



Monday Update

MDDC Newsletter

August 2007

Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council/ (517) 334-6769

“The Train Is A Moving”

A Statement from the Developmental Disabilities Council Peer Mentoring

Since 2004, there has been a push in the Intellectual/Developmental Disability (ID/DD) community to advance our slogan: “Nothing About Us Without Us.” However, decisions about us are often made for us by our “typical” parents, friends, and other natural supports. We consumers are the best experts on our conditions, including our need for supports and services. Granted our movement has enjoyed many successes, but people with developmental disabilities can benefit more from direct input on all phases of our services: planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating. Similar to those with mental illness, people with developmental disabilities are empowered by helping each other to achieve a quality of life and self-determination. The benefits are greater from a system perspective as studies now show that the use of peer specialists advances recovery by improving social functioning of consumers while also reducing hospitalizations.

Special Interest Articles:

- DD Council Peer Mentoring Program
- ATXCHANGE.ORG

Recently in public mental health, the use of peer to peer support has enjoyed renewed attention-a situation which is particularly advantageous as over-extended policy makers, administrators, and practitioners search for ways to provide the best care and services. In Michigan, the network of peer supports is more established among people with mental illness than for individuals with ID/DD. In 2005, MDCH initiated a program to train and certify primary consumers with mental illness as peer support specialists. As a result, more than 200 individuals statewide now hold a certification in the program and many enjoy key roles in the mental health system where we are role models, as well as help others with skill building, goal setting, and problem-solving. A similar effort can be seen on the ID/DD community. Having a strong peer-to-peer network in the ID/DD community should be a goal. Those with ID/DD can also benefit from participating as intermediaries between the professionals and parents on behalf of our peers. Using the *circle of supports*, including PCP, self-determination, supported housing, transportation, supportive education we too can be successful.



Continued.... Peer Mentoring

A few benefits for people with ID/DD include:

- ♦ increasing our options to become mentors
- ♦ increasing our knowledge of our rights and options, while also empowering us to be caretakers of our own lives.
- ♦ Provision of mutual aid and support, while helping us gain confidence and personal vitality.
- ♦ increasing our ability to meaningfully participate in the development of the Person-Centered Plan (PCP)
- ♦ increasing community connections and further natural supports
- ♦ increasing our presence in the workforce
- ♦ reducing the stigma that people with DD can not be independent

Some people may ask: How might a person who is non-verbal participate? That is a fair question, but we must remember that while some people with DD are non-verbal, they can understand and participate. Some may require the assistance of a translator. Others may opt to not participate. Largely, however, there is a greater group of people with developmental disabilities who can and do wish to help their peers. It is my vision, that some day the DD community might also enjoy a strong group of people providing peer-to-peer support as we have seen with the mental illness side.

New Assistive Technology Exchange Website.... ATXCHANGE.ORG

Introducing a free, Michigan-based, classified ad website to help people with disabilities get the tools they need.

Find what you need ... sell or donate what you don't.

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive technology—or AT, for short—is any item, product, system, or equipment that improves life for people with disabilities. AT includes everything from walkers, reachers, grab bars, and hospital beds, to power scooters, custom vans, Braille machines, and software that reads computer screens out loud.

What is ATXchange.org?

ATXchange.org is a nonprofit, Michigan-based web site where people can buy, sell, or give away assistive technology.

Do you have a used AT item in storage that could help someone with a disability? Would you like to sell—or give—the item to someone who will truly benefit from it? Then visit ATXchange.org and post a free classified ad.

Do you need a certain AT item to improve your daily life? Would you like to find it



free or at a bargain price? Just stop by ATXchange.org and browse the classified ads.

This free, easy-to-use web site is designed to help people exchange both low- and high-tech assistive technology.

No computer access?

If you don't have a personal computer handy—or Internet access—simply visit the ATXchange.org web site through your public library or nearest Center for Independent Living.

ATXchange.org is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Questions? Find answers in the FAQs online at ATXchange.org. Or, contact Michigan Disability Rights Coalition by phone at 800-760-4600. Or, e-mail us at ATX@prosynergy.org.

Program Committee Draft Summary Actions Minutes June 12, 2007

Present: Glenn Ashly

Phone: Melissa Anderson, Barbara LeRoy

Staff: Cheryl Trommater

Issue: Welcom, Introductions

Actions: N.A.

Issues: Housekeeping: Minutes of the May 8, 2007 meeting

Action: Minutes were approved by consensus

Issue: RFP Review Process

Action: The Reveiwer Package and Staff Handbook – Review Process documents were reviewed. A few minor editing changes were recommended. The two major changes considered were:

1. Requiring reviewers to sign a confidentiality form. This was approved by consensus.
2. Whether to permit partication by teleconference in review groups. It tends to adversely affect the quality of the review when not everyone is in the room. But it is hard to get enough reviewers, for people from distant parts of the state to attend, or for people with disabilities to attend in person. One suggestion was that one or two people may be permitted to participate by teleconference if necessary for adequate review group composition. The committee did not reach an agreement about this issue. Cheryl will poll the committee.

Issue: Staff Report: Transportation Grants

Information: Tracy provided an update on each of the grants. The report is attached to the minutes.



Continued.... Program Committee Minutes

Issue: Updates

RFPs: Both RFPs for this year have been reviewed, and awaiting the Executive Committee's decision on awards.

Planning Process: The Council has started working towards the 2012-2016 planning process. The Council has not decided yet whether or not we will be able to work with Disability Voice on this. They are working on revising their process, and the Council is participating in those discussions.

Annual Plan Amendment: Changes are small this year. The Amendment is due August 15, and the Council plans to submit by August 3.

Next month we will need to consider our work plan. An emphasis for the Council this year is looking at policy issues. A new idea to consider is developing a brochure on people first language. Members should bring any suggestions for the work plan to the August 14th meeting.

The committee will meet August 14 and September 11 at 10:00 am. No committee meeting has been scheduled for July.

Issue: Adjourn

Action: Meeting was adjourned at 12:00

Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes Hannah Community Center

June 12, 2007

Present

Theresa Squires, Melinda Haus-Johnson, Jane Spitzley, Paul Palmer, Duncan Wyeth, Pam Hall, Carolyn Lajuste, Terry Hunt, Vendella Collins, Tandy Bidinger, Dee Flotence, Vera Graham

Via Phone

Andre Robinson

Jane Reagan

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am. Chair Andre Robinson welcomed everyone.

Approval of Minutes from April Meeting

Duncan Wyeth moved that the minutes from the May meeting be accepted. Paul Palmer seconded. CARRIED



Monday Update

Continued.... Policy Minutes

Federal Updates

Immigration Bill

The immigration reform bill will also have an impact on pwdd.

SCHIP (Children's Special Health Insurance Plan) The primary focus of this program is to cover healthcare for children. Reforms are in process, to ensure children are the main beneficiaries.

Farm Bill-food stamps are very important to low-income people (which include PWD) but amounts haven't been increased in a long time. Advocates want to increase amounts of food stamps.

State Updates

Legislative Action

The 2007 budget has been balanced. It is only balanced until October 1. No real solution was found, basically funds were shifted from one pot to another. We need to stay diligent about keeping legislator pressure on. Please write and call your legislators.

Single Business Tax

A replacement for the Single Business Tax has not been found yet, several ideas are floating around. The DD Council would like to see legislators create a replacement that is revenue neutral.

Fall Rally

Ideas are being discussed to hold a fall rally with partners/agencies to bring awareness to legislators re: disability budget issues and make pwdd presence known

Create PPC Platform

The Council is in the process of creating a public policy platform. As a starting point, the current talking points will be developed further. Work Groups and Committees need to focus on policy issues when creating their work plan. The Council will then incorporate those issues into the platform.

Legislative Event – Update

Due to the Governor's Executive Directives, designed to reduce the budget deficit, we were unable to sign the contract with the Radisson hotel to hold the date from 2008. No further decisions regarding the event can be made until late fall. We will continue to keep meeting and planning the event in hopes we will be able to have a 2008.

Legislative Event.

Grant Update

Informed Communities

MDRC has looked at their workload and Carolyn LeJuste will be taking over the project for the rest of the summer. The Kalamazoo forum will be July 20, 2007 from 9:00am-4:00pm. The topic will be housing.

Medicaid Video

The video has been completed and each RICC will receive two (2) copies of the DVD to use as a tool in their community. This program is an excellent way to educate the community and legislators. The video has been shown at the May DD Council meeting and at the Self-Determination Conference in Lansing and was a big hit.

Education Update

Yasmina Bouraoui will be taking over as staff of the Education Work Group (EWG) upon Rick Van Horn's retirement.



Continued.... Policy Minutes

The EWG will be making comments on the special education rules both in writing and at a public hearing.

Contributing to the PPC Meeting

The PCC would like to have more active participation from Committee members and have more RICC Public Policy Advocates involved in attending the meetings. One goal is from participants to research and report on agenda item issues at the meeting and give comments.

Medicaid Comments

The DD Council has the opportunity to

make comments on all proposed Medicaid changes. Currently, staff creates and submits the comments (with very little committee member input). There is a need for more divergent comments. This is an excellent opportunity for consumers and committee members to become involved in proposed Medicaid changes.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am by Andre Robinson, CO-Chair.

Transportation Work Group Meeting Minutes

6/14/07

PRESENT: Diane Kempen, Paul Palmer,
Jacqui Day, JoAnn Lucas,
Glenn Ashley

Midland: Mark Oliver, Vera Graham
Tuscola: Ralph Moore, Rita Wall
Sanilac: Stephen Coffelt
Baraga: Mick Sheridan

Staff Tandy Bidinger, Dee Florence

VIA PHONE:

Ontonagon: Sue Ernest, Joe Miller, Amanda Paveglio, Erin McMahon, Scot Morrison, Doug Anderson

Eastern UP: Kori Horrom, Jon Browichrdki, Charlene Klip

Wayne: Hank Johnson, Charles Stedman, Tommy Meadows, Robert Robleski, Sharon Jablonski, Gary Yeskey, Yolanda Oliver, Verna Brocks, Ray Roberson, Mary Ann Bozenski, Elizabeth Ayden Johnson

Genesee: Mar Golden, Gary Conway, Gordan Siwula, Tiffany McIntire, Carl Fenner Muhammad, Charlene Lizotte

Approval of Minutes

JoAnn Lucas moved that the May 2007 minutes be approved as presented. Glenn Ashley seconded.

August TWG Traveling Meeting-Gaylord

The August TWG meeting will be held in Gaylord in combination with the RICC Regional meeting. RICCs will be able to teleconference into this meeting just like always. If you plan to attend the meeting in person, please RSVP so that a lunch can be reserved for you. Also, those planning to call in please RSVP so that we can get the meeting materials to you.



Monday Update

Continued.... Transportation Minutes

Work Plan

The work Plan should be issue based. Discussion was held regarding the topics the group wanted to include in the work plan. The ideas will be put into the work plan template and presented at the next TWG meeting for final approval.

Summer Meeting Schedule

The group discussed the TWG summer meeting schedule and decided to cancel the July meeting. The next meeting will be the August 6, 2007 traveling meeting in Gaylord.

Voucher Update

Jackson

There are now 78 people participating in the program. One individual saved up their miles and went to Chicago for their birthday. The program is working on getting more pwdd to ride the line haul bus. They are using a buddy system, which help individuals become more comfortable and familiar with line haul busses.

Wayne

Currently there are 40 active participants in the

Family Support Work Group Minutes June 28, 2007

Members Present: Lori Goike, Carolyn Allston-Smith, Ronda SanCartier, Karen Brantley, Joanne Darr, Vera Graham
Staff: Tracy Vincent

Welcome and introductions were done.

Carolyn motioned to approve the May minutes, Lori seconded. Motion approved.

program. Next week they are having a meeting with other organizations to discuss the sustainability of the Wayne Voucher program.

Road to Freedom

The Road to Freedom bus will be in Lansing on August 12, 2007 from Noon to 3 pm.

Teleconference Rules:

All RICCs are encouraged to participate in the TWG teleconference. Due to the large number of individuals interested in calling in, and the limited funding allocated to the TWG, ground rules have been set. They are as follows:

- **The Teleconference site must be at a public place.**
- **There should be at least two consumers participating in the call.**
- **RICCs must RSVP in advance so that meeting materials can be sent to you in before the meeting, and that we can let others from your area know where the phone site is.**
- **RSVP to Dee Florence at 517-334-6123 or florenced1@michigan.gov**

Questions about this policy (or to set up a new phone site), contact Tandy Bidingert at (517) 334-7355 or email bbingert@michigan.gov.

Announcements

- The Multicultural Committee would like FSWG members to attend their July 9th meeting at 1:00pm to discuss possible project collaboration in 2008.
- The group discussed the article that was in the Lansing State Journal about the mother who had cancer who took her life and her daughter's life whom had Down Syndrome because there was no one to take care of her.



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Continued.... Family Support Minutes

- The DD Council is going to supply information on supports and services for future planning. The group will send Tracy their suggestions.

2008 Work Plan Development

The group discussed topics to be included on the 2008 work plan. Activities include:

- Finding at least 8-10 health insurance and related links to be available on the FSWG website.
- Market the FSWG website.
- Advocate for increased

- family support services.
- Collaborate with RICCs and other advocacy organizations that have relationships with legislators to influence policy.

Tracy will develop a draft plan based on the discussion and will email it out to the group for comments. We will continue to work on the plan at the July meeting.

Next meeting: July 18th at 10:00am.

Good Luck and Farwell Rick Van Horn



Rick Van Horn, DD Council staff member and Monday Update editor, has retired from state service, effective June 29, 2007.

Van Horn joined the Council staff in 1997, coming from the Accident Fund of Michigan. He is a native of Battle Creek, served in the Navy during the Vietnam Era, and holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in journalism from Michigan State University.

He began his communications work at a life insurance company in Battle Creek and joined the Accident Fund in Lansing in 1987. He became a state employee when the Accident Fund was determined to be a state agency.

Van Horn anticipates doing a lot of fishing in his retirement. Good luck in your endeavors!