



Mission: To support and provide advocacy for providers to ensure the availability of high-quality programs, services, and funding adequate to support the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities they serve to achieve a life of increasing independence, productivity and integration.

Board Report

May 1, 2024



OPRA's Guiding Principles

Anchor Statement: Ohio's providers are focused on supporting the success of the people we support.

Principle #1: We believe the primary focus of our work is the positive and supportive relationship between front-line professionals and the people they support.

Principle #2: We believe providers should be supported and trusted to support people with developmental disabilities and operate effective and successful organizations.

Principle #3: We believe providers must be sufficiently compensated to deliver essential services to meet the needs of the people they support in an ever-evolving society and system.

Principle #4: We believe all services currently provided across the spectrum of services should be recognized as crucial to each and every person we serve.



Table of Contents

OPRA Board Meeting Agenda	Page 4
March 2024 Meeting Minutes	Page 5
Policy Committee Minutes/Updates	Page 8
Committee Summaries	Page 10
Membership Update	Page 22

Safe Place Statement

We would like to thank you for attending this meeting. This meeting, like all of the OPRA Committee meetings, are designed to offer a safe place for OPRA Members to share thoughts, opinions and ideas. The OPRA Team and the OPRA Board relies on these discussions to inform our efforts to provide Advocacy, Information and Resources. We are respectfully asking you, as a participant, to assist us to make this a safe place for professionals to openly share without fear. It is important that when personal experiences are shared, there is an assurance that what is shared stays within this group. We are looking forward to an open and honest conversation and we would like to thank you for being a part of this important meeting.



OPRA Board Meeting Agenda

May 1, 2024

12pm – 2pm

- Welcome to Toledo/Safe Place Statement (Adam Guinther)
- Approval of meeting minutes (Adam Guinther)
- Finance Report (Liz Owens)
- Board Report (OPRA Team)
 - Bill Updates
 - Lauren's Law
 - Never Alone Act
 - 14c
 - Coalition Update
 - April 26th Meeting summary
 - Preliminary Budget asks
 - Expansion of Coalition/Partners
 - Meeting schedule
 - Policy/Board/Coalition interaction
 - County Board relationship improvement
 - County Board Provider Liaison Outreach
- CEO Report (Pete Moore)
 - OPRA Networks
 - Why?
 - Who?
 - When?
 - How?
 - COO training
 - Membership update
 - August Board Retreat (Columbus)
 - What to expect the next couple of days in Toledo
- Other discussion
- Adjourn

OPRA Board Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2024 (Virtual Meeting)

- **Welcome/Safe Place Statement** (Adam Guinther)
- **Approval of February Minutes**
 - Adam Guinther asked if there were any changes to the February Board Meeting Minutes. With no changes reported, Lisa Reed made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes, Tami Honkala seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.
- **Governance Update**
 - Bob Gaston lead the Governance discussion. He reported The results of a self-assessment conducted by Kathy Allen indicated a high-performing and engaged board, with four recommendations for further enhancement, including improving the orientation process, reviewing succession planning, diversifying the board, and providing ongoing board governance training.
- **Board Report**
 - **Bill Updates** Christine discussed several bills of interest, including the Never Alone Act, a replacement levy bill, and a supported decision-making bill. Pete, Christine, and Jeff Johnson had a discussion about a bill that was unexpectedly co-sponsored by Representative Lipps they thought wouldn't support it. Christine expressed concern about the potential negative impact on providers and their clients, and speculated that the Rep. Lipps might be attempting to sabotage the bill from within due to his term-limited status. They also discussed the challenges of getting Republican lawmakers to understand the bill's contents and the need for education to counter misconceptions. The team agreed on the importance of targeting Republicans to build momentum and navigating the complexities of the legislative process. They ended the conversation with an invitation for questions about bills.
 - **Primary Election Results** Christine discussed the recent Ohio House primary results, highlighting the significant challenges faced by incumbents who had made a deal with Democrats to secure their seats. She noted that four of these incumbents, including former Finance Subcommittee Chair Sarah Carruthers, were defeated. On the positive side, she identified potential new advocates for the BD system in Representative-elect Mike Odo and expressed hope for his support. She also noted the return of Senate President Huffman to the House, where he is expected to run for Speaker. Christine urged continued nurturing of relationships with Senators and invited those interested to reach out to her for assistance.
 - **MUI Rule Update** Pete and Tim Neville discussed recent changes made to the MUI Rule reform letter in response to feedback from a subgroup of the DODD MUI work group. The Department is actively addressing concerns and making positive changes, with a final draft to be presented on April 19th for further feedback. Tim also provided feedback on the upcoming changes to the language in the draft rule, anticipated to be significantly different from the current version, and mentioned that the Department would be seeking feedback in the coming weeks.

- **COLA Proposal for Next State Budget** Pete proposed a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for the next budget, suggesting the use of a formula based on state rate increases and the ICFs funding formula. However, he expressed concerns about legislative reluctance to commit funding for such increases and suggested reframing the adjustment as a support for providers as businesses and the reliance on nearly 100% Medicaid funding. The OPRA team discussed the challenges of securing budget increases, the need for a definitive answer, and the difficulties encountered with the ICFs budget asks in the past. The conversation ended with Pete suggesting a formula for future budgets and Diane Beastron expressed concerns over legislators' preference for delaying rate increases.
- **Strategic Plan Development** Pete stressed the importance of creating a strategic plan for 2024, focusing on the OPRA community's guiding principles and the need for unity. He also discussed efforts to improve compliance with DODD and the potential need for system improvements. Furthermore, Pete proposed solutions for the ongoing billing issues and suggested the formation of a new committee to address these concerns. Jamie Steele contributed by emphasizing the need for system improvement and focusing on the providers and their needs.
- **CEO Update**
 - **Toledo Conference and Future Plans** Pete and Melissa discussed the upcoming Toledo conference, which was nearing its capacity of 300 registrants. They announced that the board dinner would be sponsored by Plant Moran, Gallagher, and Terry Town. For the 2024 fall conference, they planned a gala with an OPRA all-star band and centerpieces created by board members for raffle prizes. Lastly, they decided to hold the 2025 spring conference at the Easton Hilton in Columbus, with the intention of evaluating the success of the Toledo Conference and location options for future conferences.
 - **Networking for Enhanced Discussions and Collaboration** Pete proposed the creation of networks among committees and board members to foster more interactive and robust discussions. The idea of an initial gathering of CEOs, CFOs, Program Directors, and alumni was suggested to encourage growth and community strength. Tami suggested coordination with a point person at the agency before reaching out to individuals directly, and Pete agreed to consider this. The Board also discussed the possible benefits of networks the potential for cost and energy savings through coordination, as suggested by Michelle, and the value of networking and personal development. Pete agreed to provide a list of potential participants for the team to contact.
 - **Advocacy Army Program Improvements** The OPRA team discussed improvements to the Advocacy Army program, with Christine outlining the revised structure which includes more training sessions and legislative meetings. Stephen Colecchi shared feedback from recent his staff, noting a disconnect in the advocacy process. To address this, the team planned to organize meetings for people to discuss legislative issues and to provide support for less comfortable participants. The team also agreed to incorporate more interactive and legislative meetings into their training program, drawing on past experiences and the effectiveness of role-playing and coaching in a group setting.
 - **Membership Update** Pete provided an update on the organization's membership status, noting that they have 6 new members and 19 members still working on getting their membership finalized. He also reported that 19 members have yet to renew their memberships and that the organization has switched over to a new membership access at the beginning of April.

- o **Board Member Profiles** Pete asked board members to fill out their profiles and shared plans to improve social media presence.

- o **Other Discussion** There was a discussion about non-member participation in the spring conference, with suggestions to engage them by highlighting the benefits of OPRA. Lastly, Melissa announced upcoming golf outings and the dates for the fall conference.

- No meeting in April, in-person meeting on May 1st in Toledo

Present Board Members

District 1 – Jamie Steele, Jim Steffey, and Felicia Hall

District 2 – Dennis Grant, Ashley Brocious and Scott DeLong- Vice Chair,

District 3 – Edgar Barnett, Lisa Reed and Mary Thompson-Hufford (absent)

District 4 – Roy Cherry and Tim Menke

District 5 – Jeff Johnson, Michelle Madden- Secretary and Steve Colecchi

District 6 – Adam Guinther- Chair, Liz Owens- Treasurer and Bob Heinzerling

District 7 – Diane Beastron, Tammy Honkala and Connie Boros

At-Large – Bob Gaston, Kurt Miller and Tim Neville

OPRA Staff Present

- Pete Moore
- Scott Marks
- Teresa Kobelt
- Christine Touvelle
- Rachel Hayes
- Sonya Summers
- Melissa Fannon

Policy Committee

The policy committee serves as the clearinghouse for most issues affecting any aspect of DD services and makes recommendations for action to OPRA's board of directors. Every effort is made to allow sufficient time to discuss issues in detail in order to understand the impact on individuals and providers, and to consider what position OPRA should take on a given issue. OPRA Committees examine issues and may pass them on to the Policy Committee for review. Ad hoc workgroups may also be established from time to time to examine issues more fully. The policy committee is chaired by the vice chair of the board of directors with a representative provider group selected to serve as the core committee. This core committee is tasked with convening and commenting on policy issues as they arise, whether during a meeting or between meetings. Other committee work flows through policy committee to the board of directors, and vice versa.

Policy Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 16, 2024
10am-12pm via Zoom

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Current System
 - a. MUI
 - Reviewed a draft of the MUI DODD is working on. Highlighted some significant changes including the addition of an “administrative review” process and changes in the reporting requirements around hospitalization.
 - b. Wait List
 - Shared updates from the Waiver Waitlist Work group. Jamie Steele and Dan Connors serve on the group. DODD is looking to strengthen the rule/process to better capture if/how needs are being met through local funding (when someone is not enrolled on a waiver).
 - c. Peer Group 6
 - Update on Peer Group 6 draft rule shared by DODD. Largely designed to shift the current “IBSRAO” to a peer group. DODD will control admissions/discharges. There is work being done on the rate, and this will impact all ceilings.
 - d. Specialized Medical Equipment
 - OPRA heard from DODD that current providers will be able to continue providing this service through 2025. Rule hearing scheduled for 5/17.
3. Advocacy

Christine provided updates on the following bills/issues. Slides attached w/more info.

 - a. Supported Decision Making
 - b. EVV
 - c. Lauren's Law

d. 14(c)

4. System Reform: Priority Setting

The Committee engaged in live polls to identify issues and opportunities for system reform.

a. Billing. Issues and ideas included:

- i. Overall – make it easier, simpler, less glitches, less administrative burden (changes, delays, system hold ups, etc.)
- ii. Eliminate 15-minute units – move to more meaningful time blocks (weekly, monthly) and services/codes (i.e., combo codes, “block” of funds for all services)

b. Niche populations/Specialized Services. Topics that emerged included:

- i. Transition age youth
- ii. Aging
- iii. Complex physical, mental, or behavioral health needs, or a combination of any/all

The Committee also reviewed a proposal to get cost of living increases into the budget. The next step is to share the proposal with the Budget Coalition.

OPRA Committee Reports



Day Array

Summary

This committee provides a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to leaders in the day array. Topics covered in meetings may include, but are not limited to, updates from the field, national and state trends, policy and rule review, best practices in organizational leadership, operating fiscally sound organizations, and identifying and mitigating organizational risk as relates to the broad array of services and supports, including day programs, active treatment, vocational training, career development, and employment. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the policy committee for review and action.

Committee Chair: Anne Haning (Belco Works), Greg Ferrall (Auglaize Industries)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Anne Haning

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

OPRA Day Array Committee Report

Thursday, April 4, 2024

9:30am-11:30am

Quick recap

The 'Works for Me' program experienced expansion across counties, serving numerous individuals and offering partnership opportunities for providers. Updates on quality staffing, including payments and data entry rates, were shared, along with discussions on implementing assistive technologies and training curricula. Concerns were raised regarding upcoming legislative changes impacting sub-minimum wage employment and provider certifications.

Next steps

- Keith Banner will check and provide clarification on the definition and utilization of "community hubs" as locations for service provision, in response to Scott's query.
- Scott will review and finalize the application process and FAQs for the Employment Quality Readiness Project (EQR) to be launched in April, ensuring all necessary information is accessible for potential applicants.
- Keith Banner will coordinate with the department to announce and launch training sessions in May and June for the Employment Quality Incentives (EQI) program, aimed at educating providers, county boards, families, and individuals on the new initiatives.
- Keith will check with Melanie about the process for signing the survey report and communicate the findings to the team.
- Scott will provide updates on the House Bill 274 and its progress, especially regarding the timeline and compliance requirements for 14C holders.
- Liz will share her experience with the recent community-based compliance reviews and provide guidance to others on the process.

Summary

Array Committee Meeting With 'Works for Me' Updates

Scott led the Array committee, reminding participants to turn on their cameras and noting the meeting would run until 11:30. Greg, the Co-Chair, welcomed attendees and introduced Keith, Dustin, and Melissa, who were set to provide updates on the 'Works for Me' program. Dustin and Melissa then proceeded to share their updates, focusing on the 'Works for Me' collaboration.

Works for Me Initiative Progress & Expansion

Dustin provided updates on the 'Works for Me' initiative, a program designed to help individuals considering sub-minimum wage employment explore competitive, integrated employment. He announced that the program, which started in October 2020, will be fully implemented by September 2027, and new opportunities for providers interested in partnering with the program were made available. Dustin also mentioned two open requests for proposals to assist 'Works for Me', one for family engagement services and another for a provider liaison. Melissa then updated on the program's expansion across various counties and the number of people it has served.

Project Information and Provider Liaison RFP

Dustin announced that project information would be available on their website and encouraged participants to reach out for further details. He also asked for feedback on the new career counseling curriculum. Melissa and Scott discussed the ongoing provider liaison RFP and the plan to serve approximately 600 people over the next four years. Tim praised Dustin and Melissa's collaborative work. Scott then asked for feedback on the project and thanked everyone for their participation.

Vocab Services, Employment Quality, and Provider Training

Scott raised concerns about a memo requiring all locations providing vocab services to be listed in a provider's certification, leading to a discussion on potentially impacting compliance reviews for day services. Keith Banner introduced the Employment Quality Readiness Project, aimed at training providers for the upcoming HCBS Waiver amendment and the utilization of \$450,000 in ARPA funds. Ann Ahlers-Cole raised issues regarding county boards' authorization of job development and career planning services, and Scott emphasized the importance of tying career planning services to quality metrics. Keith proposed exploring quality incentives and suggested a training program for county boards in July or August. There were discussions about the potential impact of outcome payments on individual budgets and ongoing talks regarding provider claims for outcome and quality payments for overtime work. A stakeholder meeting was announced for April 16th, where a final proposal regarding the Pre vocational group employment support work group would be presented.

Ads Quality Pilot and Staffing Updates

Keith Banner discussed the delay in implementing the ads quality pilot due to a grant application. mthompson expressed concerns about the discontinuation of their subscription with E Serve Learning and its impact on their training capacity, to which Keith assured that they were exploring alternative solutions. Keith also shared updates on the quality staffing, noting a high data entry rate and upcoming payments. Scott asked about the impact of the quality pilot on the data entry rate and initiated a discussion on the progress and challenges of implementing the tech purchased.

Smart Board and Industries Team Updates

Team members from Smart Board and Industries shared their experiences and updates. Myron Bron reported that the Smart Board team is comfortable using the technology and that tablets are coming next. Amanda discussed the success of the quality pilot, increased use of assistive technology, and ongoing training for staff. Paul shared feedback on the training format, suggesting a reduction to four-hour sessions to better accommodate staffing and learning. The team also discussed the implementation of skill-building curricula, with varying degrees of success and unique strategies for incorporating lessons into daily activities. Keith Banner confirmed an updated list of curricula available for the employment quality pilot.

Meaningful Day' Training Feedback and Updates

Scott thanked everyone for their feedback on the recent 'Meaningful Day' training, with Michelle noting her team's positive experience with the modified version. Keith confirmed that staff could self-certify their training for the pilot project, but he would verify this. Scott then discussed the upcoming report due next week and encouraged everyone to prepare for the next pilot meeting. He also reminded the team about the limited spaces for providers in the employment quality readiness program. Lastly, he provided an update on House Bill 427, now assigned to the Government Oversight Committee, and urged the team to keep the discussion from a virtual rally in mind for future committee hearings.

Concerns Over Legislative Bill and Licenses

Scott voiced his concerns about the legislative bill aimed at phasing out the sub-minimum wage over five years, and its potential impact on providers holding an Ohio license from the Director of Commerce. Tim clarified that 14 C holders would be included in the phase-out, but Anne raised questions about how providers could reach the five-year mark given the length of their certificates. Anne and Michelle shared their experiences with certificate applications, highlighting issues with delays in approval and possible complications if not approved. Scott expressed confusion over the misunderstanding of the issue regarding licenses versus certificates in the legislation and hinted at potential administrative issues that could lead to the end of the 14 C bill.

Training Day, Eclipse Day, and Compliance

Scott announced a training day scheduled for July 16th in Columbus to fulfill the annual training requirements for the Director of Operations and CEO. He invited feedback and ideas for the training curriculum and assured that the entire day's training would be in-person, with additional online materials available. The team also discussed their plans for Eclipse Day, with a mix of open and closed facilities. Mary raised questions about changes in compliance review processes for multi-county programs, and Liz clarified that reviewers would visit different counties on the same day, picking clients and staff in each.

Discussing 'Hubs' in Community Outreach

Liz, mthompson, and Scott discussed their community outreach experiences, with a focus on the concept of 'hubs' in their day services. They debated the definition and interpretation of 'hubs', with differing opinions about whether community integration activities should be considered as such. Scott committed to seeking clarification on this issue, while the team also touched on upcoming reviews and their next scheduled meeting in two months.

The next Day Array Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 6th @ 9:30am

The day array committee has two standing subcommittees:

- **Day Services Committee:** This committee is designed for program directors, frontline supervisors, and direct support professionals who are providers of adult day support. Meetings include information sharing, networking, problem-solving and discussion of best practices and trends in day support for adults with DD. Training and updates from the state concerning adult day supports, vocational habilitation, career planning, and non-medical transportation is provided. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the Day Array Committee for review and then forwarded to the policy committee.

Committee Chair: Nicole Smith (RHDD)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

- **Employment Services Committee:** The employment services committee is designed for program directors, frontline supervisors, certified employment support professionals, job developers, and job coaches. This committee is a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to providing integrated, competitive employment services. Topics covered may include, but are not limited to, policy and rule review, state trends, understanding and implementing DODD, OOD, and ODM rules, braiding funding, best practices service delivery, establishing relationships with employers, supervising remote employees, operating fiscally sound programs, and dual customer model, and identifying and mitigating individual and programmatic risk. Policy recommendations from this committee are taken to the Day Array committee for review.

Committee Chairs: Paul Soprano (UCP of Greater Cleveland), Justin Blumhorst (Capabilities)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

OPRA Day & Employment Services Committee Report

Thursday, March 7th, 2024

10:00am-11:30am

Quick Recap

The committee discussed the challenges in the labor market, the increasing costs of provider staff wages, and the issues surrounding cost reporting and rate setting for the fee schedule. They also talked about the increased spending on case services due to an increase in participants and the transportation issues in rural communities. Towards the end, they introduced a new pilot program, the Employment Quality Readiness Program, and discussed the potential to work more hours to increase income.

Summary

Summer Youth Activities and VR Fe Schedule Update

The meeting commenced with Scott asking everyone to enable their webcams and join the Day and Employment Services committee meeting. Paul and Nicole extended their greetings to everyone. The discussion then shifted to Jay from Od, who provided updates on summer youth activities. Referrals for summer youth have already started, and plans for summer youth coordination are underway. Jay also mentioned the ongoing process of creating the VR Fe schedule, which included focus sessions on transition and students with disabilities, as well as those who are blind or visually impaired.

Labor Market Challenges and Rate Setting Policy

Jay discussed the challenges faced in the labor market, which included increasing provider staff wages and overall costs. He noted that providers were willing to do cost reporting but were not in favor of recommending it. Jay mentioned a philosophical move away from cost reporting towards looking at incremental increases based on industry standards. He also shared that they are working with RSA on their rate setting policy and aiming for an October 1st implementation date. Jay further noted that by the end of March, they hope to provide potential rates and numbers for discussion. Paul raised questions about the methodology and the significance of the incremental changes, which Jay clarified, stating that small changes in the formula can significantly impact the overall rate.

Cost Reporting and Rate Setting Discussion

Scott and Jay discussed the issues surrounding cost reporting and rate setting for the fee schedule. Scott expressed concerns about administrative burdens and the lack of correlation with industry standards. Jay agreed that cost reporting was valuable but needed careful planning. They also discussed the possibility of a premium rate service for providers who invest more in their staff. This idea is still under consideration, with discussions focusing on how to simplify the process and avoid administrative burdens. The decision on whether to implement this service will be based on input from providers and whether it can be ready in time for the next fee schedule.

Case Services Spending Increase: Financial Sustainability and Staffing Issues

Scott and Jay discussed the increased spending on case services due to an increase in participants. Jay reported that the total number of unique cases rose from 22,260 in 2022 to 24,372 in 2023, leading to an increase in spending from over 71 million to over 84 million. Despite the increase, Jay expressed confidence in the organization's financial sustainability, attributing the growth to successful services and capable staff. Jay also mentioned staffing issues and the need for more support staff. Towards the end of the meeting, Jay confirmed that the needs assessment survey would inform future decisions and that it would generally align with the organization's work.

Provider Rates and Youth Coordination Budget

Jay discussed the desire of providers to offer more services without delays or waitlists, and how a rate change could help with staffing stability and retention. Linsey inquired about the status of the summer youth coordination budget, which had been set aside for wage increases for providers. Jay clarified that the specific amount was not yet known but would be communicated as the summer approached. Linsey appreciated the effort to invest in providers following the discontinuation of the Reach program. Scott then explained why October 1st is often the chosen date for new policies and rates, aligning with the Federal fiscal year. Jay agreed but added that they are not strictly adhering to that date and could consider other times if needed.

Transportation Barriers in Rural Communities

The team discussed the issue of transportation as a barrier in rural communities. Mary raised a question about whether Lod has any resources that could help their team facilitate conversations about transportation during intake. Jay responded that he would check if there are any internal resources and emphasized the importance of discussing transportation issues at the kickoff meeting. Towards the end of the meeting, Jay mentioned that they were working on a fee schedule based on the team's input and ideas, with the aim to share concrete numbers by the end of the month.

Transitioning Youth: Challenges and Solutions

Paul shared a complex situation involving the transition of a young person from high school to an adult day support program, highlighting the need for supportive services during this transition. Paul suggested the idea of developing transition services for children moving from school to day services. The team discussed the challenges of this transition, including liability issues and the need for formal agreements. Kathy shared her experience of

successfully collaborating with schools through formal agreements, which provided space for individuals to experience vocational and day services. The team agreed on the need to consider each case individually to ensure the best possible care and support for those in transition.

Medical, Outings, Technology, Waiver Employment Services, Pilot Program

Tracy discussed the challenges faced in managing medical needs and community outings, emphasizing the need for more discussion and exploration of best practices. Scott thanked Paul for bringing up the issue and suggested the need for more discussion and exploration of promising practices. Scott also mentioned that technology reports and survey templates from Dodd had been received and were being worked on. He then introduced the possibility of changes to the waiver employment services, including the introduction of outcome-based payments. He also mentioned a potential pilot program that could start as soon as July, acknowledging the potential for pilot project fatigue given the ongoing ads quality pilot.

Outcome Payments for Career Planning Services

Scott discussed a proposal that outlines outcome payments related to career planning and employment package services. He emphasized that this proposal, shared by Dodd and Millimond, is more streamlined than previous versions, focusing on payments tied to job placement and retention in the job market. Additionally, there are specified payments for assisting individuals with acuity levels A and B, with an enhanced rate for level C. Scott also clarified that these payments are only applicable for individuals supported through career planning services, not Od services. Linsey raised a question about the calculation of the 90-day retention period, which Scott attempted to answer, suggesting that it begins when the waiver service starts.

Payment, Job Development, and Medicaid Buy-in Discussion

Paul raised a question about the possibility of receiving two \$200 payments if an individual works at a rate of \$12 an hour or more and for 30 hours a week. Scott responded that he would assume the less generous interpretation but agreed that it was a great question that needed clarification. Scott also addressed concerns raised in the chat about people potentially earning over their benefit level. He acknowledged the complexity of the issue and the need for various strategies to address it. Ann brought up challenges she faced in securing career planning job development units for individuals who cannot afford to wait. Scott emphasized the importance of tying Individualized Employment Services (IES) payments to people who start their County Board journey on the waiver. He expressed optimism that the introduction of these changes would put more attention on job development and help counties see the value in authorizing them. However, he also acknowledged the need for continued work on getting community integration services authorized. Ann highlighted the need for increased education about the Medicaid buy-in and the importance of understanding different benefit options. Scott agreed, noting that understanding these options was crucial for service coordination.

New Pilot Program and Outcome-Based Payments Discussed

Scott discussed the introduction of a new pilot program, the Employment Quality Readiness Program, funded by ARPA with \$450,000. Providers can apply for up to \$15,000 for approved expenditures, including technology funds. Scott also highlighted the importance of outcome-based payments, stating that these would be in addition to the fee-for-service billing. A question was raised about the limited number of providers who could benefit from this program, but Scott assured that more information would be available on Monday. Finally, Scott mentioned an upcoming proposal for a provider subject matter expert to assist with the transition from utilizing 14 c to no longer using it.

Amendments, Hours, and Training Program

Scott and Justin finished their formal agenda, with Michael joining late due to concerns about proposed amendments affecting his funding. Scott clarified that the amendments weren't about removing the service but about county boards losing their ability to provide it due to privatization. Michael and Scott then discussed the

possibility of working more hours to increase income, referencing Social Security rules and eligibility for certain benefits. They also touched upon the potential to earn up to \$54,000 a year while remaining eligible for certain benefits. Scott suggested working together on a training program for Mbi due to some confusion surrounding it. Both agreed on the importance of clarity and thorough understanding of the rules, with Scott encouraging Michael to reach out if he found any errors or needed further explanation.

Next steps

- Jay will work on potential rates and numbers for the VR Fe schedule.
- Jay will provide more concrete details on rate changes by the end of March.
- Jay will check if there are any internal resources that could help with transportation issues in rural communities.
- Scott will follow up on the questions about the \$200 payment for \$12 an hour and 30 HA week and clarify when the 90-day retention count starts.
- Scott will provide more information about the pilot program on Monday when the application materials are released.

The next Day & Employment Services Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 4th @ 10:00am

Health Care

Summary

The Healthcare committee is comprised primarily of nursing staff but does include other members who are interested in health and healthcare related issues. The committee focuses on nursing and medical services in the waiver and ICF settings. Areas of focus include but are not limited to: rules and regulations that affect the DD nursing community, training, education and best practices.

Committee Chair: Shelly Wharton (The Society)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Shelly Wharton (The Society)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Health Care Committee Report Thursday, April 18th, 2024 10am-12pm

- 1 Welcome and Introductions
- 2 Guest Speaker: Panel from the Ohio Association of Health Plans
 - a Dr. Erika King-Betts, Kate Tulio, Corazon Eaton
 - b An introduction to Medicaid Managed Care Plans
 - i The panel discussed the role of managed care in providing acute care in the Medicaid program
 - ii The group discussed the role of managed care for both people with developmental disabilities and direct support professionals
 - iii Christine distributed the presentation to the listserv

3 MUI Rule

- a Rachel lead the group through a discussion over the proposed changes to the MUI rule specific to the revised hospitalization
- b Committee members expressed concerns that as written, the rule applies to hospitalization regardless of if the stay is planned or not
- c It also does not recognize care that is outlined in the ISP (stay may not be scheduled but care is anticipated and not considered an MUI)

4 EVV

- a Christine gave an update on some changes to the EVV program anticipated for July. This includes extending EVV to waiver nursing delegation. More information can be found here:
<https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/medicaid.ohio.gov/Providers/EVV/Presentation/EVV%20Stakeholder%20Engagement%20Jan%2019.2024.pdf>
- b <https://medicaid.ohio.gov/resources-for-providers/special-programs-and-initiatives/electronic-visit-verification/electronic-visit-verification>

5 Tarrytown IDD/BH Symposium

- a OPRA is partnering with Tarrytown to offer a day-long IDD/BH symposium June 11 at the Polaris-Westerville Renaissance Hotel
- b More information and the link to register can be found here-
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/understanding-seizures-and-antipsychotics-in-the-idd-setting-oh-tickets-867646924307>

The next Health Care Committee meeting TBD

Human Resources

Summary

The HR committee is comprised of HR professionals, or anyone responsible for the life cycle of employment for his/her agency. This group of professionals meets to discuss best practices in HR, from recruiting and hiring process, to keeping abreast of upcoming new regulations that affect employment law and/or training requirements.

Committee Chair: Michelle Madden (IOPC), Rachel Murphy (RHDD)

Policy Core Committee Representative: TBD

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Human Resources Committee Report

Thursday, March 21st, 2024

10am-12pm

- 1 Welcome and Introductions
- 2 Guest: Nick Castellano, Castle Benefits Consulting Group

- a Nick provided an overview of the differences between fully-funded health insurance plans v self-funded health insurance plans and the pros and cons for each arrangement
 - b Committee members were given the opportunity for questions
 - c Christine distributed the powerpoint after the committee meeting
- 3 Guest: Diane Evans and Michelle Bermea, MyHIPAA Guide
- a Diane and Michelle introduce changes coming to the MyHIPAA Guide service that was developed with the input of the HR Committee
 - b New changes include an online dashboard and a rebrand to Guarded Edge
 - c Christine distributed the presentation to the committee after the meeting
- 4 Hot Topics
- a Conference
 - i Christine reviewed the HR track for the spring conference
 - b Salary Survey
 - i Christine gave an overview of the changes coming to the OPRA Compensation, Benefits, and Turnover Survey
 - ii The survey will be distributed in Mid-May with a final report issued late summer

The next HR Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 16th @ 10:00am

ICF

Summary

The ICF Committee provides a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to leaders in ICF services. The committee examines issues which have a direct impact on the programs, services and funding necessary for the operation of Intermediate Care Facilities. The committee is used to disseminate information, provide updates, and elicit feedback on important issues related to ICF's.

Committee Chair(s): Bob Heinzerling (Heinzerling Community), Kurt Miller (Empowering People)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Kurt Miller (Empowering People)

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

OPRA ICF Committee Report
Wednesday, April 17, 2024
1pm – 3pm

1. DODD Updates
 - Ann Weisent
2. House Bill 236 (Never Alone Act)
3. House Bill 465 (Lauren's Law)

4. MUI Investigative Agent Certification
5. MUI Rule Draft
6. Surveys and Hot Topics
 - Cost Reports
 - Quality Indicators

The next ICF Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19th @ 1pm

Residential Waiver

Summary

The residential waiver committee provides a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to leaders in residential waiver services. The committee examines issues which have direct impact on the programs, services and funding necessary for the operation of and provision of services to individuals in waiver funded settings. This includes licensed and non-licensed settings and shared living. The committee is used to disseminate information, provide updates, and elicit feedback on important issues related to residential waivers.

Committee Chair(s): Jamie Steele (OVRs) and Susan Berneike (Help Foundation)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Jamie Steele

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

OPRA Residential Waiver Committee Report

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

10am – 12pm

1. DODD Updates
 - Ann Weisent
2. House Bill 236 (Never Alone Act)
3. House Bill 465 (Lauren’s Law)
4. MUI Investigative Agent Certification
5. MUI Rule Draft
6. Surveys and Hot Topics
 - Day Services (Memo Monday 4/1)

The next Residential Waiver Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19th @ 10am

Marketing and Communications

Summary

The Marketing and Communications Committee is designed for organization leaders and their marketing and communication staff. The goal is to provide a focus on sharing strategies and tools, develop and hone innovative ideas, and provide feedback to other members of the group. The committee will periodically invite guest speakers to address identified needs of the group.

Committee Chairs: Liz Owens (The Alpha Group) and Carla McDonald (Weaver Industries)

Policy Core Committee Representative: TBD

OPRA Staff Lead: Melissa Fannon

The Marketing & Communications Committee last met on January 9th to have open group discussions about Annual Reports: ideas, inspiration, sharing-digital or print?

The committee meeting that was scheduled for Tuesday, March 12th was cancelled due to DD Awareness & Advocacy Day.

The next Marketing & Communications Committee will be Tuesday, May 14th @ 10am.

Speaker: Carla McDonald

Topics up for discussion:

- SEO Strategy Optimization
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Marketing
- Crisis Communications Planning

Membership Update

- Currently, OPRA has a total of 173 provider members, 32 public entity members and 55 associate members.
- 14 provider members did not renew in 2024 due to financial reasons.
- As of today, OPRA gained 14 new provider agencies (2 are sponsored by Portage Co. Board of DD). 2 new public entity members (one at Level 1 & one at Level 2) and 7 new associate members.
 - **Total membership dues invoiced for 2024 (Provider, Public Entity & Associates) - \$1,818,761.50**
 - **Total dues paid so far - \$1,508,173.50**
 - **Total dues still owed - \$310,588 (mostly due to semi-annual and quarterly payments)**

