

DAIL Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2021

Microsoft Teams Phone/Video Conference

ATTENDEES

Board Members: Ruby Baker, Nancy Breiden, Avril Cochran, Kim Fitzgerald, Jeanne Hutchins, Nick McCardle, Michelle Monroe, Delaina Norton, Steven Pouliot, Cathy Swain

Guests: Hannah Eye, Chris Davey, Liz Sheedy, Sarah (Interpreter), Lynne Cardozo, Maggie Harris, Meg Burmeister, Sean Londergan

State Employees: Monica White, Liz Perreault, Kirsten Murphy, Megan Tierney-Ward, Angela McMann, Bard Hill, Laura Siegel, Ross McDonald, Angela Smith-Dieng, Janet Nunziata, Glenn Jarett

Motion to Approve Minutes: March 11, 2021 minutes: Move to Approve: Kim Fitzgerald
Seconded: Steve Pouliot

Abstained: Nick McCardle, Ruby Baker, Delaina Norton

Minutes are approved as written.

DAIL Updates:

Monica White, Interim Commissioner and Megan Tierney-Ward, Deputy Commissioner

Interim Commissioner White introduced Laura Siegel who has been hired as the new Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind Services Director for DAIL. Laura's start date was March 29.

The department has been considering what a return to work will look like once the State of Emergency is lifted. The planning will include continued flexibility in work hours, and a hybrid model of in office and telecommuting time. It is DAIL's goal to meet the needs of both employees and the people we serve.

The anticipated Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) bump will be released to the states soon. However, the guidance on how that money can be used is still unknown.

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) awarded the Adult Protective Services (APS) Unit a \$704,000 grant that will need to be used before September of 2023. The money will be used for many things that will enhance the services of APS, but the primary use will be to create Service Navigator positions that will work in conjunction to the restorative justice program in APS.

Reopening guidance for Adult Days and Senior Centers went out last week ([Guidance for In-Person Services](#)). Some programs are ready to reopen while others still need to rehire staff and rethink their

space as they consider having in person services again while still adhering to COVID-19 safety protocols. Since Ault Day sites have been closed and will slowly reopen with a limited census, there is a proposed 5 million dollars in the 2022 budget for Adult Day providers to help sustain the sites while they work to fully reopen.

The Vermont Forward Plan ([Vermont Forward](#)) that Governor Scott laid out covers the reopening of the state from now until July 4. This phased reopening plan addresses the remaining stages of the vaccination rollout and guidance for businesses, traveling, and event and gatherings. DAIL will continue to work with partners on implementing the phased reopening of services to the populations DAIL works with.

Meet Laura Siegel

Laura Siegel, Director of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind Services

Laura started her position with DAIL on March 29. Already, Laura has been networking and collaborating with stakeholders. One of the first projects Laura is taking on is educating the state staff and partners on how to hold meetings virtually that are accessible to people. She has been working on a document on how to make video conferencing through Zoom and Teams accessible and, once approved, will be available on the DAIL website.

Laura will also be working with Vermont's FEMA contact to ensure emergency plans are accessible to the public.

American Sign Language (ASL) classes: Laura would like to explore the idea of combining multiple high schools to create one class for students who want to learn ASL as a language.

Revised DAIL In-Person Guidance to HCBS Providers

Megan Tierney-Ward, Deputy Commissioner

DAIL has been working with the Vermont Department of Health on facility, Adult Day, and Senior Center guidance for providing in-person services. This guidance will be in conjunction with the Governor's Vermont Forward plan. It will provide specific information that these services will need to successfully provide in-person services while still adhering to COVID-19 protocols. A memo with this guidance went out to DAIL's provider networks last week ([Guidance for In-Person Services](#)).

If a service provider is interested in requiring attendees and/or staff to be vaccinated prior to going to the site, providers are encouraged to consult your legal team before implementing that requirement.

ADRD Commission 2020 Annual Report to HCBS Providers

Janet Nunziata MS, ADRD Commission Co-Chair and Glenn Jarrett, ADRD Commission Co-Chair

Janet and Glenn presented the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Commission's 2020 Annual Report. If you would like to review the presentation you can find the presentation here

(<https://dail.vermont.gov/resources/advisory-board/dail-advisory-brd-2021-items>). To view the full annual report, you can find it here: [2020 Annual Report to the Legislature](#).

Educating primary care physicians and their staff is the focus for the ADRD Commission. There are two platforms that are being used for virtual education on early identification of Alzheimer's Disease and dementia in a patient, and available resources for the patient and family. One platform is Vermont Health Learn. You can find information on that here: [Vermont Health Learn](#). The other platform is Project ECHO, which you can find here: [Vermont Project Echo](#).

BOLD Grant on Alzheimer's Disease

Rhonda Williams, VDH, Public Health Chronic Disease Prevention Chief

Rhonda presented the BOLD Grant that the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) applied for and was granted to “create a strong public health infrastructure for early detection & diagnosis, risk reduction, preventable hospitalization, and dementia caregiving” ([Vermont's BOLD Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program presentation](#)). This grant is through the Centers for Disease Control. It is important for Vermont to take advantage of these funding opportunities to enhance services to Vermonters.

Member Perspective

Delaina Norton, DAIL Advisory Board Member

Delaina comes to serve on the board with two lenses of perspective. One as a provider of Developmental Services in her role as the Howard Center's Director of Long Term Supports and Services. The other lens is as a mother of a child who has developmental disabilities. Prior to the birth of her son, her career started in Developmental Services in NY State in group home settings. During her work there, Delaina grew to love working with the IDD/ASD community. Delaina explained that no formal education could have prepared her for the work she was doing and expressed gratitude for the education that came from serving those with IDD/ ASD. One main lesson she shared was people with IDD/ ASD can communicate without words; taking time to understand behavior, movement and sounds is so important to understanding the individual and meeting them where they are at and where you are at with providing support. These learned lessons shaped who she is as a mother of a 20-year-old son with a disability and as an individual. Delaina's son was born the second child of four. When he was first born, there were no concerns, but when he was around one year of age, his development was behind others his same age.

Delaina and her family lived in a very rural part of Vermont, and it was a surprise to see how quickly Vermont responded to her family's need for support. Prior to the age of two home supports were in place and prior to age 3 the district supported his placement in an early education setting. Delaina was surprised by the school system and how the community embraced and supported her and her family. This support was welcomed by Delaina who had left her large family and support system back in New York. Even though there were not a lot of resources where she was raising her family, the support system in her community did their very best to provide what she and her son needed.

When Delaina's family moved into Chittenden county and registered her son for elementary school, she was surprised to be shown the classroom where he and his classmates would be. Her son would be integrated into the classrooms with his peers. This was a pleasant surprise. The school had the resources that made it possible for her son to have the flexibility to be in the classroom and receive the extra support he would need.

Recently, Delaina's son graduated from high school, is working, and has his own apartment. He takes pride in his work and his colleagues appreciate his work ethic. Seeing him in his apartment and the work he has done to remain independent is inspiring to Delaina. She never thought she would see him so independent especially at 20 years old. When Delaina checks in with him, he tells her he is doing good and is happy. That is all a parent wants to hear.

Delaina feels fortunate to have her life as a parent to a child with disabilities and her work in human services interwoven. Vermont is inspiring even if the systems are not perfect. We do not all see the issues or the solutions to the issues the same way, but we work together to build a better system. This work and collaboration is remarkable and a source of pride to be part of that system.

Board Announcements

COVE- Ruby Baker: The hearing aid bill does not look like it will move through the legislature this year. However, there is work being done to make it more likely to move next session.

Meeting was adjourned