### State Interagency Coordinating Council

December 14, 2020 Minutes

9:00 AM-11:30 AM

Remote Zoom Meeting

ICC Members Present: Leona Adamczyk, Andrea Brinnel, Anne Giordano, Cindy Jackson, Tiffany Allain, Sharon Marie, Carol Peltier, Elaine Balsley, Ginny Mahoney, Myra Watnick, Alice Ridgeway, Tammy Venenga, Ann Gionet

ICC Members Absent: Michelle Rinaldi, Representative Linehan, Senator Abrams, Melissa Roberts, Shanda Easley, Loius Tellarita, Mary Beth Bruder, Kim Nilson

Pending Nominees in attendance: pending parent representatives Robb Dunn, Lisa Opert, and David Gonzalez-Rice. Approval process requires Governor Appointment and continues to take a significant amount of time to complete the process.

CPAC represented by Adriana Fontaine and Jane Hampton

CDI represented by Kareena DuPlessis

Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM by Cindy Jackson ICC Chair

**Introductions**: ICC members

**Public Comment:** No public comment was offered at this meeting

**Old Business**:

Approval of the October 2020 ICC Minutes: motion to accept and motion seconded, none opposed

**New Business**:

Steve Hunt-Building Bridges is applying to fill the provider vacancy.

Tentative 2021 meeting dates shared as follows:

* 2/8/21
* 4/12/21
* 6/14/21
* August: possible executive committee meeting (open to all)
* 10/4/21
* 12/13/21

These dates are tentative and have not been confirmed with Beacon Health Options for facility availability. It is hoped that in-person meetings might be an option for the April meeting for the annual Family Focus meeting.

Explore the possibility of LOB/CTN option to more involve legislators and increase exposure (CTN does not require presence at LOB).

Explore a hybrid approach to future meetings when in-person meetings resume continuing to allow remote attendance for those who might find travel difficult/impossible.

**Cynthia Jackson**

#### ICC Chair/Provider

##### Leona Adamczyk

##### *ICC Vice Chair/Parent*

##### Ann Gionet

#### Dept. of Public Health

**Tiffanie Allain**

*Parent*

**Kim Nilson**

*Dept. for Children and Families*

**Michelle Rinaldi**

*Parent*

##### Elaine Balsley

#### ReachOut

##### Alice Ridgway

#### Office of Early Childhood

**Senator Mary Abrams**

*State Senator*

***Shanda Easley***

*Parent*

##### Sharon Marie

#####  *Dept. of Aging & Disabilities Services*

##### Ginny, Mahoney

#### Dept. of Social Services

**Anne Giordano**

#### Education Connection

**Carol Peltier**

#### American School for the Deaf

**Louis Tallarita**

*SDE-Homeless Children*

**Andrea Brinnel**

#### SDE-619

**Vacancy**

#### Early Head Start

**Myra Watnick**

##### *Rehabilitation Associates, Inc*.

**Vacant-Dr. A Milanese Pending**

#### American Academy of Pediatrics

**Representative Liz Linehan**

*House of Representatives*

**Tammy Venenga**

##### *Dept. Of Developmental Services*

**Mary Beth Bruder**

##### *UCEDD*

**Melissa Roberts**

##### *Department of Insurance*

Family Support/CPAC update: Adriana Fontaine (Jane Hampton) referrals doubled 19-42. 4 new mentor parents added. Concerns continue around transition, locating clinical services in the community, and behavioral supports preschool settings. Elaine Balsley from Reachout are partnering with CPAC to develop future CPAC trainings. Bimonthly newsletter for notification of events. Adriana will share with the ICC.

Cindy Jackson proposed a possible collaborative effort to address parental concerns regarding transition.

LA to look into adding CPAC to website permissions to blog information add events to Birth23.org

Concerns raised regarding the possible return of parent fees with possible expiration of the governors executive order in February. Alice Ridgway clarified that elements of the executive order can continue by adding to a new executive order, separate from the existing one that could allow for continuation. Fiscal hardship brought on by PHE/changes in family income mentioned for consideration.

Topics to consider in legislative/fiscal committee in more depth- explore change in statute to remove parent participation fee and how to make up revenue that would be lost.

Alice Ridgway presented the Lead Agency report (see attached). Alice reported on the meeting with PCG and insurance providers and resulting changes. These meetings will replace the PCG meetings to better network and address concerns/solutions with ongoing discussions. The initial meeting centered on reasons for denial and developing efficiencies moving forward. Significant discussion and requests for data regarding projected deficit as referrals remain low.

Concerns raised related to GAP payments reverting back to previous system. While revenues were up in October, there remains need for continued monitoring going forward to keep programs healthy. Concerns were expressed about the number of families that may not want any remote services going forward. This in turn would impact revenue now that they may no longer want in-person supports with the rise in Covid numbers. Myra requested flexibility and creativity related to GAP if revenues declined.

Alice Ridgway clarified that funding when no services are provided isn’t a viable finacial option. However, an area of flexibility might include adjustment to the current GAP amount and/or onetime Quality Assurance payment. Any item related to changes in SPIDER data system are not feasible as the system is fragile, and all resources are focused on building RAIN.

Alice notified ICC of the need for 2 weeks’ notice for data requests and for the ICC to determine what data-related information they will want on a regular basis.

Jane Hampton discussed the health of the system/parent report cards as a point that might be followed. Type of complaint (formal written-informal conversation) would have to be determined. Currently, formal written complaints are very infrequent. The majority of calls to the family liaison historically have been regarding parent participation fees.

Alice Ridgway announced plans to retire in Sept 2021, with Nicole Cossette assuming the role of Assistant Director for succession planning. The data manager position will be posted.

Sparkler screening tool to be rolled out soon as part of OEC’s PDG collaboration.

Committee Report Out:

**Community education and outreach**-concerns related to parental understanding in-person vs. remote services, explaining the coaching interaction style in a way that families will better understand. “How could this be better addressed”? Fact sheet/family handout?

CPAC Family Connections-making sure providers reintroduce the topic throughout the time a child is in the B23 system to meet the family where they are when they might be ready. This program of empowering parents has the potential to impact throughout the lifetime and prepare parents to effective advocates for their children.

Reminder to begin work in committee to highlight “Family Focus” in April

**System Support and Professional Development**- Require a needs assessment to determine which areas to focus resources. Comprehensive EIS Autism Programs expanding types of services may require additional supports. Website related resources added to address areas of need. Areas initially identified as areas of need include: foundational skills, communication, autism, and

social-emotional (discussion re: SME as presenters).

Need to elect another co-chair for this committee (bylaws require parent representative co-chair)

Legislative/fiscal: Feel strongly the need to work on the long-term goal of statute change to remove Parent Participation Fee. Identifying state deficit vs. B23 deficit when discussing finance-related topics. Other possibilities to pursue- change income level to Alice level before a parent fee would be attached and monitor insurance revenues monthly to determine how changes may affect the system (keep escrow payments down). Consider options for program revenues, such as an increase in Gap payment or Quality Assurance 1-time payment, or additional measures if needed.

To be considered: Insurance collected-how do we want it reported

Next Meeting: tentatively scheduled for February 8, 2021



SSIP

*Education and Outreach*

Interviews are being completed for an Education Projects Coordinator position. This position will take over as the staff support for the ICC and as the lead on Education and Outreach SSIP work as Koleen Kerksi will be taking the lead with Linda on Professional Development projects and Autism. Koleen recently completed the training to become a national fidelity coach and will complete her TA with Rush and Sheldon over the next few months

We are exploring an MOU with DSS about data sharing for Child Find like we do with DPH for children with diagnosed medical conditions who would be eligible but are not enrolled in Part C.

We are working with BESB to create similar style handout as the EDHI “HSS” flyer.

A total of 15 people from CPAC and CDI have observed or are scheduled to observe a remote evaluation. The intent was to provide direct knowledge to CPAC/CDI so that they could information to families and better understand the process. Thank you to the programs who are helping.

The OEC joined a collaborative in-service hosted by CDHI on 10/28 to highlight supports available in “Connecting Children to Behavioral Health Services” at the Department of Pediatrics meeting at Middletown Behavioral Health/Middlesex Health Pediatric Services.

Koleen met with CCMC neonatologist Dr. Lainwala and the rehab supervisor/OT to discuss B23 referrals and supports. Dr Laiwala would like to continue with a staff-wide training in early 2021.

An information session was also presented to the Bridgeport NICU staff courtesy of neonatologist Dr. Guarcello. Dr Guarcello expressed an interest in have B23 back for a staff meeting in early 2021 and was receptive to local provider programs participating in a future meeting.

The two part professional development session as part of a federal grant for continuing education for librarians is still in the works and will be part of their ongoing series “Set the Stage”. The first session will be presented on 1/27/21 and the second (TBD) will include Andrea Brinnel and CPAC.

*Personnel Development*

16 members of the first cohort of the Leadership Grant are meeting biweekly for a total of five hours per week.

The RAINBOW PD grant is ready to start accepting applications for Mentor Coach fiscal support. The draft application was sent to programs last week and will be reviewed at the meeting after this before being finalized. The OEC has to expend 90% of the grant by August or risk reduced funding next year. Therefore, programs that are accepted will be on a tight timeline to complete 6 months of mentor coaching between January and June 2021.

After a 2-day Family Coach training and Mentor Coach training held in November, EIS programs are ready to use their own mentor coaches to provide the require 6 months of TA to the participants. This has been the plan all along for sustainability.

A new Mentor Coach Community of Practice began on 12/9/20 and was very well received.

*Fiscal Enhancements*

PCG and the OEC had a very successful meeting with the CT Association of Health Plans. Follow up includes PCG sending summary by plan data to CTAHP to review. While most of the six plans are paying for about 15% of what is billed, CIGNA is at 9% and so PCG will start there. The goal is to identify efficiencies for EIS programs, PCG and the plans while reducing rejections and denials.

The OEC held the first new Insurance Billing Community of Practice (CoP) and it was so well received that the participants asked to meet monthly for two hours! The sharing of ideas will help everyone be more successful at billing and will help the OEC and PCG identify systemic issues.

PCG started billing the F84.\* ICDs as the primary code in all cases when that code is present and the results in the first month were very positive. As of Friday based on dates of service October = $19,790 and November = $89,191. If that continues, it could result in a significant annual increase.

The OEC’s contract with PCG expires on 6/30/21 and we will be requesting a 5-year sole source renewal. We will be asking EIS programs for input on changes at the meeting that follows.

Effective 11/1/20 the OEC discontinued paying emergency/extended GAP, which paid programs for children with IFSPs even when no EIS were billed in the month.

With input from programs and with only normal GAP payments going forward the OEC is no longer projecting a deficit. As we learned last June, projections can change quickly based on the many assumptions made in the models used by the fiscal division.

Last Tuesday the ICC legislative/fiscal committee asked for some data that may become part of a regular report to the ICC. A draft is available as the final numbers could not be prepared in time for this meeting. It will help the OEC to standardize and vet reports if one consistent request is made for monthly updates to the council. Ad hoc reports involving PCG, Fiscal and SPIDER data are much more complex now than previous data reports and need time for thoughtful programming.

SPP.APR Review

Nicole will review the summary table about the FFY19-SFY20 SPP/APR that is due February 1, 2021.

Other

There are several draft procedure revisions online for feedback including the one about working with DCF. That procedure was almost completely rewritten with fresh eyes as we have been doing since 2018. Feedback is due to Elisabeth.Teller@ct.gov by December 24th.

Since the last ICC meeting we can now announce that we happily hired former ICC member Elisabeth Teller as our lead for General Supervision and Monitoring. Now that the Birth to Three system has moved past the change to fee-for service, the RFP and the early months of the COIVD-10 PHE, we will return our focus to verifying of deeper IDEA compliance as well as adding fiscal audits that will mirror what DSS will do when they audit. The OEC will not be extrapolating and will as always include stakeholder input on the processes being developed.

We are happy to announce that Nicole Cossette has taken on the role of Assistant Part C Coordinator in addition to being the Data Manager. All of the new positions are part of what continues to be long-term succession planning. The next position to be requested will be a Data Manager position so Nicole can train her successor and take on more leadership responsibilities as Alice prepares to retire in September.













