

**AHS Integration Efforts
Autism Planning for the Future
Meeting Minutes**

Date: June 22, 2021

3:00-4:30

Overall Goal of our work group: How do we use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont?

Present: Cheryle Wilcox, Molly Bumpas, Marilyn Mahusky, Cammie Naylor, Matt Habedank, Lana Metayer, Melanie Hall, Diane Bugbee, Pam McCarthy, Danielle Brier, Beth Forbes, Danielle Howes, Alex Langevin, Sara Stowell, Jenn Johnson, Kathryn Workman, Philip Eller, Laurie Mulhern

Regrets: Hanna Wagner, Joy Wilcox

Agenda Item	Discussion Notes	Next Steps
Welcome and Updates	<p>Autism Assessment Clinic, Molly Bumpas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for social workers for their team <p>DMH, Cheryle Wilcox:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner as of July 5th: Emily Hawes, Commissioner and Alison Krompf, Deputy Commissioner. • Major workforce challenges across our Designated and Specialized Service Agencies. DMH is focused closely on this and creating a strategic plan to impact this issue. Yesterday, Cheryle and Alison were interviewed on VPR about this. <p>Vermont Family Network, Pam McCarthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to a diff. suite in Williston, will be opening their doors on July 1st . • Have a policy advocacy director now, Robyn Freedner-McGuire, to address issues such as people waiting • Wondering if folks involved in H. 243 will be involved in this group? <p>Diane Bugbee, DAIL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selina Hickman, Division Director, Developmental Services is departing as of today. The position is posted. Sad loss for DAIL and providers. <p>Marilyn Mahusky, Vermont Legal Aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced Cammie Naylor, attorney in the Montpelier office. She has been at VLA for 3 ½ years and she will be representing Vermont Legal Aid starting today. 	

DVHA, Danielle Brier, Autism Specialist:

- ABA updates: benefit will be moving from a prospective payment to a retro payment model where agencies will submit hours they served so there are more predictable payments.
- There is a new site visit occurring every year with ABA providers to look at clinical practice, documentation and ensure alignment with consistent practice statewide.
- Danielle will be going out on family leave this summer; she is working on a contingency plan for coverage while she is away.
- Children with Medicaid DO NOT NEED an autism diagnosis to start receiving ABA services. You would do your initial assessment as a provider and submit to Medicaid. ABA services are also for children with developmental disabilities who may benefit from these services.
- If you have questions about ABA benefits please reach out to Danielle.Brier@vermont.gov

Alex Langevin, AOE Special Education Team:

- Got their budget approved for statewide consultant grants which will be posted today or tomorrow.
- Working on rule changes
- Head of monitoring for AOE being posted for recruitment

SD Associates, Jenn Johnson:

- Gearing up for summer, moving offices, still in Williston but a new spot.
- Just took a few kids off the waitlist (toddlers) all will be starting in new space.
- Still have a significant wait list of others waiting for services.

Lana Metayer, Parent:

- Workforce shortages is effecting services for kids, PCAs, respite, the allocated \$16/hr is not enough for pay so parents are supplementing with their own funds to have skilled PCAs.
- Extraordinarily difficult for children to attend camps and programs because there are not enough staff to support them AND camps and others do not understand what inclusion means. E.g. a camp director saying, yes the PCA can attend if they are not distracting to others. This is not what inclusion means. Education is not happening in a centralized way.

	<p>UVMCC, Dr. Forbes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant concerns about access in evaluations and obtaining services. • Their waiting lists have doubled. • They have started discussing how they can impact access and they are working with the Child Development Clinic. <p>Child Development Clinic, Kathy Workman:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still committed to the number of children on their waiting list (around 90 kids)—some children have been waiting 15-16 months for a diagnosis. • They are going to start seeing children again in person next month (July). • Dr. Carol Hassler, retired at the end of April which leaves a significant gap. <p>NCSS, Matt Habedank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing staffing challenges to a severe degree and getting very few applicants when posting positions. This adversely affects service provision. 	
<p>Special Education changes in LCAR ~ Marilyn Mahusky, Vermont Legal Aid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please see attached PowerPoint shared today for full details. • New special ed rules take effect July 1, 2022 • Powerpoint covers the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why did the rules change? ○ UVM Study that showed a number a limitations, based on the current funding model. ○ DMG Report made five recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure core instruction meets most needs of most students ▪ Provide additional instructional time ▪ Ensure students who struggle receive all instruction from highly skilled teachers; ▪ Create or strengthen a systems-wide approach to supporting positive student behaviors based on expert support; and ▪ Provide specialized instruction from skilled and trained experts to students with more intensive needs ○ Independent Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Charged with making recommendations on criteria to be used by State Board of Education for designation of “approved” independent school. 	<p>Thank you, Marilyn!</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment period is open to rule change proposals ○ Major changes to rule series 2360 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Definition of “Special Education Services” ▪ Definition “Adverse Effect” ▪ Addition of “functional performance” to basic skill areas ▪ Elimination of discrepancy model ▪ Increased voice for parents ○ Major differences slides which show changes from old rule to new rule ● Eligibility Rule ● Adverse Effect Rule 2362(d) ● Basic Skill Areas Rule 2392(g) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Functional skills is new: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Means the acquisition of essential and critical skills needed for a child with disabilities to learn specific daily living, personal, social, and employment skills or the skills needed to increase performance and independence at work, in school, in the home, in the community, for leisure time, and for post-secondary and other life-long opportunities. ● Parent Input – New Rule – 2362.2.4(j) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The IEP shall contain a section for parents to provide written comments regarding their child’s IEP. Following an IEP meeting to write or amend an IEP, the LEA shall send to the parent together with prior written notice of decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent has 10 days to complete & return ▪ Purpose of – facilitate feedback from families to ensure they have an opportunity to express any opinions about IEP or IEP process 	
Possible Initiatives for this group to focus on in the next year	<p>Will discuss next month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What would your number one priority be? ● Can you spend time outside of meetings? 	