

**DSP Workforce Initiative
Steering and Advisory Committee Meeting
Champaign, IL
October 23, 2007**

In attendance:

Laura Allen, *Gateway Services*; Rich Behl, *Division of Developmental Disabilities*; Christina Berry, *Alan G. Ryles*; Kim Brewerton, *New Hope Center*; Pam Bruce, *Ray Graham Association*; Jessica Dunlop, *Alan G. Ryles*; Carol Elliot, *Marc First*; Kathleen Flynn, *New Hope Center*; Tina Fogerty, *Neumann Association*; Rick Glass, *Mark First*; Vanessa Hoffeditz, *Gateway Services*; Dawn Kellogg, *Community Support Services*; Tim Knapp, *New Hope Center*; Marianne Lambur, *Community Support Services*; Jessica Madsen, *Gateway Services*; Julie Marcionetti, *Seguin Services*; Kristy Martin, *Sparc*; Mark McCabe, *Sparc*; Lorraine McCormick, *Community Support Services*; Susan Murphy, *Cornerstone Services*; Tim O'Brien, *Sparc*; Jane O'Melia, *Arc of Rock Island County*; Chris Patton, *Alan G. Ryles*; Mike Perry, *AFSCME Council 31*; Barb and Lester Prichard, *Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities*; Carlissa Puckett, *Sparc*; Pam Schaefer, *Alan G. Ryles*; Janet Shelton, *Macon Resources*; Paulette Stark, *New Hope Center*; Lou Ellen Strong, *Arc of Iroquois County*; LeAn Taylor, *Little City Foundation*; Paula Vanier, *Self-Advocate*; Brandon Von Liski, *Sparc*; Dave Wasserkrug, *Macon Resources*

Project staff:

Institute on Disability and Human Development: Kristen Connolly, Katie Keiling, Dale Mitchell, Tia Nelis, Mary Kay Rizzolo, Tamar Heller
Institute on Community Integration: John Sauer
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities: Margie Harkness

Welcome and Introductions

- The planning group was thanked for their work in figuring out the logistics of the meeting: Lorraine McCormick, Vanessa Hoffeditz, Tim Knapp, Carlissa Puckett, Dawn Kellogg, and Paula Vanier. Paula had a contact at Parkland College that allowed us free space for the meeting.

Personalizing the Issue

- Paula Vanier presented information regarding Personal assistants (PAs). She summarized the current funding available for individuals with disabilities to use in hiring PAs including the DHS-DRS Home Services Program, Medicaid Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver for Adults with Developmental Disabilities, and Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Homemaker Services.
- Concerns with the system were summarized and suggestions for change were made. Paula would like to develop a state-wide advocacy group for people with disabilities and their families to provide a venue to voice their opinions, frustrations, or concerns regarding PA issues. This advocacy group would address some of the challenges with the current system and together unite for change.
- Do you or someone you know want to be a part of a statewide advocacy group regarding PA issues? Contact: Paula Vanier at pvan76@sbcglobal.net or Katie Keiling at kkeiling@uic.edu or 312-996-1002

Workgroup Reports

IDSP Group

- The DSPs are solidifying their group and focusing on spreading information about their group.
 - They are making folders to market the group to other DSPs.
 - Also, they are developing a website that will include a mechanism for people to look up and send letters to their legislators about key issues. They will be looking for sponsorship for this site which will be about \$20/month.
 - The grant the DSPs applied for was denied so they continue to look for funding.
 - The by-laws will be finalized by the next meeting, which is Jan. 7th in Brookfield.
 - Mark McCabe is the new assistant secretary for the group.
 - They are working on having a DSP Day designated for Illinois by the Secretary of State.
- DSPs to DC was Sept 9-11 and 6 DSPs from 3 organizations were supported to attend by their organizations and the project. This was a very powerful experience for everyone who attended. There was a lot of networking among the DSPs, people with disabilities, and parents. They rallied around House Resolution 1279 which will allow states to raise the DSPs pay in private organizations to that of state wages using Medicaid dollars.
 - ANCOR is collecting stories from DSPs at DSPTv.org and DSPstories .com

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

- This group continues to focus on increasing the wages for DSPs through legislative advocacy. The budget process this year has been very difficult and disappointing.

Training Taskforce

- This group is focusing on developing a crosswalk to compare the College of Direct Support (CDS) and the IL mandated DSP training with the goal of getting the CDS approved by the state as an option for training DSPs.
- The group is close to completing the crosswalk and matching all the IL competencies with the CDS. They will get this final version to Rich Behl of DHS to review in the next week. It looks positive that the CDS matches up and will hopefully be approved by the state.
- Supervisory Training is being requested around the state and the group is developing a team of trainers to disseminate this important information around the state. Katie and Vanessa Hoffeditz will be presenting for the Council of Rehabilitation Affiliates on Nov. 28th in Chicago. Katie and Kristy Martin will be presenting at the QMRP leadership training in Alsip on Jan. 22. Katie and Tina Fogerty will be presenting at the AAIDD-IL Conference on March 13 in Alsip.

Executive Directors

- An initial proposal for purchase of the CDS was reviewed and the Executive Directors would like to work with the state to purchase the CDS. Each organization would have a \$2800 annual administration fee. Since the DHS training has not been updated since 1999, the CDS provides quality content that enables ongoing best practice training. Also, the CDS can be used for credentialing and increasing the professionalism of the field. The courses on the CDS for supervisors are very appealing to Executive Directors.
- UIC's Department of Disability and Human Development is developing an online course for supervisory and managers that will be beneficial to the field.

Key Accomplishments

- All the progress of the Workgroups is a huge accomplishment, especially IDSP group. The group continues to evolve as things move forward and assess how to be most effective for change in our state.
- Data for Year 3 is being collected and there will be one additional round of data collected at the Year 4 mark.
- Toolkits for individuals and families to find, choose, and keep great DSPs are going quickly and have proven to be a great resource for people. Information about this resource is being disseminated at the Waiver trainings and many other states are interested in this as well.

Summary & Discussion

- The group discussed the importance of continuing the momentum of the Steering and Advisory Committee. The quarterly meetings provide a valuable exchange of ideas. The DSPs find the larger meetings to be empowering and shows them that people in administrative roles are behind them.
- The group would like to develop a more strategic and cohesive plan. It has been a while since the initial goals were developed and much has evolved since that time. Refocusing by redefining the outcomes and successes will help the group move forward in a consistent direction. At the next meeting the group will brainstorm and shape the direction for the future.
- An idea is to have regional meetings for other organizations to learn more about the work of the initiative. Organizations involved in the project can show and tell the process and outcomes and share the CDS.

Next Meeting:

January 15, 2008; 10am-3pm

- **Somewhere in Pontiac, IL (more details to come)**