



**Division of Developmental Disabilities
District Central Independent Oversight Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 27, 2020 – 10:00 AM**

Call to Order

The meeting called to order by Committee Chairperson, **Karen Van Epps** on June 22, 2020 at 10:25 am. **This meeting was held electronically due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.**

Welcome and Introductions

Attendance by Video:

- **Eva Hamant**
- **Carol McNulty**
- **Heidi Reid-Champigny**
- **Sheri Wilhelmi**
- **Mandy Harmon**

Attendance by Phone:

- **Karen Van Epps**
- **Eduarda Yates**
- **Lisa Witt**

Members Absent:

- **Andrea Potosky**
- **Debbie Stapley**
- **Linda Mecham**

Public in Attendance:

- **Laurie Ganzermiller** (United Healthcare)
- **Sophie Legaspi** (United Healthcare)
- **Very Kermachek** (Mercy Care)
- **Amy Pawlowski** (United Healthcare)

ADOA:

- **Larry Allen** (video)

Division of Developmental Disabilities:

- **Eric Houghtalin** (IOC Liaison)
 - **Marlene Riggs** (non-voting IOC member)
 - **Michelle Pollard** (NCI Coordinator)
 - **Laura Perez** (Area Program Manager)
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Call to the Public

No public input.

ADOA and DDD Updates

ADOA – Larry Allen: Advised that they were still in phase I of the pandemic.

Eva Hamant: Asked about the DDD members and going back to school.

Karen Van Epps: Advised **Eva Hamant** that they have no power over schools.

Eva Hamant: She rephrased her question to ask how the integration into a physical school setting would impact DDD members and the essential workers that provide services for them.

Larry Allen: Advised that he believes that every school district would have their own way to integrate and that it was a fluid situation.

Eva Hamant: Added that each school district is required to have at least one open school to accommodate various students that could not stay at home.

Karen Van Epps: Advised that this was totally an educational issue. She added that all they could really do is support parents. She noted that there was also DDD day programs that are closed, and those people are being forced to stay at home too.

Larry Allen: Added that the school districts had no control over the situation and that DDD would have to monitor it. He advised that control to open would likely be returned to the individual school districts and to check the districts' site for more updates.

Eduarda Yates: Acknowledged the issue and added that in Tempe will have virtual school until early October. She noted that the students were getting the tools that they will need to participate virtually.

Eric Houghtalin: Added that each school district is required to open at least one school to accommodate various students that can't stay home.

Karen Van Epps: Added that any school age students in group homes would have to rely on staff for education.

DDD - Eric Houghtalin: Advised that meetings would continue to be held electronically until at least the reversal of **Governor Doug Ducey's** executive orders. He also advised that Google Meets would be available for member not able to attend in person as long as ADOA approves once in-person meetings begin again.

Marleen Riggs: Added that ICFs have telehealth. She gave some details.



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Eric Houghtalin: Advised that there is a topic devoted to the discussion of telehealth later in the meeting.

Statewide IOC Meeting Discussion

Carol McNaulty: Advised the meeting took place on July 16th. She advised that she took notes of the meeting.

She read the notes. She advised that 488 DDD members tested positive for Covid-19. She added 246 of the positive tests were members that lived in their own homes and that 242 were living in a group home setting. She also added that 27 DDD members passed away due to the pandemic. She broke down the deaths (9 lived at home and 18 lived in a group home setting). She advised that in the last three months, there have been no in-person support coordination meetings. She noted that on-site monitoring has been suspended. She added that the monitoring of abuse and neglect accusations would continue with DDD staff using appropriate personal protective equipment. She advised that telehealth services have significantly increased due to the pandemic. She added that over 800 DDD members have used telehealth. She advised that respite has been increased temporarily to 720 from 600 per respite year. She added that parents and family members were being allowed to bill those hours for the care they provide. She noted that there are extensive resources on the DDD website. She added that on the DDD site there was pages of information to help providers and members during the pandemic. She advised the town halls are being held weekly. She noted all support coordinators have reached out to all DDD members/families to ensure that they have the support they need. She advised of the payment of money (Cares Act) for Covid-19 (80% was to paid in wages, bonuses, and incentives for direct care staff and this is mandatory). She added that service rates were increased. She noted the reasons that these measures were being introduced (e.g., the fact that someone on unemployment could make \$600 a week to not work versus the money they would earn providing care for DDD members). She advised that the Assistant Director of DDD, Zane Garcia-Ramadan, said that the top priority for the Division is to keep members safe from the pandemic. She noted that there was a discussion about members in group homes testing positive for Covid-19. She advised that the agency would keep only one staff member assigned to the member and that they would like (if possible) for the member could have their own bathroom. She added that caregivers were being given more hours to help with continuity. She advised that some agencies are moving Covid-19 positive members to separate group homes with other positive members. She also noted that the group homes were being provided extra money to help offset the costs of the PPE (Cares Act). She added that DDD has supplied emergency supplies to agencies that have been having trouble securing PPE.

She advised that another issue that the Division is working on is the AHCCCS notice to cure items. She noted that DDD is also working on the vendor call system. She added that the Division is working to comply with AHCCCS's requirements.

She advised that there was a discussion about the Native American DDD members. She noted that the Division serves about 1,100 Native American members. She added that about half of them are utilizing



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AHCCCS insurance and that the other half is using an Indian Health Services. She advised that they (DDD/AHCCCS) is trying to get all 1,100 Native American members under AHCCCS plans.

She mentioned the fact that CEPS (a large company that owns several DDD group homes) will be closing and that the Division hopes to have all affected members relocated or homes sold to other agencies by the end of the year.

Eduarda Yates: Asked if CEPS was still operating the group homes in the meantime.

Eric Houghtalin: Answered that the Division has noted that they are working hand-in-hand with CEPS to ensure that all affected members are placed by the end of the year. He added that the plan could include the sale of housing contracts to other vendors.

Marleen Riggs: Advised that she recently read that another agency will be taking over the contracts for CEPS. She was unable to name the agency from memory.

Eduarda Yates: Asked **Marleen Riggs** to look into the name of the agency.

Marleen Riggs: Advised that she would look into the name of the agency and report back.

Karen Van Epps: Asked what the best practices would look like for the vendor call process.

Eric Houghtalin: Noted the changes of the process since he was working as a DDD support coordinator. He noted that the process seemed cumbersome and might have made it more difficult for his members to get the help that was needed.

Karen Van Epps: Asked the committee to allow her to author a letter to **Zane Garcia-Ramadan** to provide some clarification of the plan to update the vendor call process.

Motion and Vote

Sherry Wilhelmi moved to allow **Karen Van Epps** to write to **Zane Garcia-Ramadan** for clarification of the plan to update the vendor call process.

Eduarda Yates: Seconded the motion.

All present members voted to allow **Karen Van Epps** to write to **Zane Garcia-Ramadan** for clarification about the improvements to the vendor call process. None of the members voted no or abstained from voting.

Continued Discussion

Karen Van Epps: Advised that she wanted to share the issues of the person-centered plan being proposed by AHCCCS. She asked if Eric Houghtalin had sent out the link. She advised that all comments needed to be in by August 4th or 6th.

Eric Houghtalin: Advised that he didn't have the link but would contact his management team to send it to him. He added that he would send it to the committee via email once he gets it (the link was provided



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by **Sophie Legaspi**. **Eric Houghtalin** forwarded it before the end of the meeting). He added that **Zane Garcia-Ramadan** directed at the statewide committee meeting to go to the AHCCCS website for comment.

Eric Houghtalin: Advised that the statewide meeting also included a discussion with **Richard Kautz** and **Barbara Picone** about trying to convince the IT department to facilitate a means of reading the IRs electronically online. He also acknowledged that **James Maio**, District Central Quality Improvement Manager, even proposed issuing a tablet that could be turned in at the beginning of the meeting and given back to the IOC members by the end of the meeting that would only be used for reading incident reports.

Karen Van Epps: Asked what it might look like.

Eric Houghtalin: Answered that it would likely be similar to a shared document page that only the IOC members would have password access.

Karen Van Epps: Addressed the limitations of online or virtual meetings.

Telehealth Discussion

Laurie Ganzermiller: Advised that telehealth/telemedicine has been in place since the pandemic started. She advised that it is going well. She advised that video, phone, and photographs can be used. There is some talk about keeping telehealth as an ongoing option after the pandemic. She noted that therapies can be provided via telehealth as well. She added that the members could be sent the appropriate supporting items to perform the physical elements of therapies with the assistance of in-home providers (e.g., parents, group home staff, etc..).

Karen Van Epps: Asked what if a member doesn't want to be seen through telehealth.

Laurie Ganzermiller: Advised that some providers are allowing in-person visits for one or two guardians if needed. She also addressed safety for those going into the office for visits.

Eric Houghtalin: Asked **Laurie Ganzermiller** about taking vitals and other diagnostics through telehealth.

Laurie Ganzermiller: Advised that the plans have not been providing equipment, but patients can provide diagnostics via telehealth.

Eva Hamant: Advised the necessary vital sign equipment can be furnished through the drug plans.

Laurie Ganzermiller: Explained that was on the United Healthcare Medicare plan now.

Marlene Riggs: Advised that members can send records through telehealth (via email or fax).

Karen Van Epps: Asked about what happens if a member who needs behavioral health won't be taken due to the fact that they have trachs. She asked what a member can do to get a behavioral health provider if nobody will take them.



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Laurie Ganzermiller: Advised that she would have to see specific cases. She invited IOC members to share specific instances with her to review.

Karen Van Epps: Advised that it had been reviewed by United Healthcare.

Laurie Ganzermiller: Added that their integrated health clinics should be able to support those members. She noted that it could be that they would have to get nursing services to support the member as well.

Sherry Wilhelmi: Added that the same issues have been noted with certain management providers. She advised that they have been having a difficult time getting high-medical needs members into pain management.

Marleen Riggs: Advised that the initial intake was the issue.

Sherry Wilhelmi: Advised that they are getting them to the doctors, but nobody would treat the members. She continued that the argument is that the doctors don't believe the member is in pain because they won't speak up about it but that some members are non-verbal.

Laurie Ganzermiller: Asked that any member that has any issue be forwarded to any member of the UnitedHealth Care team. She advised that she would work with management to rectify the issues.

Eduarda Yates: Noted that part of the problem was narcotic overuse.

Sherry Wilhelmi: Added that was only about 1% of those that are getting legal prescriptions that become addicted.

Discussion, Review, and Possible Action of Committee Membership

There were no new applicants to the IOC as of the date of the meeting.

Discussion and Review of Incident Reports and Behavior Plans

James Maio, Quality Improvement Manager, was unable to attend the IOC meeting. There was no discussion of incident reports or behavior plans. The committee pointed out that they hadn't received IRs in the last two months.



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Adjournment

Heidi Reid-Champigny motioned to adjourn the executive meeting.

Sherry Wilhelmi seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

All available members voted yes to close the meeting (no executive meeting held). No members abstained or voted no.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 am.

Next Meeting Time and Date

The next District Central IOC meeting will be held on August 24, 2020 at 10:00 am.

(The meeting ended at 11:41 am)