



**Arizona Department of Administration  
Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)  
Statewide Independent Oversight Committee Meeting  
Meeting Minutes**

April 21, 2021 - 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

**This meeting took place by electronic means due to concerns about Covid-19. There was not a physical location.**

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by De Freedman. The date was April 21, 2021, at 10:03 am. The address of the meeting was Virtual, no physical address.

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**Welcome and Introductions**

Present:

- **De Freedman** (District West Chairperson) (Facilitator)
- **Bernadine Henderson** (District West Vice-Chairperson)
- **Bob Malloy** (District North Chairperson)
- **Karen Van Epps** (District Central Chairperson)
- **Kin Counts** (District East member)
- **Bonner Raskob** (District South:Tucson Co-Chairperson)
- **Carol McNulty** (District Central Vice-Chairperson)
- **Marlene Riggs** (District Central Non-Voting member)
- **Jeffery Yamamoto** (DDD IOC Liaison)
- **Octavia Lamb** (DDD IOC Liaison)
- **Richard Kautz** (DDD Chief Advocate)
- **Ahmed Rateb** (DDD Contracted Staff)
- **Leah Gibbs** (DDD OIFA Administrator)
- **Barbara Picone** (OIFA Program Manager)
- **Zane Garcia-Ramadan** (Assistant Director of DDD)
- **Michelle Pollard** (DDD NCI Coordinator)
- **Larry Allen** (ADOA liaison)
- **Mary DeCarlo** (PRC Manager)
- **Joan McQuade** (Quality Improvement Manager for District East)



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- **Staci Rodamel** (Quality Improvement Manager for District North)
- **Jennifer Myler** (District North Program Manager)
- **James Maio** (Quality Improvement Manager for District Central)
- **David Blount** (District Quality Coordinator for District Central)
- **Delorah Grant** (Quality Improvement Manager for District West)
- **Marilyn Croci** (PRC Specialist for District North)
- **Megan Taylor** (District East Program Manager)
- **Pauline Selmer** (District South Quality Assurance Manager)
- **Joseph Jensen** (District South Quality Improvement Supervisor)
- **Joseph Tracewell** (District South Quality Improvement Supervisor)
- **Amy Rose** (PRC Specialist for District West)
- **Megan Dougherty** (District Central Program Manager)
- **Virginia Rountree** (DES Deputy Director)
- **Patricia Sandino** (PRC Specialist for District Central)
- **Cathy Stern** (DES Chief Compliance Officer)

**Health Plan Present:**

- **Janet Holtz** (Mercy Care)
- **Summer Kamal** (Mercy Care)
- **Laurie Ganzermiller** (United Healthcare)

**Public Attendance:**

- **No public attendance**

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**Call to the Public**



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No members of the public attended the meeting

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**DDD Updates: Assistant Director Zane Garcia-Ramadan**

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** provided a summary on DDD members and the effects of COVID-19. 2,792 DDD members have tested positive for COVID-19 and 74 members who have passed away from COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. 16 DDD members tested positive as of this week and it was the lowest number since September/2020 and there have been 0 member deaths due to COVID-19 in the last two months. There has been progress with COVID-19 vaccinations. They have been tracking the amount of DDD members who have been vaccinated and 24% of eligible members have been fully vaccinated, 41% have received at least their first dose. Support Coordinators have been making direct calls to DDD members and their families that are eligible and letting them know that the vaccine is available and that transportation options are available as well as in-home options. Ability 360 held a vaccination event organized two weekends ago and over 1,600 individuals with Developmental disabilities received their first dose. DDD has also worked with ADHS to set aside appointment slots at the statewide vaccination sites specifically for DDD members.

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** went on to say that there is still resistance amongst the DD population to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and the next phase of their effort along with the help of everyone in the community will be to help eliminate the rumors about the vaccine by educating DDD members and their families on the benefits of receiving the vaccine.

**De Freedman** asked Is DDD tracking the percentage of DDD members who are being advised by their Physician not to get vaccinated?

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** responded, when it comes tracking Physicians, No they are not tracking that, but they are tracking from the direct calls from support coordination on who is and who is not interested in receiving the vaccine and those who mention that they have been advised from their Physician not to



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receive the vaccine due to medical reasons they are tracking the data that way, but support coordinators are not asking DDD members directly if they have been advised by a Physician not to receive the vaccine?

**De Freedman** asked Are you meeting weekly with the healthy plans?

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** responded; he has been meeting with the health plans monthly to discuss all issues related to the vaccine.

**De Freedman** stated that it is important that all is being done to protect DDD members and if they are being told by their medical providers, they should not be getting the vaccine, then other alternatives should be available to protect DDD members.

**Laurie Ganzermiller** from United Healthcare stated that her team meets weekly to discuss with varies groups within the health plan and share ideas and community resources along with DDD and it has not been brought up about Physicians instructing their clients not to get vaccinated, but she will bring up this concern at the next team meeting and get some feedback to bring to the IOC committee members.

**Karen Van Epps** stated that a question that should be brought up at the team meeting: Is the guardian preventing the person from getting the vaccine? Because many of the Physicians are not seeing their clients in person.

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** also stated about the services related to flexibilities that has been implemented since the beginning of the pandemic and those are still in place and AHCCCS is extending these services until the end of the Public Health Emergency which is anticipated until the end of the calendar year. They are going to try building as much preparation time as possible to unwind the flexibilities as they get closer to the end of when they no longer need to be in place and will provide as much advance notice as possible on dates and when the unwinding will look like. Also, with COVID-19 flexibilities they continue to have a number of funding strategies in place to ensure providers maintain financial liability.



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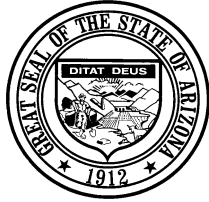
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**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** lastly spoke about the Current to Future Initiative this is to address issues within DDD that can be addressed now and was able to identify 8 priorities to be addressed which included 4 Notices to Cure from AHCCCS such as a nursing assessment corrective action plan and Transitioning DDD American Indian health plan services. The division has been working on these for over a year with addressing these priorities, with 3 out of 4 Notice to Cure letters have been sent out to AHCCCS requesting a release and is still waiting for a response from AHCCCS. The nursing assessment will be addressed by August of this year. The division believes that all compliances will be released by the end of this calendar year. This will help the division to be more proactive and less reactive to improve the system to best meet the needs of DDD members. A focus group has been put together to help provide a wide range perspective of underlining issues that will be addressed within the next 1 to 2 years and DDD is working on prioritizing those issues that was brought to the division's attention. The committee will be updated on the what the next phase will look like with the Current to Future imitative has in store.

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** also touched on the legislative session for the State Legislature in Arizona and there are a number of bills that can potentially impact DDD and the work that has been done. One is to add state funding for the provider rates to retain staff in our direct care workforce and this was a very common theme amongst the committees that there is low pay for direct care workers.

**Karen Van Epps** asked is services that are not part of DDD like sign language services for the deaf population be a part of the Current to Future imitative?

**Zane Garcia-Ramadan** stated, yes it will be part of the Current to Future imitative and they have started to talk about implementing services at the end of the first phase for members that are deaf, blind, hard of hearing, etc. They have already begun some work to enhance their procedures to make sure staff are better aware of possibilities that exists to put services in place. The division is in the process of hiring a new FTE position at DDD to focus on some cultural competency issues with a focus on ASL with deaf and blind members and has been working with the Arizona commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to receive some expertise on this issue and they are right in the middle of working on this.



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**DDD Staff Updates**

**Richard Kautz** stated that the division have been working hard to get all of the incident reports redacted, by hiring new contracted staff to get the incident reports redacted timely and he introduced one of the staff that was just hired to assist with redacting, 2 additional staff were hired to help with redactions along with a full-time staff was just hired to focus on redactions as well. Also, he spoke about IOC membership going down and IOC has decided to consolidate District South from two committees to one committee and now the committees are working on choosing a new date for the one committee. Recruitment is highly needed right now and will be reaching out to the townhall meetings that are coming up along with posting information in the newsletters that go out to help with recruiting members.

**Carol McNulty** asked who is the person who trains new committee members who are interested in joining?

**Richard Kautz** said Computer based trainings are offered to receive some information and every IOC member is given an IOC guidebook that explains the IOC process along with speaking with the IOC liaisons to address any questions.

**Karen Van Epps** brought up a concern about the new electronic platform for behavioral treatment plans being accessible on the shared drive. She shared that it is very difficult to read and make notes if they are only available online and wanted to make sure that the behavioral plans would still be available in paper form.

**Kin Counts** expressed her concerns as well with viewing the behavioral plans online. Sense the change over it has been difficult to review the plans and go back and make notes and make herself available easily compared to when the behavioral plans were available by paper.

**Bernadine Henderson** made a comment that she really enjoys having the behavioral plans online as well as the incident reports because it is very accessible, and she does not have to download any documents everything can be viewed and commented on in the shared drive.



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**Amy Rose** stated that for district West they have been able to accommodate IOC members by having the behavioral plans available by paper and electronically. They have had success by making it accessible for those that review and comment the behavioral plans by paper and being able to join a PRC meeting by phone or virtual.

**Mary DeCarlo** stated that as part of her updates she wanted to address the electronic drive with behavioral plans. The electronic drive is up and running now and all the districts have the accessibility either by paper form or electronically. PRC received many requests to have the option to view the behavioral plans online to have more opportunities to be able to participate either by phone or virtually. Also, a survey is being developed to measure overall satisfaction and engagement to receive feedback from all participants about the electronic platform and should be coming out soon.

**Mary DeCarlo** spoke about some preliminary work regarding C2F activities, some of the subgroups that were created are looking at some of the behavioral health services in DDD group homes specifically looking at access to care, and training requirements from that work group there is another group that is working on a standardized FBA and BTP's for the PRC process. These work groups are a collaboration of people from DDD, the health plans, provider community as well as members. Also, regarding the planning document, there were some concerns about if the planning document would still be required as part of the BTP and as of currently there will not be any changes to the process at this time and PRC will require that planning document be a part of the BTP.

Mary DeCarlo continued with an update on Article 9. Article 9 will be posted to the secretary of state office within the next couple of weeks, the oral proceeding for Article 9 is scheduled on May 24, 2021 from 9am-10:30am. This is an opportunity for those that would like to speak on public record regarding their comments for Article 9.

**Karen Van Epps** asked what are the main changes to Article 9?

**Mary DeCarlo** answered with she is not able to speak about the changes until it is posted on the Secretary of State website then will be able to communicate with the committees so they can review the changes.



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**Leah Gibbs** updated the committee that Betty John has retired from OIFA as the Liaison for Child Safety and Barbara Picone is tentatively filling in that role until someone is hired for the position. Also, she restated what was provided early by Richard Kautz about hiring additional staff to assist with the incident report redactions process.

**De Freedman** asked is there any electronic solutions to help with the redacting process?

**Leah Gibbs** answered by saying that currently the electronic solution is the shared drive and through AHCCCS there are fields that are redacted automatically through the format and Personal identifiable information (PII) is being redacted and this is a manual process through Adobe software, and it is currently working for the team and the team is working as quickly as possible to get the incident reports out to the committee.

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**Arizona Department of Administration Updates**

**Larry Allen** provided an update on recruitment and he is currently working with the existing IOC's and other agencies to network to find opportunities for members that may be interested in joining a committee. He is also talking to providers with the specific focus on the South and North districts. Also, it looks like everyone is starting to follow the House bill 2059 The Robert's Rule of order regarding the request to the agencies to provide information from the agencies to the committees. If there are any concerns or issues ADOA or DDD is to be contacted to get a resolution.

**Q:** What is the House bill 2059?

**A:** Where the IOC's will vote on any issues or concerns or improvements during committee meetings and put it up for a vote and send the question through DDD to provide an answer by the next monthly committee meeting.

**Q:** are you aware of any legislative proposals that may affect IOC's?

**A:** There are no current proposals that will affect IOC's





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**Q:** When will the DCS IOC committee start?

**A:** No one from DCS has informed ADOA when the DCS IOC committee will begin. He will reach out to someone from DCS to receive an update.

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**Updates from the Health Plans**

**Laurie Ganzermiller** the only update from United Healthcare was that on January 1, 2021 the health plans became responsible for Aug. Comm. Communication device benefit and reported that things continue to process well and there has not been any concerns or issues reported to United Healthcare but continue to monitor the process.

**Janet Holtz** stated that along with UHC the Aug Comm. Communication device benefit transition is going very well. They have received positive reviews from providers and the community. Mercy Care continues to work with DDD as far as assisting DDD members with in-home vaccinations with their contracted providers as well as setting up transportation for those members that request it.

**Kin Counts** stated that she has spoken to families that have requested Aug Comm. Devices and because of the pandemic the vendors that were supposed to provide the device are now short staff and there is a delay with members receiving there Aug. Comm. Devices and parents are still waiting for any information about the Aug. Comm device being delivered. There should be alternate vendors to assist with this issue.

**Janet Holts** stated she had not been made aware of any vendor issues in regards with Aug Comm. Delays but would be happy to discuss this with her team and to also have families who are expressing this concern to reach out to her or to member services to help resolve the problem.



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**IOC Workgroup Update**

**Virginia Rountree** gave an update on the IOC's and how they are partnering with DDD to address many of the IOC committee concerns like the timeliness of incident reports received and receiving sufficient information on incident reports and a large work group has been put together that consists of AHCCCS, ADOA, representatives from the IOC, senator Barto and DDD staff. The focus has been to work through some of the concerns and a smaller work group has been put together to look at the incident report template and to get feedback on what information would like to be seen on the incident report. Prompts have been added to prompt staff how to fill out the incident report and at the provider level to provide information about antecedents. Strategies that have been used, are, is the member on a BTP, feedback on medication errors and if additional questions could be answered. DDD staff and triage have asked for some of the same information to be included in the new template. It has been asked to use an incident portal for incident management and the division is working with AHCCCS and senator Barto about which direction to proceed. The goal is for the incident report processes to be more efficient that meet the needs of everyone.

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**Roundtable Topics for Next Meeting**

**De Freedman** wanted to make everyone aware that there are different reports out there and feels that all IOC's should be made aware of these reports and if the IOC's want to request these reports they can follow Roberts Rule of order and vote to request them at a committee monthly meeting. She posted the titles of these reports if other committees are interested in requesting the same reports. ADOA and DDD will be aware of these requested reports and can decide what reports can be released to the IOC committees if they choose to do so.



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**Karen Van Epps** brought up the concern that Case Management continues to be virtual and how is DDD case managers supposed to see their members in their home and know what's going on in the home.

**Leah Gibbs** stated that the division has been addressing the issue and if a case manager/support coordinator cannot see the DDD members during a virtual meeting then arrangements are made to see the member in-person. The division wants to keep people safe as much as possible and not expose people unnecessarily to individuals.

**Karen Van Epps** stated the other concern is that there are many new support coordinators that have not work with or seen the members and cannot provide information on the member during a PRC meeting because they have never seen the member.

**Leah Gibbs** stated that the division is tracking and trending incident reports and are looking to see if there any significant changes what's happening with DDD membership and they continue to monitor this process.

**Karen Van Epps** lastly stated that her and other committee members continue to have a concern about room & board billing, and it continues to be wrong for DDD members that live in a residential setting and the billing system continues to be a problem.

**Leah Gibbs** stated that if IOC members can provide specific information about specific billing concerns to the division then they will be happy to investigate and hopefully provide a resolution and if there are any specific families that have this concern to contact their support coordinator or customer service.

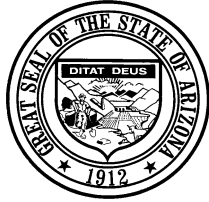
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**Next Meeting Date/Time/Facilitator Discussion**

**Octavia Lamb** Advised the next scheduled time would be July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Facilitator to be determined at later date.

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**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am by **De Freedman**. The next meeting will take place virtually on July 21, 2021 at 10:00 am.