



Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council

Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Date	September 2, 2021
Time	2:00pm – 4:00pm
Location	Meeting will be held via Zoom. Call In Information: https://uwyo.zoom.us/j/202849015 , (669) 900-6833, Meeting ID: 202 849 015
Purpose	To assist and advise the Division of Healthcare Financing (Division) in implementing a statewide service delivery system for persons who are identified as having developmental and intellectual disabilities, and acquired brain injuries (ABI).
Members	Rita Basom, Ginny Chidsey, Maria Clark, Brenda Dick, Heather Dodson, Jeff Gardner, Kayla Green, Buck Gwyn, Arkansas Le Marr, Erin O’Neill, Sandy Root-Elledge, Bob Sell
Division Staff	Matt Crandall, Elizabeth Forslund, Teri Green, Lee Grossman, Heidi Hoffman, Samantha Mills, Shirley Pratt

AGENDA ITEMS/KEY POINTS DISCUSSED

Topics and Highlights	
1.	<p><u>Roll call and approval of minutes</u></p> <p>Jeff called the meeting to order at 2:01pm. Arkansas moved to approve the minutes of June 3, 2021 as circulated; Erin seconded. Motion carried.</p>
2.	<p><u>Direct support workforce challenges and initiatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee introduced the discussion on workforce challenges and initiatives. Workforce challenges are being felt across the country. The Division of Healthcare Financing (Division) currently participates in the National Core Indicators (NCI) Staff Stability survey, which identifies trends in provider wages, overtime, and retention. Past Wyoming data has demonstrated significant challenges in these areas, and future survey data is not expected to improve. • <u>Member comment:</u> Professionalizing the direct support professional (DSP) profession is key to retaining staff; it isn’t just about compensation. However, we need to be able to pay at least what other industries competing for this workforce are paying. • <u>Member comment:</u> A big concern is people not showing up for interviews. Current Wyoming Unemployment standards only require a recipient to apply for three jobs a week. They don’t have to attend interviews or accept or reject a job. This results in higher unemployment costs for the organization, so the provider is getting hurt on both sides. Is this something that the Department of Workforce can help with? • The Unemployment Insurance program is in the Department of Workforce Services, but not in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Brenda stated that she would like to consult with the administrator of that Division. Vocational Rehabilitation is having similar issues where individuals apply for jobs in order to comply with unemployment criteria, but then don’t accept the positions. This problem is not exclusive to providers of waiver services, but a problem across all industries across the nation. • Prior to COVID, the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) assembled a group to discuss workforce issues, and developed a trial training program that was tested and showed success. • <u>Member comment:</u> Providers cannot automate or cost shift, which is something that other businesses that aren’t in the human services industry do. • <u>Member comment:</u> In an effort to understand why hiring was so difficult, my company did some research on this issue. I think this has less to do with unemployment practices and more to do with

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the fact that the people who typically hold these positions are women who are caring for children and elderly parents, and have no childcare available. It isn't that they don't want to work, but rather that they can't work.

- Member comment: I would echo the prior statement. People don't want to sacrifice their children in order to work.
- Member comment: More professionalism, better support systems and supervision, and certification are all important. While we need to focus on these things, this problem will not be solved without more money. What is on the other side of the certification? People expect more money for the extra work they put into obtaining a certification. Entry level positions are paying more and we can't compete. We are asking people to give up more money in order to do something more meaningful, which people cannot afford to do.
- Member comment: The last issue reflects the experience we've had in my community. A large provider of day services has closed these operations.
- Member comment: The Wyoming Community Service Providers (WCSP) will be lobbying for additional funding.
- Member comment: Perhaps working with community colleges. Pay for tuition and salary, paid internships, paid work experience, college credit for doing the work? In an emergency, do we need to be more flexible in allowing family members to be paid? Division response: *Wyoming offers quite a bit of flexibility in terms of family caregivers. We need to look at emergency situations versus long term recruitment and retention.*
- Member comment: Providers have done a phenomenal job during the public health emergency. However, individualized activities have decreased, and we need to get back to them. Electronic visits have been successful. Division response: *We are looking at virtual support on a more permanent basis. In the past we have focused on building independence, but now we are focusing on decreasing staff. We need to be careful that we present solutions to problems that could cause issues in the long term, and will need guidance as we move forward.*
- Member comment: WIND held a forum on technology for independence and support. If there is an immediate need to recruit and hire, could Zoom technology help? Perhaps a forum that presents what the DSP career path has to offer.
- Member comment: Providers are sending 30-day notices to participants because they can't provide services as promised; especially for people who need one-on-one support.
- Member comment: 30-day notices are on the table for most WCSP providers. It is the only option to deal with reality.
- Member comment: Participants are left with providers who can provide cheaper services; not necessarily better services.
- Member comment: There are two layers - the ability to recruit staff, and the ability to retain staff, which is an even greater issue.
- Member comment: ARPA provides a 95/5 match for mental health services. People with a dual diagnosis would be included in this population. I urge the Division to try to get these funds. The goal is to keep people from being institutionalized. Is there any information on crisis stabilization? Division response: *We don't have any information, but this is probably part of the Strike Force. The Division will look into this.*
- Discussion Summary
 - Brenda will seek clarification on unemployment insurance concerns.
 - The Division will continue to pursue policies related to assistive technology and remote support.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sandy will look at opportunities to educate potential employees via Zoom. Jeff will reach out to WCSP members to gauge their interest. ○ Investigate partnerships or internships with community colleges.
3	<p><u>Division updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lee provided a quick refresher on the American Rescue Plan Act. The total projected amount that will be available for Wyoming home and community-based services is approximately \$35 million. The Division submitted the initial spending plan and narrative on July 8th, and held additional stakeholder engagement sessions on July 29th and August 6th. The Division received partial approval of the initial spending plan on August 9th, and hopes to submit a response and updated spending plan by September 3rd. Council members were encouraged to visit the ARPA website for updates on the spending plan and information on additional stakeholder input sessions. The website address is https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/hcbs/hcbsarpa/. ○ The Division has received several questions from providers on when provider rates will be increased, as indicated in the spending plan. The Division needs to determine a reasonable timeline for implementation, but can guarantee that rate increases will not occur in the 2021 calendar year. ● Rate rebasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Comprehensive and Supports Waiver rate rebasing project is almost complete. The Division has held the final Provider Team and Steering Committee meetings, and Guidehouse is working on the final report, which will be available later this year. ● Electronic visit verification (EVV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Division is actively working with Carebridge, the contractor for the EVV project to get this program up and running. The go live date for EVV is anticipated for December 2021. ● Provider background screening process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The anticipated rollout date for the updated background screening process has been delayed. Until further notice, providers are using the current process, which is further explained at https://health.wyo.gov/admin/background-screening/, for submitting background screenings. ● Financial Management Services (ACES\$) statewide tour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACES\$ is wrapping up a statewide tour, during which they have been able to present information on EVV for participant-directed services, and answer questions from participants, employees, and employers of record.
4.	<p><u>Member updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Wyoming Department of Education will host a session with Dr. Temple Grandin on September 20th from 1:30 - 3:30. Link information will be sent to Council members at the end of this meeting. ● WCSP is hosting its 3rd Direct Support Professional of the year event on Monday, September 13th in Casper. Lee was tasked with selecting the ultimate winner, although all nominees will be acknowledged. Two outstanding case managers will also be recognized. Additionally, Representative Lloyd Larsen and Representative Eric Barlow will be honored, as they have been champions of people with developmental and intellectual disabilities for many years. ● Vocational Rehabilitation has a new policy and procedure manual that is being used to ensure consistency of services in Laramie County. This manual will be shared with other county offices as well. ● ECHO networks are reconvening. The website has been organized. Topics of interest are open to everyone. The link to the new website will be shared with Council members after the meeting.



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5.	<p><u>Council membership</u> Arkansas and Bob's terms expire on September 30, 2021. Both have been invited to reapply for the Council. The Division will send a call for applications. Jeff, Ginny, Erin, and Kayla volunteered to sit on the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee will review applications and make a recommendation to Interim Director Johansson, who appoints all committee members.</p>
6.	<p><u>Public Comment</u> There was no public comment offered during the public comment period.</p>
<p>NEXT MEETING – December 2, 2021</p>	