% rate increase for eligible HCBS services.
- Increase rates for personal care services, and nursing home support services.
- The legislature did not adopt behavioral health MA school-based services and community services.

MOTION made by Margaret Fairbanks, seconded by Christina Krasovich to adjourn the meeting at 11:45AM. Motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting on Thursday, November 10, 2023, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Prepared by: Jess Ford-Kelly on 8/11/2023.