

**DSP Workforce Initiative
Steering and Advisory Committee Meeting
Chicago, IL
March 13th, 2006**

In attendance:

Sara Bianco, *Equip for Equality*; Kim Brewerton, *New Hope Center*; Tina Conner, *Neumann Association*; Harry Dispensa, *US Dept of Labor*; Kenya Driver, *Seguin Services*; Lesley Gonigam, *Gateway*; Vanessa Hoffeditz, *Gateway*; Julie Keck, *Clearbrook*; Beth Lacey, *Community Support Services*; Kimberly Lawler, *Clearbrook*; Julie Lieberman, *Little City Foundation*; Julie Marcionetti, *Seguin*; Lorraine McCormick, *Community Support Services*; Abbie Miles, *Habilitative Systems*; Kip Nichter, *Ray Graham Association*; Amie Norris, *Oak/Leyden Developmental Services*; Tony Paulauski, *Arc of Illinois*; Mike Perry, *AFSME*; Sheila Romano, *Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities*; Rae Rushford, *Little City Foundation*; Janet Shelton, *Macon Resources*; Nancy Sifuentes, *Clearbrook*; Hazel Small, *Habilitative Systems*; Marie Sonnon, *Gateway*; Paulette Stark, *New Hope Center*; Karen Steen, *The Arc of Rock Island County*; Patty Thies, *Ray Graham Association*; Paula Vanier, *Self-Advocate*; Stacy Yusim, *Equip for Equality*

Project staff:

Institute on Disability and Human Development: Tamar Heller, Katie Keiling, Mary Rizzolo, Kristen Ball, Dale Mitchell

Institute on Community Integration: John Sauer

Human Services Research Institute: Marianne Taylor, Lee Vorderer

Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities: Sandy Ryan, Fred Bortz

Welcome and Introductions

- Sheila Romano from ICDD welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their commitment of the project. She also acknowledged the efforts of the Education Workgroup for presenting at the AAMR of IL Conference.

Workgroup Reports

➤ **Recruitment and Retention Strategies**

Goal 1: Conduct annual and on-going legislative advocacy campaigns to increase the wages and benefits of direct support professionals and frontline supervisors by not less than \$3.00 per hour.

- Tony gave an overview of the history of the wage initiatives. Currently there is not much momentum around this issue since there are so many other issues that are being pushed as priorities. We need to work with state associations in the capitol and get this as a priority area.
- TO DO: Everyone in the group needs to bring this issue back to the associations they are part of and urge them to get it on the agenda.
- TO DO: Please send Katie stories from DSPs, people with disabilities, and their families about the impact of the low wages on their life and the importance of investing more in DSPs.

- Some people have asked why the goal specifies \$3/hr—Tony explained that SEIU signed a contract using \$3/hr over 3 years and the group decided to align themselves with that as a model. Also, this increase would achieve parity for DSPs working in community settings with DSPs working in state institutions.

Goal 2: To disseminate and implement a public relations campaign kit throughout the state.

- Using the Marketing Toolkit from Minnesota as a model, the group thought of 3 types of kits to create: 1. Marketing for DSPs geared toward organizations, 2. Marketing of Pas geared toward people with disabilities and families, 3. Legislative Advocacy Kit with info on our first goal.
- TO DO: Please identify public relations people who could get involved in this group.

Goal 3: To improve the knowledge of supervisors related to recruitment and retention strategies.

- The model from the train-the-trainer given over the summer to organizations can be used to spread the information statewide
- The group is identifying how to move forward and will work with the mentoring and supervision group.

➤ **Education, Training, and Career Dev.**

Goal Description: Building on existing DHS competencies for DSPs, develop intermediate and advanced education opportunities that bear college credit and that lead to voluntary, specialized credentialing.

- Amie Norris presented an update on group progress. The education workgroup (Katie, Carolyn, Amie, Maryam, Michelle, and Paula) presented at AAMR on March 2, 2006. At this presentation, they passed out a survey to audience members to see which model of education & training delivery was preferred (Associates Degree, Certification, DHS Tracks, or Apprenticeship). 88% of respondents indicated they would prefer training that resulted in an Associate's Degree or Certification.
- TO DO: After Amie edits the survey, she will be distributing it to SAC members to disseminate widely to DSPs across the State.
- Amie acknowledged how instrumental Preston Morgan has been in facilitating discussion between the education workgroup and the community colleges. Amie informed the group that the Illinois Central Community College in Peoria offers a Certificate Program in Developmental Disabilities. The program began in September of 2004 and has since held 10 trainings educating approximately 200 DSPs. Courses are provided every other month and allow newly hired DSPs to complete the DSP training within the DHS required 120 days. Courses are taught by local service provider staff that the College hires as adjunct

faculty. Amie also briefly discussed findings from Harry Dispensa regarding the apprenticeship model. The apprenticeship is not an end product (as opposed to a certificate or degree); rather, it is a means of arriving at these other ends. The workgroup was very interested in considering this option further.

➤ **Data, Wages, and Statistics**

Goal 1: Convene stakeholders to identify statewide data needed regarding the community services DSP workforce supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in Illinois, inventory existing and potential sources of that data, and make recommendations about ongoing data collection, evaluation, and reporting strategies.

Goal 2: Report annually on the extent to which an adequate supply of DSPs is available to provide community based supports and services for citizens with developmental disabilities.

- Dale Mitchell explained that the goal is to ensure there is an ongoing data collection system in place that will continue to collect necessary data after the project is completed. This means that we should focus on current vehicles that collect data and try to convince them to modify their current efforts to include the data that is needed by this project to evaluate outcomes.
- There are two groups we need to target data collection: 1) disability groups and agencies that operate residential and day programs that support persons with disabilities and employ staff as DSPs; and 2) families and individuals who hire their own DSPs directly. We especially need to make sure that we focus on data collection efforts on the second group.
- The revision of the Medicaid waiver for Illinois in 2007 presents an opportunity to build in some of the ongoing data collection efforts into the Illinois service structure. Prime targets might be fiscal intermediaries who could assist families in the hiring, training, and payment of DSPs.
- Some of the questions that should be reviewed:
- Do agencies have different wage scales for their DSPs and if so, what are the criteria used for these differential wages (i.e. seniority, education, experience, job difficulty or responsibilities)
- How many families directly hire their own DSPs versus receiving DSP services through an agency?
- How many relatives function as a paid DSPs for a family member? How do the wage rates, turnover rates, and training levels compare between family members who are paid DSPs and other DSPs?
- What impact do different rates of pay have on turnover of DSPs?

- What data has been collected for the 10 families in the study who hire their own DSPs— how can we expand the number of families in this sample?
- The work group has begun conversations with several organizations (IARF, Illinois Bureau of Economic Security) to see if their ongoing data collection efforts could accommodate some of the projects data needs on a permanent basis.
- Also, Beth is going to help in contacting Charlotte Cronin to see if we can talk with more families.

➤ **Status and Awareness**

Goal 1: Develop and provide support to an Illinois chapter of the National Association of Direct Support Professionals run by and for DSPs by June, 2006.

- Many DSPs have become involved in this group to be the founding member of an Illinois chapter of the NADSP. The group is using a Toolkit from the NADSP as a guide to develop a state chapter.
- Fliers with information about the development of an IL chap of NADSP were disseminated at the AAMR of IL conference. The flier will be revised slightly and disseminated throughout the state.
- TO DO: Each organization should identify 2 DSPs (1 main contact and 1 back-up person) to be involved with the group and be founding members of the IL chap of NADSP. A recruitment flier was given out for people to use to give DSPs more information with Kristen's contact info.
- Goals 2 & 3 will be focused on after goal 1 is implemented.

Goal 2: Develop and provide training to organizations on how to involve DSPs in the development and implementation of individual supports for the people to whom they provide services and supports by June, 2008.

Goal 3: Encourage agencies operating programs for people with developmental disabilities to include DSPs on relevant work groups, councils, board, and task forces by October, 2007.

➤ **Mentoring and Supervision**

Goal 1: Develop and implement a training program for organizations about the benefits of effective mentoring and supervision.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a training program for DSPs about the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for being a mentor.

Goal 3: Develop and implement a training program to teach supervisors necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for guiding, directing, and supervision direct support professionals.

- The mentoring and supervising group continues to work of drafting definitions of these skills, along with a set of competencies for each. These will be shared with the larger SAC group by the end of Spring, with requests for comment. Once the definitions are finished, we'll be spreading them throughout the Illinois human services field by way of the existing network of Human Resources Professionals, through the developing training directors' network, and we will also share them with state agencies, Arc of Illinois, IARF, and other stakeholder groups.
- Our work group will then focus on gathering training materials that address the competencies. We would like to connect with the Education workgroup, so that the competencies can be included in their training and education planning, and we would appreciate everyone in the SAC identify to our group any training materials/activities that relate to the competencies.
- We will use the project website to list all these training resources, so that they will be available throughout Illinois.

Workforce Development Plan: Disseminate and engage others

- The group brainstormed ideas of ways to not only disseminate the Plan, but especially to engage others in a meaningful way to further the Initiative. The chart below indicates the ideas the group cam up with—this is a start and additional ideas should be emailed to Katie.
- Katie will be the central coordinator of the dissemination effort. Please let her know how you are disseminating the information and whether it is electronically or with the hard copies.

WHO will you contact?	WHICH version of the Plan will you use?	HOW will you engage the individual, group, organization?
Side by Side Coalition—this is a PR initiative of 10-12 organizations in the Chicago Metro area	FULL, EXEC, 1-PAGER	Beth will contact the leadership
Executive Directors of orgs throughout the state	FULL	Email with intro letter from ICDD explaining and encourage to give out to DSPs
DSPs statewide thru EDs of orgs	FULL, EXEC	EDs give out at staff meetings with an explanation (not just given out)— Also, this is good way to increase interest in NADSP
Families (as advocacy tool)	FULL, EXEC, 1-PAGER	Tony w/Charlotte thru FSN (put in newsletter), Tony has list of PAS agencies, newsletters of orgs
Coalition of Women Legislators—has economic self sufficiency of women as agenda	FULL, EXEC, 1-PAGER	Try to get them to take on as key legislative issues (Sheila)

Legislative staff and key committee members	FULL, EXEC, 1-PAGER	Face-to-face for key staff—R&R Wrkgrp will ID these people, email blast others
Community Colleges	FULL & EXEC	Preston
Network staff	FULL	Via Jeri Johnson w/Sheila, get on agenda of next SAC mtg
Families members/PWD	EXEC	Tony, Charlotte C, Charlotte Des Jardin—send w/letter
Legislators	EXEC	DSPs with PWD—tell their story
Media	FULL, EXEC, 1-PAGER	Project staff & ICDD coordinate strategy
Candidates/Elected Officials/Mayors	EXEC, EXEC, 1-PAGER	The R&R Wrkgrp will be strategizing about this
Mental Health Boards	EXEC	Beth will contact
PAS agencies & Children and Family Connections	EXEC	Tony has access to network
Workforce Development Board give to the One-Stops	EXEC	UIC could send a letter
NADSP Chapter	1-PAGER	Use as a marketing tool to spread the word
Conferences and conventions	1-PAGER	Everyone
Rally Day at the Capitol	1-PAGER	Paula will bring a bunch
Co-ops and Special Ed	1-PAGER	Directors of Special Ed statewide conference

Spotlight on Excellence

Gina Buhrmester from Arc of Iroquois County had the flu so she will present at the June meeting.

Year 1 Outcomes Evaluation Summary

Tamar Heller presented the data from year 1. See the powerpoint slides for details.

Future Meeting:

June 12th, 2006

10:00am-11:30am: Workgroups Meet

11:30am-12 noon: Lunch

12pm-3pm: Steering and Advisory Committee Meets

Chicago Illini Union

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