

# State Interagency Team Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 25, 2024

2:00-3:30

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

**Facilitator:** Beth Sausville

**Notetaker:** Cheryle Wilcox

1. Invest in retention and recruitment efforts to address workforce challenges to be able to provide necessary and quality services to children and families.
2. Advocate for parity with private insurance for children and youth enrolled in commercial insurance plans, so they can access the appropriate residential level of care needed.
3. Support alternative housing options that support families by encouraging more affordable/diverse/mixed socioeconomic/multigenerational living options.
4. Increase supports in the community for children and youth, and ensure we have a higher level of care in Vermont for children with complex needs (such as co-occurring, developmental disabilities, medical issues) to decrease the number of children sent out of state for treatment.

**Present:** Cheryle Wilcox, Beth Sausville, Laurel Omland, Melanie D'Amico, Danielle Bragg, Amy Lincoln Moore, Alicia Hanrahan, Karen Price, Sandi Yandow, Olivia Gaudreau, Renee Weeks, Dana Robson. Guest: Aryka Radke, DCF-Family Services Deputy Commissioner

**Regrets:** Deb Forreth, Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Melanie Feddersen

Agenda Item	Discussion Notes	Next Steps
<p><b>Updates-- any major updates we all need to know about related to our System of Care</b> <i>(staffing changes, new programming, policy changes, fiscal, workforce challenges and planning, legislative outcomes)</i></p>	<p><b>DMH, Cheryle Wilcox:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PRTF: An Agency of Human Services team continues to dedicate significant time working towards standing up a 15-bed Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility in Vermont to address the high number of children placed out of state by the Departments of Mental Health, Children and Families, and Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. On Monday, February 12th, a group from DVHA, DMH, DCF-FSD, and AOE went to visit the building on the Retreat Campus called Linden Lodge which is where the PRTF would be housed. Due to the current moratorium on independent schools per H. 483 with no timeline as to when that will be lifted, the youth placed at this PRTF would only be able to access partial day tutoring.</li></ul> <p><b>DMH, Laurel Omland:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinated Specialty Care for Early Episode Psychosis-- get info from Laurel.</li></ul>	

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	<p><b>AOE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne Bordonaro is now the Interim Deputy Secretary at AOE.</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System of Care-working to stand up a secure facility in Middlesex for 4 youth. Need a contract for programming on that site.</li> <li>Windham site – 2 bed Crisis Stabilization Program moving forward to be stood up hopefully by the end of the year</li> <li>Special Response Team to support youth who need staffing in temporary sites—Kheya did training for this group on mental health and trauma-informed care.</li> <li>Working with VCORP to move forward with some tenets of QRTP under Families First legislation. There will be an advisory group for congregate care—Dana has been invited as a DMH rep, if others are interested let Beth know.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discuss letter from Chittenden LIT</b></p>	<p><b>Reviewed letter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our system is struggling with youth who have DD.</li> <li>There is a <a href="#">moratorium on independent schools</a> and that is a problem given some programs have closed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moratorium was put in effect due to a Supreme Court decision that said public funds couldn't go to religious schools because of possible discrimination that could occur.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Youth can be on DS waivers and in school still.</li> <li>Placing in residential due to a lack of educational options is not appropriate.</li> <li>AOE is getting more requests for residential programs than before.</li> <li>Dana shared she has been talking to DAIL staff recently who have been denied waivers due to being in school. DAIL has clarified this isn't mutually exclusive — youth can be eligible for a waiver even when they are in school.</li> <li>Capacity in alternative schools is severely diminished due to workforce challenges.</li> <li>Dana asked--Can we pull data together where we think the lack of an adequate school placement has led to residential referrals.</li> </ul>	<p>Highlight to the legislature about the impact on youth of the moratorium.</p> <p>Educating the field about what is possible and what isn't re: education and DS waivers.</p> <p>Connect with our DAIL colleagues to discuss this given they were unable to attend today due to</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of educational placements for youth with DS.</li> <li>• Currently, there are 18/19 youth at one program in NH (Easter Seals) -- all are DS eligible. 6 years old to 18 years old.</li> <li>• Shared with SIT there is an AHS group that came together to work on the PRTF; that same group is now focused on addressing the needs of youth with DD— related to level of care, services, crisis bed access. (VCIN beds have not been used by any youth in two years due to adults with DD and other complex issues being in the beds without a place to go).</li> <li>• 25% of youth placed through CRC right now have developmental disabilities—point in time as of today that Dana looked at during the meeting. Most of these youth are in out of state placements.</li> <li>• Just yesterday Melanie D’Amico heard from a DA that they did not need to do eligibility for a youth in DCF custody. She had to push back hard and clarify. Need to follow up with DAIL staff.</li> <li>• Ask Howard Center to gather local data to share about this issue that they are seeing-how do they advocate with their legislators and highlight this to others?</li> <li>• Need to communicate about how we are working across depts and agencies to highlight and move on the issue of children with DD push this issue.</li> </ul>	<p>prior commitments.</p> <p>Cheryle to reach out to DAIL to see if a formal letter has gone out DAs about serving youth in DCF custody.</p>
<p><b>System of Care Report DRAFT review</b></p>	<p>Brief review of system of care draft—looked at data and let the team know Beth and Cheryle need to do one final review and make some edits then it will be final and sent out.</p>	