



## **Rhode Island Division of Developmental Disabilities Community Forum**

**August 8, 2017 -- 4:00 - 6:00 pm**

**Coventry Department of Human Services and Senior Center, 50 Wood St, Coventry**

### **State Leadership in Attendance:**

#### *BHDDH*

Kerri Zanchi, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities  
Heather Mincey, Assistant Director of Administrative Services  
Anne LeClerc, Associate Director of Program Performance  
Adam Brusseau, Finance Administrator  
Joni Martell, Residential Coordinator  
Tracey Cunningham, Associate Director of Employment  
Dianne Curran, RI Consent Decree Coordinator  
Kevin Savage, Licensing Administrator  
Linda Reilly, Chief Community Relations Officer  
Jenna Mackevich, BHDDH Communications Coordinator

#### *DHS*

Joe Murphy, Assistant Administrator, Office of Rehabilitation Services

#### *EOHHS*

Brian Gosselin, Senior Strategy Officer, Executive Office of Health and Human Services

### **Overview of Division Organizational Structure and Division Updates by DD Director and Senior Staff**

**Kerri Zanchi, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities**, described the updated structure of DDD, which was explained using an organizational chart (see attachment).

**Heather Mincey, Assistant Director of Administrative Services** went into detail about age distribution of DDD consumers, summarized the applications received by month, and eligibility application's age distribution. Two cogent points are that we have an aging population and we continue to work with our partners --RIPIN, RIDE, ORS and the schools -- to encourage early application consistent with Eligibility by 17 policy. Heather further explained that Carolee Leach began in the new position of Transition Coordinator in January and has met with, or had contact with, more than 100 individuals/family members. Diana Kriner from RIPIN reported they have been in touch with 234 families who have been provided transition info/assistance through outreach materials in schools. They have been assisted with information and guidance beginning the transition planning process. Heather discussed the increase in social caseworkers to 24 (from 20) with each having a caseload of approximately 160 cases. She also explained that there have been five SIS-A trainings for staff since November of 2016. Questions about bilingual staff were raised specific to a hiring requirement and the division will pursue again in accordance with its union contract.

**Joni Martell, Residential Coordinator**, responded to concerns about the future of group homes in Rhode Island. She explained that in addition to group homes and shared living, the state is working to expand residential support options. Efforts are underway to develop supported models through Section 8 subsidies and other apartments such that individualized models are more readily available for those

interested. Feedback from the community included needed communications about these potential models.

**Tracey Cunningham, Employment Specialist**, said that 22 providers are currently involved in Person-Centered Employment Program, with 106 individuals becoming employed since January 2017.

**Anne LeClerc, Associate Director of Program Performance**, spoke about efforts underway to enhance quality assurance and oversight. She announced that in these efforts, there will be two Quality Committees formed. One committee would be internal; the second would be created to look at the system and advise on how to improve as a whole. These committees with launch in September and outreach for those interested is underway. Questions about the variance process came up and Anne explained that FAQ on the website would be posted, but she assured that variances can be made on a person to person basis. Community participation in this conversation supported concerns raised about how and when to request a variance and how these were developed with consumer and advocate input.

**Adam Brusseau, Finance Administrator**, explained that the Budget passed on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and \$6.1 million was allocated for DSP raises; this would be \$11 million in two years for much needed raises in this field.

#### **DDD Regulations Update – Kevin Savage, Licensing Administrator**

Kevin Savage reviewed BHDDH's work on the regulatory revision of its state regulations as part of the Governor's statewide Administrative Procedures Act (APA) project. The work groups (in which all stakeholder have been invited to participate) have been reviewing, updating and rewriting regulations from the perspective that regulations have the "force and effect of law." Non-regulatory policies and procedures will be appropriately coded in BHDDH's upcoming online policy manual. The work groups have been meeting since May and the first draft of the regulations is scheduled to be finished by mid-September. Reviews and re-writes will follow; the process is scheduled for promulgation by the end of the year.

#### **Consent Decree Update – Dianne Curran, Consent Decree Coordinator**

Dianne Curran provided an update on the recent status hearing and the Court Monitor's report. She spoke on the following topics: Supported Employment, Quality Improvement, Integrated Day Services, Career Development Planning and Benefits Planning and Provider Capacity. She reminded that the Consent Decree does not cover residential issues.

#### **Person-Centered Planning and Conflict-Free Case Management**

Kerri discussed undertaking the process of Person Centered Planning Forums in which 15 were held including 6 family forums facilitated by family members. The feedback and information from the forums are being gathered and there will be 2 feedback forums in September. Deanne Gagne (Advocates in Action) spoke about Person-Centered Thinking and said that everyone should think outside the box of the typical service system and that the individual should always remember that they are driving the vehicle and should decide how they want to live their life. She also spoke about the Advocates in Action Annual Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Comments from the community included an understanding of the significant change conflict-free case management will be for Rhode Island.

#### **Community Resources and Community Partners Update**

RI APSE's Kiernan O'Donnell and Kim Einloth spoke about the work of APSE, a grassroots national group which has been in existence for 30 years; 4 years in Rhode Island. They described their cornerstone event, Take Your Legislator to Work Day, and encouraged folks to participate in order to bring a message of employment and empowerment to elected officials. The DD Council has collaborated with RIAPSE to

ensure successful events. RIAPSE has a 93% passing rate on the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) exam.

### **RI FORCE (Families Organized For Reform, Change and Empowerment)**

An initiative of the RI Developmental Disabilities Council, RI FORCE plans to reinvigorate advocacy among the DD community. Chris Simonelli spoke about the new group, which has met five times with Ken Renaud. An event called Coffee and Café Conversation will be held this fall to discuss a strategic plan of action. The DD Council will support RI FORCE until it can support itself.

### **Discussion**

Discussions ensued after the agenda items were completed. Some suggestions from participants to the Division were--

- Eligibility by 17 is showing progress-helps to know who is entering the system; also, need to work with Early Intervention, RIDE, and Katie Beckett data
- Families should be notified of Tier levels 30 days after a SIS
- Seems to be a log-jam with SIS for transition age youth; need two years to plan properly, not one year
- Work on bringing new providers into the system to help with capacity