

Family Support Council Meeting
February 28th and March 1st, 2025
Zoom Meeting – Sioux Falls, SD; Holiday Inn Express Sioux Empire Mall
Meeting Minutes

Members present: In-Person: Krista Johnson, Julie Flowers, Haley Coss, Peggy Waltner, Jennifer Walker;
Virtual: Melissa Rickett, Carolee Little, Lindsey Hansen, Ruth Conway, Toni Feist, Janet Whiting

Members absent: Tina Two Crow-Slow Bear, Brittany Norin, Joshua Jones

DHS Staff: Kade Anderson, Carrie Geppert, Stephanie Busjahn, Kevin Dunn, Brett Spencer
A&M Staff: Erin Leveton

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Krista called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm CT.

2. Approval of Agenda

Toni made a motion to approve the agenda and Haley seconded. Motion passed with a voice vote.

3. Approval of Minutes

Krista made a motion to approve the September minutes and Julie seconded the motion. Motion passed with a voice vote.

4. Opening Round

Introductions were made from State staff and the Council Members.

5. DDD Leadership Introduction

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) new director and assistant director introduced themselves. Brett Spencer is the new assistant director and Kevin Dunn is the new director. Kevin also gave an overview with what was happening with Medicaid and South Dakota Legislative Session. DDD is gathering more information around any Medicaid changes but doesn't have anything to report at this time. There are no South Dakota bills affecting DDD's services or the Family Support 360 Waiver.

6. DDD Updates

- **Hearings FAQ Document** – Erin Leveton gave an update on the FAQ appeals document. DDD has ran it past Disability Rights SD. <https://drsdlaw.org/>. The Council decided to take two weeks to look over the document “FS Council Admin Hearing 2-25-25” before it is publicly linked on DDD's website.
- **FS360 Waiver Update** – Kade gave an overview of FS360 Waiver Update and where DDD is currently at. DDD went over the projected timeline to get the waiver amendment completed. Townhalls were completed last week on February 19th and 20th. High turnout and lots of great feedback during the townhalls. The waiver amendment should be drafted by the next council meeting and the Council will have an opportunity to review the draft then.

Other ideas that were offered were nutrition and dieticians, other items not covered by insurance such as other therapy services.

DDD also was looking for how to engage with the public. The Council offered that surveys work, an option through text message would be ideal, and to keep surveys short.

- **NCI Survey** – Erin Leveton gave an overview of the upcoming NCI surveys that will be going out to families. There will be a paper survey and in-person interviews. The list of individuals selected will go to the family's family support coordinators as well so they can be of assistance to families. The in-person surveys will likely take over an hour to complete and the selection of those individuals was done through a random and stratified process.

Erin then went over past NCI data and where South Dakota fell in different areas. When the NCI surveys were last done in South Dakota there were not enough respondents to get a comprehensive sample size. One goal for this year is to have more people complete the survey.

Current or legacy reports for the NCI surveys is located at:
<https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>

7. **Intake Overview**

Power point was presented by Stephanie Busjahn with DDD. Power point presentation is posted to the Boards and Commission website. <https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/>

The Resource Guide that was discussed will be posted to the Boards and Commission website as well.

Julie advised their family just went through the intake process and stated that the process seemed to go quickly and appears to be more movement between waivers.

The Council did advise that it appears some delays could be caused by who is helping complete and gather the paperwork.

8. **Public Comment**

M.K. current family support coordinator – Requested lists be made available for Conflict Free Case Managers and Community Support Providers.

9. **Recess**

Went into recess at 8:09 PM CT.

10. **Recall to Order**

Janet called the meeting back to order at 8:32 AM CT.

Joshua Jones joined the meeting. Janet joined in-person.

11. **DDD Updates**

- **Grievances and Appeals/ALJ** – There were 7 appeals for items. 6 were for Specialized Medical and Adaptive Equipment and Supplies (SMAES) and one was for personal care. 2 SMAES requests were overturned, and the others were upheld.

- **SMART Data** – DDD went over information on the SMART data handouts. These are available on the Boards and Commissions website.
- **Waiting List** – the current data has 173 individuals on the waiting list. These individuals have gone through screening to see if they would likely be eligible for the waiver but are not officially on the waiver. 28 individuals are waiting in the western part of the state, 3 in the central, 26 in the northeast and 116 in the southeast. The longest amount of time that someone has been on the waiting list is 370 days in the southeast region. The Council had a good discussion around the waitlist and were given options to reach out to their local legislators or Disability Rights:
<https://sdlegislature.gov/>
<https://drsdlaw.org/>

The Council made a request to track the number of applications that are being received to see if those numbers are increasing.

There are currently 37 family support coordinators, and the Council felt like this number was too low.

- **Townhall Update** – Townhalls were conducted by DDD on February 19th and 20th. They had roughly 50 people attend the Wednesday townhall and close to 70 people attend the Thursday townhall. Overall, the feedback was very positive from the townhall meetings. Items discussed during the townhalls were what services or items was DDD still missing, the timeline for the waiver amendment, and updates around DSS letters that have been sent out.

Discussion was had around what would encourage families to attend and some ideas that were provided were: an agenda, text message reminders for the meetings, what others are requesting or better options for group sharing, or video testimonials, and there is also an FS360 Facebook group.

To get current information here is DDD's Listserv that individuals can sign up for.

<https://state.us7.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=3a4bb110bc1a8b2594346b1cc&id=17ff84c9a8>

- **Assistive Technology One Pager** – Reviewed and discussed the adaptive technology one pager. Overall the council thought it would be beneficial and made sense for families.

12. Conversation on Gaps in Services

Conversation was had between DDD and the Council around different areas of gaps in services. Included were gaps in FS360 waiver services and in general.

Childcare was one area where there is a gap in service and an overall need for in South Dakota. A database of available providers would be beneficial. DDD has not ever kept a list of available providers and likely will not in the future as they would have to do background checks and vet individuals on the list. Families will likely need to find simple solutions within their own communities. There are also concerns for childcare assistance for older participants who might not fall under childcare assistance through DSS or DDD.

Individuals with physical disabilities who do not meet DDD requirements. Council members also shared that they have seen this in their line of work in the medical field as well. People may need services but are not qualifying for those needed services.

Individuals with dual diagnoses who have mental health concerns or families receiving mental health help. The Council advised that a lot of individuals who only have mental health concerns can slip through the cracks.

Carrie advised that DDD is currently contracting with A&M and can have them look into these concerns as well. Possibly starting a new waiver to cover some of these other areas or other potential solutions.

13. DD Council Updates

Jessica Lamb shared a by the numbers handout. This will be posted to the Boards and Commission website. The DD Council is proud of the work they have been doing to help fund different conferences and workshops.

The national DD Council is creating a photo gallery to highlight people's stories. If interested in sharing your story please reach out to jessica.lamb@state.sd.us.

The DD Council is also working with the Center for Disabilities on the DD Conference in August for South Dakota. Lighting the Way Autism conference is coming back and there will also be another conference in Omaha in October.

14. Advisement from the Council to DDD

Krista was concerned and had questions around personal safety devices for individuals with disabilities. Conversation was had around what DDD can cover and discussed other options. A council member shared that Reddit can have good discussion forums around different ideas.

Ruth asked that any updates around legislation regarding Medicaid be shared with the Council as it becomes clearer.

15. Share something you enjoyed from this meeting

Council members and State staff shared something they enjoyed from the meeting.

16. Public Comment

M.K. is a family support coordinator – she really liked the information that Erin presented on the NCI surveys and believes it is the first time she has seen that data.

17. Action Items

Items to discuss in future meetings:

- Following up on Succession Planning, Carrie talked about an upcoming session about Special Needs Trusts and other future planning. ABLE accounts.

Ruth shared that the Autism Society of the Black Hills will have Tomac and Tomac speaking at their Support Group meeting on March 16th. Marlys, Toni's Mom knows Jennifer and there was discussion about inviting them to our Rapid City meeting in September.

- Invite Disability Rights South Dakota to have them tell the council what they do.

- Work on letter for Legislators together

18. Adjourn

Toni made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 AM CT, Peggy seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote.

X

Ruth Conway
Secretary