

**DSP Workforce Initiative
Steering and Advisory Committee Meeting
Chicago, IL
June 12th, 2006**

In attendance:

Lori Bolt, *Gateway Services*; Gina Buhrmester, *Arc of Iroquois County*; Chris Burnett, *IARF*; Terri Canham, *Sparc*; Harry Dispensa, *US Dept of Labor*; Kenya Driver, *Seguin Services*; Lesley Gonigam, *Gateway*; Vanessa Hoffeditz, *Gateway*; Julie Keck, *Clearbrook*; Don Kellog, *Community Support Services*; Beth Lacey, *Community Support Services*; Kim Lawler, *Clearbrook*; Julie Marcionetti, *Seguin*; Kristy Martin, *Sparc*; Michelle McHaney, *Habilitative Systems*; Preston Morgan, *Illinois Community College Board*; Susan Murphy, *Cornerstone Services*; Amie Norris, *Oak/Leyden Developmental Services*; Jane O'Melia, *Arc of Rock Island County*; Tony Paulauski, *Arc of Illinois*; Mike Perry, *AFSME*; Levon Powell, *Clearbrook*; Rae Rushford, *Little City Foundation*; Marie Sonnon, *Gateway*; Paulette Stark, *New Hope Center*; Patty Thies, *Ray Graham Association*; Paula Vanier, *Self-Advocate*; Brandon Von Liski, *Sparc*; Susy Woods, *Family Support Network*

Project staff:

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

Institute on Community Integration: Amy Hewitt, Sherri Larson

Human Services Research Institute: Marianne Taylor

Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities: Sandy Ryan, Fred Bortz

Welcome and Introductions

- Tamar Heller, Director of IDHD, welcomed everyone and went around for introductions

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.*

- A fact sheet is being developed as well as talking points and a "how to" guide for people to use in advocating with their legislators

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

- The group will use the information from the Marketing Toolkit to spread to organizations and individuals around the state

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

- A training is scheduled for September 19th to teach the 14 organizations about recruitment and retention strategies for supervisors
- After this training, the information will be spread to additional organizations around the state where the 14 organizations will have a key role in mentoring and providing technical assistance

Education, Training, and Career Development

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.*

- The education workgroup discussed plans for conducting a statewide survey on direct support professionals' competency standards. A similar study was conducted by the University of Minnesota in 7 states. It was decided to use the same survey tool. However, to increase completion rates (the survey tool is lengthy – approximately 12 pages), it was decided to split the survey up into manageable chunks.
- The group decided that instead of the complete survey, DSPs would be asked to complete one of the 14 sections. It was estimated that this would take about 10-15 minutes. DSPs would be given the option to complete the entire survey if they chose, though they would be informed of the time commitment this would take.
- The workgroup members discussed incentives to increase participation in the survey. Some ideas were ipods (members discussed opening up personal bank accounts to get free ipods to donate to the project) and small cash prizes.
- The survey will be available in an online format and in hard copy upon request. Mary Kay Rizzolo will work on converting the survey from the University of Minnesota into an online version.
- The group also decided to create a letter that would be sent to executive directors across the State. The letter would introduce the survey and encourage participation. A copy of the workforce development plan would also be included so that the directors could learn more about the project's vision and progress to date.

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 will contact the Illinois Association for Rehabilitation Facilities and meet with them to discuss the possibility of modifying their annual wage survey to collect some of the wage and turnover data the workgroup has recommended should be collected on an on-going basis. Committee members Chris Burnett and Dale Mitchell will work to schedule this meeting.
- Tamar Heller will work with one of her employees, Joe Caldwell, to expand the current data the committee has regarding families and individuals with disabilities who hire DSPs directly and not through an agency. Tamar and Joe will attempt to both collect this data from the existing 10 families in the project and to expand the number of families in the project who hire their DSPs directly.
- Beth Lacy and Chris Burnett are members of a task force helping IDHS write a draft for the renewal of the state waiver, which will expire on June 30, 2007. Beth and Chris will encourage the inclusion of a clause that would require any entity serving as a “fiscal intermediary” under the waiver for either a person with a developmental disability or a family of such an individual to collect minimum core data regarding the employment of persons providing DSP services to the person with a developmental disability.
- In addition, if approved, UIC could publish a quarterly summary of the data collected from the fiscal intermediaries that would provide information to IDHS, PassR agencies, and other interested parties as to the current status of DSP services and supports to individuals living outside of agency settings. In addition, once a year, UIC could publish a more comprehensive report listing outcome measures and recommendations for system change.

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.

- Many DSPs were at this meeting to work on developing an Illinois Chapter of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP)
- Amy shared information on the development of DSP credentialing, the different levels and requirements.
- There was a discussion of utilizing the other Workgroups of the Illinois Direct Support Professional Workforce Initiative as a resource (Recruitment & Retention Strategies; Education, Training, and Career Development; Data, Wages, and Statistics; Mentoring & Supervision).
- Individuals will be contacted representatives from other state chapters around the country to gather information about how to develop a chapter.

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.

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

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.

- Definitions of mentoring have been developed by the group. There is a possibility that the Mentoring and Supervision Workgroup would partner and potentially merge with the Recruitment and Retention Workgroup around the supervisory training.

Spotlight on Organizations

- Gina Buhrmester from Arc of Iroquois County presented the intervention strategies her organization is using.
- Julie Marcionetti and Kenya Drive presented on Seguin Services intervention strategies and how it is impacting their organization.

Spotlight on Individuals & Families

Toolkit for Individuals and Families to help find, choose, and keep DSPs

- A draft of the Toolkit was shown to the group. There are two versions, one for individuals with disabilities and another for their family members, and they can be used separately or together, depending on the person/family. This resource provides tips and activities that people can use to find, choose, and keep great DSPs.

Customized College of Direct Support (CDS) for individuals

- The CDS can be customized in many ways, one of which is to provide a realistic job preview with information about working with an individual with disabilities. Amy showed a sample of

a powerpoint that was developed for an individual she is working with. It includes information about the person's likes and dislike as well as the good and difficult things about working with her. It also includes quotes from other people who have worked with her and many pictures. This is a great tool that can be updated easily and provides a way to give potential DSPs a more realistic sense of working with an individual.

- Many people from agencies thought this could be used to describe individuals living in a CILA where a potential new DSP would work. They liked how easy it could be updated and how personal it seemed.

Spotlight on Workforce Development Intervention: College of Direct Support

Merger of CDS & CFS

- The College of Frontline Supervision and Management is being merged with the College of Direct Support so they are both streamlined. The CDS will be the portal with which to access all the CDS courses as well as all the CFS courses.

Administrative training

- Katie and Mary Kay have learned the administrative functions of the CDS which include adding new learners and assigning courses. Some organizations have selected one main administrator at their site to manage the CDS for their agency. Katie has done administrative training with one organization and will be rolling it out to others in the next few months.

CDS general training

- Organizations were asked if they felt the need for additional training on the CDS more generally. At this point, it was decided that organizations would learn the administrative training and they would let project staff know if additional CDS training was needed.

Workforce Development Plan

Update on the dissemination and engagement efforts of the Steering and Advisory Committee

- Katie mailed out to all the SAC members over 1000 1-pagers, 800 Executive Summaries, and 400 full versions of the Workforce Development Plan. The word about the initiative is being spread around the state.
- A panel presentation about the initiative was done at the AAMR of Illinois conference and the 1-pager was disseminated to attendees
- A presentation was also done at the Arc of Illinois conference and the 1-pager was disseminated in the packets given out
- The 1-pager was disseminated at the CCDI conference
- Beth Lacey spread the information at the conference for the Community Mental Health Boards
- A panel will present at the IARF conference
- Katie will present at the upcoming Statewide Advisory Committee for the Division of Developmental Disabilities
- The Arc of Illinois spread the information to their chapters as well as their listserv
- Beth Lacey connected Katie with the Side by Side Coalition and she gave them information to spread to their members
- Beth Lacey made a contact from the Coalition of Women Legislators and explained that the majority of DSPs are women who are receiving minimum wages and are struggling to support their families. She will set up a meeting for she and Katie to meet with them and see if they will take this on as one of their issues.
- Paula Vanier spread the 1-pager during a Rally Day at the capitol
- Seguin has a workforce development committee that has spread the information to their management, DSPs, and board
- Some organizations spread it around within their newsletter
- The Recruitment and Retention Workgroup will organize the group around spreading the word to legislators

- It was decided that a special meeting should be set with DHS-DDD to discuss the initiative further and specifically talk about the possibility of adopting the CDS for the state

Future Meetings:

September 18th, 2006; 10am-3pm

- **Springfield, IL**

December 4th, 2006; 10am-3pm

- **Chicago, IL**

March 19th, 2007; 10am-3pm

- **Springfield, IL**

June 18th, 2007; 10am-3pm

- **Chicago, IL**