

Steering Committee Meeting

December 17, 2008

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Michael McAllister, Len Kravitz, Ann Marie Campbell, Shauna Roman, Michelle Sparling, Kathy Sykes, Teresa Myers-Thompson, Wanda Sabb, Jeff Orlin

I. General Updates

Teresa initiated the conversation with an update on issues discussed at the Capacity Building Work Group meeting held on 12-15-08. The IEFS approval process was identified by several Capacity Building Work Group participants as a concern for Community Integrated Employment (CIE) providers.

A general discussion about the IEFS approval process ensued among Steering Committee members. One of the issues is that some CIE providers are running out of authorized service units for some individuals. In some situations, the IEFS process has been initiated to request additional service units and several months have passed without an indication of whether the request is approved or denied. This has created some situations where the service units authorized for an individual have been fully utilized and the person may be in jeopardy of losing CIE services. One scenario that can occur is that a CIE provider would continue to provide services in order to assure that the person does not lose their job. However, in this situation the agency may not be reimbursed for service units that exceed the authorized amount. Another scenario that could occur would involve the agency ending services when the authorized amount is reached creating a situation in which the person may lose their job because support services are not available.

Kathy pointed out that since fiscal year 2009 still includes cost reconciliation CIE providers may need to look for ways to work flexibly within their agency budgets to manage units and utilization. The point was made that for the remaining six months of fiscal year 2009 CIE providers need to look for ways to reallocate units among individuals based on agency-wide service utilization. It is important that CIE providers constantly review individual units authorized and utilized. This is especially critical in fiscal 2010 when there will be no cost reconciliation process and reimbursement will occur based on authorized units identified in a person's Individual Support Plan (ISP).

There was a general discussion about the importance of CIE Providers understanding the impact of the system changing to a fee for service model in fiscal year 2010. There continues to be a need to educate CIE providers about the mechanics of a fee for service system. If CIE providers are not able to effectively track and manage service utilization and be reimbursed for services provided they will have difficulties sustaining as an organization in a fee for service environment. A suggestion was made to identify CIE providers that appear to be having the most difficulty with this transition and meet with them individually to review procedures and other policies related to providing CIE services. Another suggestion was to make a general offer of agency-specific technical assistance to any CIE provider that expresses an interest.

A. Upcoming Meeting Dates

The group reviewed and confirmed the following upcoming meeting dates and times:

January 28, 2009 2 PM @ MRS

February 25, 2009 2 PM @ MRS

March 25, 2009 2 PM @ MRS

April 22, 2009 2 PM @ MRS

B. Other Updates

Teresa and Len provided a brief summary of their participation with the QI Employment Committee. They reported that the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) was funded to support a variety of statewide employment related activities. MIG funds will be administered through AHEDD. Michael added that he had been contacted by John Miller from AHEDD and Dana Olsen to arrange for a conference call to discuss the possibilities of combining the Employment Supports Symposium with the MIG activity of conducting a Statewide Employment Conference. The conference call is scheduled to take place on December 22, 2008.

II. Provider Practices Work Group

Michael distributed a final draft copy of a questionnaire to be used to survey employment provider practices. An initial draft questionnaire was developed by Len and Michael and then edited and re-worked in the Provider Practices Work Group. The final draft copy is being piloted with three agencies. Michelle Sparling has completed interviews with two of the pilot agencies: CIS and SPIN. She will be completing one more interview with Ken Crest to complete the pilot. The pilot interviews have taken approximately one hour to complete and several suggestions were made by respondents. Michelle has also identified some ways to improve the questionnaire based on the two pilot interviews.

Final edits to the questionnaire will be based on the information gathered during the pilot. The goal is to complete the pilot by the end of December 2008 and begin the survey with the rest of the agencies starting after January 1, 2009.

At the August 2008 Retreat, a number of Steering Committee members agreed to participate in the survey by interviewing agencies using the questionnaire. Len agreed to send Steering Committee members the list of agencies they agreed to interview. Michael will make the edits required to the questionnaire and send the final version to everyone for use in the survey. The goal is to complete the survey by the end of January 2009. Definitions of terms used in questionnaire will be provided to those conducting the interviews. Michael agreed to prepare the definitions as a glossary to supplement the questionnaire.

III. FY 2009 ODP/Transition Initiative (Teresa)

Teresa and Kathy noted that Supports Coordination Organizations (SCO's) have received lists of individuals identified to be included in the FY 2009 Transition Initiative. SCO's have been instructed to review the lists they received and get back to MRS if there are any changes to the list they received.

A Provider Expo has been scheduled for February 11, 2009 to be held at the Community College of Philadelphia. Teresa will be sending letter to all the individuals/families identified on the list by the end of December 31, 2008. The letter will include basic information as well as materials related to the Provider Expo. Teresa and Shauna will be making follow-up phone calls to the individuals/families after the letter has been sent.

IV. CIE FY 2009 Monthly Data Reporting System (Len & Michael)

Michael distributed data collected for five agencies: CIS, PDDC, SPIN, WES, and UCPA (see attached). For each agency a list of individuals served and units provided during the first quarter was provided. The data from each of the agencies was briefly reviewed and there was general discussion about future uses. Kathy requested that Teresa take a closer look at St. John's, WES, and PDDC by comparing the rosters submitted with FY 2009 budgets and the data submitted for the first quarter. We will review these agencies again at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Note: After the meeting ended Len and Michael identified AHEDD, Ken-Crest, COMHAR, and PEP as additional agency data to be distributed for the next Steering Committee Meeting.

The next meeting will take place at MRS on January 28, 2009 at 2 PM.