

DAIL Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2019
Sally Fox Conference Center, Waterbury

ATTENDEES

Board Members: Robert Borden, Nancy Breiden, James Coutts, Kim Fitzgerald, Matt Fitzgerald, Kenneth Gagne, Joseph Greenwald, Jeanne Hutchins, Laura MacDonald, Nick McCardle, Nancy Metz, Michelle Monroe, Delaina Norton, Diane Novak, Steven Pouliot, Christine Scott, Beth Stern, Lorraine Wargo, Marie Zura

Guests: Sean Londergan, Toby Howe, Christopher Davey, Dustin Matton

State Employees: Liz Perreault, Camille George, Monica Hutt, Auburn Watersong

Motion to Approve Minutes: May 9, 2019 minutes: Move to Approve: Steve Pouliot
Seconded: Nick McCardle

Abstained: Michelle Monroe, Nancy Breiden

Minutes are approved as written.

New DAIL Advisory Board Member Introduction

Michelle Monroe, Board Member

Michelle Monroe was recommended by Kim Fitzgerald to join the DAIL Advisory Board. Michelle lives in South Burlington. The board is very happy to have to have Michelle join the group.

Meet the Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience Development

Auburn Watersong, Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience Development

“The Agency of Human Services is committed to being a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive organization (Act 45. Section 3(12), (2003)). The purpose of this policy is to foster a human services system that employs and practices trauma-informed principles in relation to staff and the individuals and families it serves.” (excerpt from AHS Policy: Trauma Informed System of Care) From this policy and Act 43, the position of Director of Trauma Prevention and Resilience Development was created and Auburn Watersong was recently hired in that position.

Act 43 in 2017 opened the conversation on how prevention and resilience to trauma would benefit the State of Vermont both socially and financially. Vermont doctors had started making links between the negative impact of the trauma a person experiences and health care costs. A study done using nationally representative data from the 2011/12 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) showed that 1 in 8 Vermont children, aged 0 – 17, have experienced 3 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). The 3 most prevalent adverse experiences for children in Vermont are: divorce, economic hardships and alcohol use.

As required by the statute, a workgroup was formed to establish “a plan that specially addresses the integration of evidence-informed and family-focused prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals affected by childhood adversity. The plan shall address the coordination of services throughout and among the Agency, the Agency of Education, and the Judiciary and shall propose mechanisms for:

- (1) Improving and engaging community providers in the systematic prevention of trauma;
- (2) Case detection and care of individuals affected by childhood adversity; and
- (3) Ensuring that the Agency's policies related to children, families, and communities build resilience;
- (4) Ensuring that the Agency and grants to the Agency's community partners related to children and families are evaluated using results-based accountability methodology; and
- (5) Providing an estimate of the resources necessary to implement the response plan including any possible reallocations.”

The State's trauma informed policy will assume that all those that are served have experienced or are experiencing trauma in order to be as proactive and effective as possible in providing services. It is important that staff are trauma informed and make this assumption in order to avoid re-traumatization while providing services.

Vicarious trauma is also recognized and is being addressed. Vicarious trauma applies to staff who work with people who are going through trauma and experience the trauma vicariously, or, in other words, experienced as a result of their interactions with others who have directly experienced trauma. It is important for staff to have supports within their workplace to help protect from this stress. It is also essential to provide staff with training that teaches skills and gives tools that will mitigate the negative effects of working with people who are experiencing trauma. This would help the worker to think clearly and not go into the fight or flight response that is a natural response to stress. It is important that staff have connections to one another and that the work culture shifts to support the needs of staff who experience trauma either directly or vicariously in their work.

An important step to Vermont building protective factors and creating resiliency is to pull communities together and educate the public on how to help kids and adults within communities and the resources that are available. This is a good public health approach that will strengthen the communities both inside and outside of services.

When looking at ways to work with the older population in Vermont, it is important to include the agencies that have direct contact with this population. Providing appropriate training that can help staff think instead of “what’s wrong with you?” to “what happened to you?” would help shift staff’s perspective and create room for more patience and understanding. Many times, the difficult behaviors that present themselves when trying to provide services come from years and years of the client dealing with trauma.

Auburn Watersong’s perspective comes from her work in childhood trauma, but the skills are applicable to all ages. Auburn would like any feedback the DAIL Advisory Board can give on how to teach these skills and approach the population beyond childhood.

Conversation with the Commissioner

Monica Hutt, DAIL Commissioner

DAIL Advisory Board Membership Update- There are 19 people whose term ends on November 30, 2019. We currently have 10 people who have responded whether they would be reapplying for another 3-year term. For reapplying, the deadline is July 18. If DAIL’s Commissioner’s office does not receive a response, it will be assumed the member is no longer interested in continuing on the board beyond November 30, 2019 and are letting the membership expire. Liz Perreault will resend the application to those who have yet to respond before the end of today.

AHS Staffing Update- Al Gobeille has resigned as Secretary of the Agency of Human Services and Martha Maksym, Deputy Secretary, is now Acting Secretary until a new person is appointed Secretary by Governor Scott.

SFY2020 DAIL Budget Recap- Bill Kelly, DAIL’s Financial Director, came to the Advisory Board to give a recap of the SFY 2020 budget. He brought with him the document titled “SFY20 DAIL Budget Highlights and Related Big Bill Language” that he went over with the group.

Notes of interest:

1. Any caseload decrease was taken after a multiyear trend of underutilization of the program.
2. The Choices for Care (CFC) appropriation has been moved to DAIL’s budget and is no longer sitting with Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA).

3. The legislature funded a Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deafblind Services Director position. This new position will be housed in the Commissioner's office and the cost is part of the SFY20 budget.
4. Close out for SFY19 will be completed next week.
5. The Assistive Community Care Services (ACCS) rate has increased this year by \$5.00 per day. This is a State Plan Medicaid Service paid to participating residential care homes and assisted living residences for services provided to Medicaid members.

Adult Protective Services (APS) Staff Update- John Gordon has been hired at the new APS Director. His former position was the Assistant Director to APS. That position now needs to be filled. We will invite John Gordon and Joe Nusbaum to a meeting in the near future, possibly September.

CMS Home and Community Based Services Rule-Conflict of Interest Free Case Management Update – Phase 2 – The September DAIL Advisory Board meeting will be mostly about Conflict of Interest Free Case Management.

There had been some analysis of service done and it concluded that organizations couldn't be both case managers and providers without it resulting in a conflict of interest. Since that report, CMS has required states to rectify any possible conflicts of interest.

Choices for Care (CFC), the Traumatic Brain Injury Program (TBI) and Developmental Services (DS) programs have been identifying where there could be either real or perceived conflict of interest in case management and have been getting stakeholder input. In September, our colleagues from the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) along with both Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) and Adult Services Division (ASD) staff will come to the DAIL Advisory Board (DAB) meeting to discuss the progress that has been made to this point in addressing the potential conflicts of interest. Each program will share possible ways of addressing conflict of interest and get input from the Advisory Board about those solutions.

DS is having to concurrently address the conflict of interest free case management and payment reform. Those meetings will begin in August. For the next DAIL Advisory Board meeting, the Commissioner's office will provide a summary of themes that are coming up in stakeholder meetings across the state.

The stakeholder feedback that has been formally given so far will be available on the DVHA Conflict of Interest Free Case Management website for viewing. The Commissioner's office will send a link to the page to the DAIL Advisory Board when it is available. There will also be multiple opportunities to hear about this across the state in addition to the DAIL Advisory Board meetings.

Developmental Services Payment Model Project-

As part of the work to develop a new way of paying for Developmental Services, a rate study was conducted to help us understand how much it currently costs to provide each of the various services that are available. In June, the rate study was reviewed with DS Providers and a separate meeting was also held with individuals and families to go over the rate study from their perspective. There is now an opportunity for people to submit additional written comments before the study is finalized.

Voices and Choices

Ken Gagne, Board Member

Ken Gagne, DAIL Advisory Board member, attended the annual Voices and Choices conference that was held at the Double Tree in Burlington. There were approximately 1,000 attendees this year which is about 350 more people than last year. The conference is sponsored by Green Mountain Advocates and is run solely by people with disabilities. The focus this year was “every person” and the breakout sessions had individuals speak to their personal experience in a specific situation. For example, Commissioner Hutt, who also attended the conference, sat in on a session that discussed the unique issues that a person would face who is part of the LGBTQI community and living with disabilities.

With this topic in mind, DAIL is working with the LGBTQ Coalition to address this topic with older Vermonters as well.

DAIL Advisory Board Member Perspective

Steve Pouliot, DAIL Advisory Board Member

Steve Pouliot is a native Vermonter who likes to golf and hunt. Steve graduated from UVM and received his business degree. He then became a CPA. As time passed, he got married and had children and decided to change careers to something that didn't take him away so much. Steve then became a comptroller for construction companies which allowed for more home time. As a member of the local Lion's Club, Steve was sharing his desire to change careers to a fellow member who was the Executive Director of the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI). Steve was hired as a comptroller for the association for 4 years before he moved to become the Assistant Executive Director, and 4 years later, then became Executive Director of VABVI.

Steve originally thought he would give the comptroller job for VABVI a year or two before moving on, just long enough to get the finances for the association straightened out. However, during this time, he came to really believe in the mission of the Agency, and his daughter was diagnosed with diabetes so Steve understood that his daughter may someday need the services that this organization provided.

So, Steve stayed on to help fortify the finances to ensure VABVI's continuation. His career path didn't go the way he had ever expected it would but has found that this work is very important to him.

VABVI serves people from ages birth and up to adulthood then again from ages 55 and above. DAIL's Division for Blind and Visually Impaired serves people from aged 18 to 55. The association serves approximately 1,900 people annually and that number is expected to go up along with the aging population of Vermont.

Being part of the DAIL Advisory Board has taught Steve a lot about what is available for family members as they age and the clients that VABVI works with. Steve uses the knowledge he gains from the meetings for both personal and professional betterment.

DAIL Advisory Board Member Updates

Laura McDonald- Heartbeet night at the Alchemist is tonight in Stowe. People can go and have food, drink and listen to live music. All proceeds for the night are donated to Heartbeet. The Alchemist, through the summer on Thursday nights, picks a non-profit organization to profile and donate the proceeds for the night to. This week it's for Heartbeet.

Beth Stern- Central Vermont Council on Aging will also be profiled by the Alchemist on August 29.

Steve Pouliot- VABVI is having a fund raiser at the Flynn on September 8. It is Dancing with the Local Stars. It is a night to get information out to the community about VABVI and to raise some money.

Jim Coutts- The Older Vermonter Work Group will be meeting again tomorrow. They are still working on finalizing the final draft legislative report which we hope will be ready in September.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:34