



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
District Central Independent Oversight Committee (IOC)
Public Meeting Minutes Summary
Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Committee Chairperson, **Linda Mecham**. The date is March 28, 2022, at 10:04 am. **The meeting took place Virtually due to COVID-19**. Physical location when meetings resume in person will be at 4400 N Central Ave, Ste (to be determined) Phoenix, AZ 85012.

Welcome and Introductions

Attendance Virtually:

- **Sherry Wilhelmi**
- **Eva Hamant**
- **Linda Mecham**
- **Carol McNulty**
- **Mandy Herman**
- **Carolyn Willmer**

Attendance by Phone:

- **Eduarda Yates**
- **Lisa Ehlenberger**

Absent:

- **Andrea Potosky**
- **Debbie Stapley**
- **Marlene Riggs**

Public in Attendance:

- **Tina Buettner**

Health Plan Liaisons:

- **Karen Kramer (UnitedHealthcare)**

ADOA:

- **Larry Allen**



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
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Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

DDD:

- **Jeffrey Yamamoto** (IOC Liaison)
- **Patricia Sandino** (District Central PRC Chairperson)
- **Liz Perez** (DDD volunteer Coordinator)
- **James Maio** (District Central Quality Improvement Manager)
- **Leah Gibbs** (DDD OIFA Administrator)

Call to Public

Linda Mecham made a call to the public. She called on **Patricia Sandino** to tell the committee how she found **Tina Buettner**. She contacted Tina through a provider.

Tina Buettner introduced herself and stated why she is interested in joining the IOC. She is a Graduate from ASU and has been interested and working in advocacy all her life. She has been in advocacy for her kids and learned a lot from different jobs. She has three biological kids and one stepchild. Two of her kids have a neuro-diverse disability. She has been dealing with DDD for 18 years. Looking forward to working in the IOC.

Voting on New Membership

Linda Mecham asked for a motion to vote to have **Tina Buettner** voted in a new full voting member of the District Central IOC.

- **Carolyn Willmer** motioned to vote in **Tina Buettner** to be a member of the District Central IOC.
- **Sherry Wilhelmi** seconded the motion.
- A vote was taken and all present (see Welcome and Introductions attendance) voted “Aye”, there were no “Nay” votes. Motion was passed and **Tina Buettner** is now a member of the District Central IOC.

Discussion on Incident Reports and Behavior Plans

Linda Mecham called on Eva to update the committee. She began by stating that there were 5 IRs in suicides. Member commented on social media that someone asked the member if they wanted to see sexually explicit photos of the person on social media. This triggers the member to threaten suicide later. She has episodic events of suicide threats. She shared other IR events with similar sexual



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natures. All the members have counselling, and Eva wants to know if the counsellors are aware of events or threats and are doing something for these events.

Linda Mecham stated she wanted **James Maio** to discuss the Quality investigations and any statistics surrounding the Abuse and Neglect trainings going on with DDD vendors and members.

James Maio stated in general terms, not all incidents are investigated. Some do not reach the criteria to be investigated by Quality. The Abuse and Neglect (A&N) training is not currently being tracked for its effect on the members. It would take a coordination between Qualified Vendor Agency (QVA), Support Coordination (SC), and Behavior Health (BH) services to discuss these effects in the members team meetings. There currently is not any language in the team meetings which addresses the information desired by the IOC. Should the IOC want to elevate the gathering of this data, the IOC would have to submit their request to the DDD Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to put it into the plan of the member's meeting.

Linda Mecham asked for a motion to create a subcommittee to discuss and develop language which would convey the request to add to the member's plan, information about the effectiveness of the A&N training with the member.

- **Sherry Wilhelmi** to create a subcommittee to discuss and develop language which would convey the request to add to the member's plan, information about the effectiveness of the A&N training with the member.
- **Eva Hamant** seconded the motion.
- A vote was taken and all present (see Welcome and Introductions attendance) voted "Aye", there were no "Nay" votes. Motion was passed.
- The subcommittee will consist of **Eva Hamant, Sherry Wilhelmi, Tina Buettner** and **Linda Mecham**.

Carol McNulty asked to clarify the subcommittee function.

Linda Mecham stated to explore language to discuss/track the A&N effectiveness during the member team meetings.

Leah Gibbs informed the committee that DDD is planning to review and revisit the A&N training at it's year anniversary in the summer. The Public Comments will be available to DDD IOC at that time.

Sherry Wilhelmi stated that when the training went out that DDD assured concerned members that there was data to support the trainings. She stated that DDD is only keeping data on whether the member took the training or not. There is no data collected on if the training is a traumatizing event or a trigger for some individuals. This is a concern for her.



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
District Central Independent Oversight Committee (IOC)
Public Meeting Minutes Summary
Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Parental Rights Bill

Eva Hamant provided background of bill that would mandate all educators and school administration to inform parents of any information the school personnel receive whether in confidence or not in respect to physical, mental, and emotional health.

Linda Mecham informed Eva that that would only apply to minors and that the current focus is for the adult population.

This topic was not discussed further during this session.

Pain Update SB-1162

Sherry Wilhelmi stated that SB1162 made it through house. She gave background on how the bill effect the DDD members. It provides that the pain management providers that are working with known chronic pain members to continue to prescribe pain medication without fear of prosecution. The problem is that the pain providers are still fearful of prosecution and have been retracting prescription to keep from losing licenses.

Leah Gibbs asks that if there are specific incidents of this happening to reach out to the OIFA office and or Customer Service to have it elevated and addressed by the DDD pharmacist to work with the PCP and the pharmacy.

Tina Buettner asked what the Senate Bill number was and commented that she is glad that this problem is being address as she has had denials pertaining to pain for her own children.

Legislative Updates

Linda Mecham stated she had talked with Senator Barto and that all the bills are moving forward 1308, 2560, 1230, 1231. Funding is the only consideration that's slowing the bills. The bill impacting the IOC the most is SB1231 which allows for the IOCs to have a 30-day review of policy changes in DDD prior to Public Comments. She encourages the committee members to enroll and use the "Right to Speak" to use their voices to be heard in the legislature.

Sherry Wilhelmi stated that with the one of the bills requiring training of "ABA" to staff, that DDD doesn't have anyone in the infrastructure to officially teach the course to the vendor staff. This would have to be built from the ground up.

Linda Mecham replied that's probably why the funding is being considered in all these bills.



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
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Public Meeting Minutes Summary
Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Linda Mecham did mention that in the last meeting to establish a subcommittee to keep up with the legislative bills and report back to the IOC on their progress. This would be good because navigating the system of legislative bills or DDD policies are not very easy.

Abuse and Neglect Updates

Linda Mecham informed she didn't have any new information.

DDD Staff updates

Patricia Sandino had no updates at this time.

James Maio informed the committee that they are short staffed in District Central Quality by two supervisory positions.

Liz Perez introduced herself. She noted that there is a Volunteer Appreciation Event on April 19th from 3-4pm.

Leah Gibbs informed the Committee that ARPA funding to Direct Care Workers (DCW) and vendors can begin to be funded. A restriction is that 80% of their funds must be given to the DCW but not through their base wage but other means such as stipends, bonuses, childcare. The amount will be 260 million dollars and 211 million to the DCW.

Leah Gibbs informed the IOC that currently under the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the AHCCCS/CMS flexibilities given to DDD, Parents of minor children can be paid as (HCBS) habilitation and attendant care are being allowed. When the PHE is concluded AHCCCS will continue to allow the flexibilities until the end of the fiscal quarter that the PHE was concluded in. In another matter the ARPA funding has been granted to pay parents until March of 2024. So, when PHE ends, AHCCCS will allow for the paid parent but will limit it to 40 hours for the parents of a minor member. AHCCCS is looking to include all HCBS to the ARPA funding through 2024.

Leah Gibbs commented that there have been a lot of policy changes from the division. The reason is that DDD went through a AHCCCS Operational Review. DDD needed new language to be added to many policies to comply with the AHCCCS requirement of language concerning oversight and monitoring of the new integrated health plans by DDD. The Division was doing the oversight and monitoring, they just need it written in policy.



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
District Central Independent Oversight Committee (IOC)
Public Meeting Minutes Summary
Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Leah Gibbs informed the Committee on the COVID numbers for the state from the DDD updates as of 3/18/2022.

- 46,902 members being served by DDD
 - 41,834 members are living in their own home/family home
 - 5,068 members are living in licensed facilities
- 6,761 members tested positive for COVID-19
 - 4,785 residing in their own/family home
 - 1,976 residing in licensed facilities
- 100 Member deaths attributed to COVID-19 (47 lived in a family/own home & 53 lived in licensed facilities)
- Tracking of COVID positive is way down from the high in 724 to this week at 3 members

Linda Mecham asked about repeat numbers of members and multiple times COVID illness.

Leah Gibbs did not know. **James Maio** stated that **Dr. Dekker** from DDD is looking to get more information gathered around the statistics of COVID-19.

Sherry Wilhelmi asked about the paid parents and that California has had paid parents as providers for many years and why Arizona did not.

Leah Gibbs stated that each state works a contract with CMS and that Arizona did not have this included in their contract with AHCCS/CMS.

Linda Mecham asked about the capping of the number qualified for ALTCS services.

Leah Gibbs stated she had not heard of any limiting measures for services to gain members.

Carolyn Willmer asked, “How does DDD notify DDD parents about the ability to become paid providers for minor children?”. She recalls decades earlier that her aunt had difficulties with this and could have used the service.

Leah Gibbs stated that only until the Federal Public Health Emergency and AHCCCS waiver have parents been able to be paid providers. The flexibilities have only been in effect for about 2 years. The Division sends out notifications through monthly email newsletter and bi-annually a hard published newsletter is sent to members homes. The SC are trained to recognize to look for the needs of the members they serve.

Updates from Integrated Health Plans (HP)

Karen Kramer (United Healthcare) stated that she did not have any updates



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
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Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Linda Mecham asked about the members that UHC serves and how they are doing.

Karen Kramer stated that she hasn't heard of any problems with their members.

Sherry Wilhelmi asked about why UHC did not send out notifications about cancelling Over-the-Counter med card and Healthy Foods card. She has been having difficulties trying to get new cards issued. It took repeated nagging and several months to get new card.

Karen Kramer was not aware there was an issue with the cards but will report it back to her member services and leadership.

Eva Hamant suggests that the back of the UHC card to have both a member services number for regular services and a separate number listed for Dual Complete members since they are two different services at UHC.

Several IOC members agreed with the Dual Complete process being harder to navigate.

Karen Kramer gave her email address to the committee to send her any request or problems with the Dual Complete OTC med card and Healthy Foods card. She will update the committee next meeting on what she discovers.

Updates from Arizona Department of Administration

Larry Allen gave the update that Abuse and Neglect task force team meeting. He will send out a request for the brainstorming sessions for setting an agenda to be discussed. He mentioned that there are many bills, and he will try to keep track on those affecting the IOCs.

Roundtable Reports from Members

Eva Hamant suggested that the subcommittee meeting being coordinated by Jeffrey Yamamoto to set up virtual meeting. Also, to find out if the Parent Right bill will affect the DDD minor in school.

Eduarda Yates would like to discuss the lack of funding for education. It's a problem which needs attention **Linda Mecham** suggests talking with your local legislature to get this issue in front of the legislature. Add Education on the standing agenda.

Remembering Karen

Linda Mecham informed the committee about the Celebration of Life for Karen on Friday April 1st, at 2:00pm. The location is at Meldrum Mortuary. Midge White will have a small gathering of close



**Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
District Central Independent Oversight Committee (IOC)
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Monday, March 28, 2022 – 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

friends after the Celebration. Some of the committee members and DDD staff gave their fond remembrances of Karen to the committee.

Discussion and Review of Incident Reports and Behavioral Plans

For February IRs, the Committee members have been given 487 for January incident reports in the Shared Drive. This included 15 for open and 472 closed reports.

Type	Open	Closed
Accidental Injury	0	89
Consumer missing	1	17
Deaths	1	5
Emergency Measures	0	24
Human Rights	2	10
Legal	1	1
Medication Errors	0	23
Neglect	3	27
Other Abuse	3	29
Other-Behavior	0	147
Other -Injury unknown	0	65
Physical Abuse	3	21
Property Damage	1	2
Suicide	0	12
TOTALS	15	472

The desired IRs will be divided by the chair and equally distributed amongst the members.

Questions for QIM: Members of the committee will send the incident reports questions to the DDD Liaison **Jeffrey Yamamoto** to be forwarded to Quality for responses.

Adjournment to Executive Session

Linda Mecham asked for a motion to vote the IOC go to Executive Session at 11:43am

- **Sherry Wilhelmi** motioned to have the meeting of the District Central IOC go into Executive Session
- **Carol McNulty** seconded the motion.
- A vote was taken and all present (see Welcome and Introductions attendance) voted “Aye”, there were no “Nay” votes. Motion was passed to go into Executive session



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Adjournment

Linda Mecham adjourned the Executive Session and the public meeting at 12:11 pm

The next District Central IOC meeting will be held on April 25, 2022, at 10:00 am.
