



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

October 23, 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.

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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

October 23, 2024

10am – 11:30am

- Welcome/introductions/Safe Place Statement
- Approval of Meeting Minutes
- Financial Report
- Board Report
 - Letters to DODD
 - Compliance
 - SIS
 - Coalition Update
 - Rule Update
 - MUI Rule
 - NMT
 - Legislative Updates
 - 14c
- CEO Report
 - Strategic Plan
 - OPRA Give Back Plan
- Other Topics / Open Discussion
- Adjourn



OPRA Board of Directors Minutes

Date: June 26, 2024

Time: 10:00am – 2:00pm

Location: In Person @ ARC Industries

Board Members:

Present			Absent
District 1	District 4	District 7	Bob Gaston
Felicia Hall	Roy Cherry	Diane Beastron	Dennis Grant
Jamie Steele	Steve King	Tami Honkala	
Jim Steffey	Tim Menke		
		At-Large	
District 2	District 5	Kurt Miller	
Ashley Brocious	Steve Colecchi	Tim Neville	
Scott DeLong	Jeff Johnson		
	Michelle Madden		
District 3			
Edgar Barnett	District 6		
Lisa Reed	Adam Guinther		
Mary Thompson Hufford	Bob Heinzerling		
	Liz Owens		

OPRA Staff: Rachel Hayes, Teresa Kobelt, Scott Marks, Pete Moore, Christine Touvelle

Guests: None

Minutes*:

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Call to order</i>	Adam Guinther called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.	The Board welcomed new member Steve King. Safe Place Statement read.	
<i>Approval of minutes</i>	The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Jim Steffey, seconded by Ashley Brocious.	Approved unanimously	
<i>Financial Report</i>	Liz Owens reviewed May Financial Statement. Gave update from Finance Committee. Motion to approve the May financials was made by Scott DeLong, seconded by Jeff Johnson.	Approved unanimously	
	Liz Owens reviewed Annual Financial Statement. Gave update from Finance Committee. Motion to approve the Annual financials was made by Michelle Madden, seconded by Tim Menke.	Approved unanimously	
<i>Board Report</i>	Pete provided update on OPRA Foundation and use of funds for Just Culture Learning Collaborative	Pending feedback from Vory's will schedule Foundation Board Meeting	Pete/OPRA
	<p>Pete provided update on DD Budget Coalition, potential new members, and implications for upcoming budget.</p> <p>Christine shared data from Q1 wage survey.</p> <p>Discussion around whether the Board is interested in an "ask" that is focused on a dollar amount (i.e., \$20.64) or a percentage increase with consensus around a percentage.</p> <p>Additional discussion around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICF budget requests including "vent beds" • Multi-system youth/youth with complex needs 	OPRA will be putting advocacy tools together.	Christine/OPRA

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
	Christine provided updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never Alone Act • Lauren's Law • Peer Group 5 		
	OPRA team provided updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MUI Rule • Wait List Rule 	Ask Scott Phillips to come to upcoming OPRA Committee Meeting to Discuss MUI	Rachel/OPRA
<i>CEO Report</i>	Pete discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Retreat agenda, content and location details. • Policy Core Committee Charter developed with the Chair of the Committee to include terms, members, etc. • Professional Networks which will take place the day before the conference. The Board did discuss the need for thinking through/communicating what we're asking members to travel to Columbus for, how often, etc. • Upcoming Trainings to include the DOO training in July and the Just Culture Learning Collaborative starting in October. • PAC Fundraiser will be at Top Golf the day before the conference. • 		
<i>Open Discussion</i>	Christine provided update on OPRA's compensation benefit survey. Jamie Steele and Michelle Madden shared information on a meeting with OnScene and some possibilities it may offer. Teresa also acknowledged the 10-year anniversary of ADVANCE and ways we will be celebrating at Conference.	OPRA team will continue to push out survey	Christine/OPRA

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Adjourn</i>	Ashley Brocious motioned to adjourn; seconded by Lisa Reed.	Unanimously approved	

* More detailed information available upon request

OPRA Board of Directors Minutes

Date: July 24, 2024

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Virtual

Board Members:

Present			Absent
District 1	District 4	District 7	Steve Colecchi
Felicia Hall	Roy Cherry	Diane Beastron	Scott DeLong
Jamie Steele	Steve King	Tami Honkala	Kurt Miller
Jim Steffey	Tim Menke		Liz Owens
		At-Large	
District 2	District 5	Tim Neville	
Ashley Brocious	Jeff Johnson	Bob Gaston	
Dennis Grant	Michelle Madden		
District 3			
Edgar Barnett	District 6		
Lisa Reed	Adam Guinther		
Mary Thompson Hufford	Bob Heinzerling		

OPRA Staff: Melissa Fannon, Rachel Hayes, Teresa Kobelt, Scott Marks, Pete Moore, Sonya Summers, Christine Touvelle

Guests: None

Minutes*:

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Call to order</i>	Adam Guinther called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.	Safe Place Statement read.	
<i>Approval of minutes</i>	The minutes from the previous meeting will be reviewed at the next in-person meeting of the Board.	Meeting minutes from 6/26 and 7/24 will be reviewed at in-person board meeting scheduled for 8/23/24.	OPRA Team
<i>Governance Committee Report</i>	Bob Gaston discussed the Governance Committee's focus areas, including providing governance training to the Board, enhancing the orientation and mentoring process and clarifying the role of the Executive Committee. and to handle upcoming elections.	The Committee plans to address the classification of Board members in the Code of Regulations Adam Guinther will be handling Board Member appointment to District 7.	Governance Committee Board Chair
<i>CEO Report</i>	Pete discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Trends Report developed by the budget coalition and overall budget strategy • Facebook posts and comments around a variety of issues, including negative/derogatory comments about providers, OPRA, members. • General DODD updates including discussions with members around the remote supports rule, MUI rule, and reorganization of Department workgroups including the Waiver Workgroup. 	OPRA will suspend Facebook activity/posts for now. Consider Social Media strategy as part of overall marketing/communications plan in new year.	OPRA Team
<i>Retreat Planning & Schedule Review</i>	Board reviewed schedule and agenda for upcoming retreat.		

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Future OPRA Trainings</i>	OPRA Team shared updates on upcoming DOO/CEO training and Just Culture Learning Collaborative.		
<i>Adjourn</i>	Michelle Madden motioned to adjourn; seconded by Jim Steffey.	Unanimously approved	

* More detailed information available upon request

OPRA Board of Directors Minutes

Date: August 23, 2024

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Junto (Board Retreat)

Board Members:

Present			Absent
District 1	District 4	District 7	Scott DeLong
Jamie Steele (Virtually)	Roy Cherry	Diane Beastron	Adam Guinther
Jim Steffey	Steve King	Tami Honkala	Felicia Hall
	Tim Menke		Lisa Reed
		At-Large	
District 2	District 5	Kurt Miller	
Ashley Brocious	Steve Colecchi	Tim Neville	
Dennis Grant	Jeff Johnson	Bob Gaston	
	Michelle Madden		
District 3			
Edgar Barnett	District 6		
Mary Thompson Hufford	Bob Heinzerling		
	Liz Owens		

OPRA Staff: Rachel Hayes, Teresa Kobelt, Scott Marks, Pete Moore

Guests: None

Minutes*:

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>Call to order</i>	Michelle Madden called the meeting to order in Board Chair's absence. A quorum was present.	Safe Place Statement read.	
<i>Approval of minutes</i>	The minutes from 6/26/24 and 7/24/24 were reviewed and several corrections were needed. OPRA team will correct minutes and bring back to Board.	OPRA Team will correct minutes and bring back to Board for approval at in-person meeting scheduled for 10/23/24.	OPRA Team
<i>Finance Report</i>	Liz Owens reviewed financials, highlighting that investments were doing well, and the balance sheet remained largely unchanged from the previous month. Roy Cherry moved to approve the financial statements; Steve Colecchi seconded.	Unanimously approved	
	Pete also discussed using deferred revenue to update the DSP Ohio website and grant revenue for a statewide commercial. Michelle Madden made a motion to approve the use of the AR2 grant funds to promote the statewide commercial; Diane Beastrom seconded.	Unanimously approved Pete will follow up w/DSP Ohio to distribute remaining grant funds.	Pete Moore/OPRA
<i>Board Report</i>	<p>Pete discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Coalition updates and general budget strategy. Discussion around whether to go for a percentage increase and, if so, what percentage. Legislative interest around promoting quality in the DD system and tying any increases to quality. <p>The Board discussed the need for providers to drive discussions around quality and come to agreement on how we define quality. Further, there is no interest in a quality payment model that pays you a portion of the rate (i.e., 80%) unless you reach a quality standard (100%).</p>		

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>CEO Report</i>	<p>Pete provided updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board elections. Reviewed seats up for election and election process. • OPRA's Great Provider Series – newsletter targeted at non-members – providing critical info and opportunity to promote OPRA membership. • Fall Conference – dates, pre-conference events including PAC outing, and 50th Anniversary Gala. • Grant from OOD that will allow OPRA to support the Works For Me efforts. <p>Rachel presented the Board with information on “OPRA Gives Back” – an opportunity for the OPRA community to come together to “give back” to the communities around us.</p> <p>The Board discussed the fact many providers are already “giving back” and that in addition to/instead of joining OPRA in Columbus, OPRA could find ways to highlight how providers are giving back throughout the month, for example. Another idea included Districts organizing themselves around “giving back” and possible having a “give back” day once or twice a year.</p>	The OPRA team will take the Board's feedback into consideration and continue refining the “Give Back” idea.	Rachel/OPRA Team
<i>Adjourn</i>	Motion to adjourn; seconded.	Unanimously approved	

* More detailed information available upon request

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 workflows through policy committee to the board of directors, and vice versa.

Policy Committee Meeting
Wednesday October 9, 2024
10am-12pm via Zoom

1. Welcome & Safe Space – Co Chair: Scott DeLong
2. Budget – Pete & Christine
 - **Coalition Updates:** Pete led the discussion on the ongoing budget coalition process. He emphasized the need for sustainability, regular increases, preventing caps and rollbacks in the ICF formula, and equal growth for all providers. Pete shared details of a proposal being developed by the budget coalition which would allow for increases over the biennium as well as create an ongoing mechanism for increases. He also shared plans being worked on by the ICF group to address ongoing increases as well as increased beds for kids on vents. (PowerPoint with more details attached)
 - **Advocacy Talking Points:** Christine presented the Industry Trends Report (ITR), which communicates key trends to the General Assembly. The report highlighted growth in wages, improved staffing, and expanded benefits based on survey results. Christine discussed the impact of rate increases on compensation, with most providers raising starting and average wages. She presented data on expanded benefits like health insurance and paid time off. While some service areas were stable, others like employment saw increases. The team discussed decreases in residential waiver services, attributing it to staffing issues and service stabilization needs. They agreed to focus on stabilizing services for those with complex needs in the next ITR iteration.
3. Waiver Modernization – Christine & Teresa
 - **Workgroup Updates & SIS:** Teresa shared the Department's consideration of tools to replace the AAI and DDP, with the SIS being the most favored tool. However, there are significant concerns about the SIS, including its potential to misrepresent people's needs, its lengthy assessment process, and the lack of access to assessment results. Christine shared her experience with a group of State association execs who expressed similar concerns about the SIS. The team also

discussed the challenges of implementing the SIS, including the need for extensive training and the potential for misrepresentation of people's needs. The conversation ended with concerns about the lack of transparency in the assessment process and the potential impact on individuals and families.

4. MUI Rule – Rachel

- Tabled – we anticipated a draft rule and it was not issued

5. County Board Relations & Provider Liaison Meetings – Pete & Teresa

- Tabled – we will send a survey to follow up and get input.

6. Compliance: Settings Rule & Community Integration Add-on – Scott M. & Teresa

- Teresa and Scott discussed the challenges and concerns surrounding the implementation of the settings rule in Ohio. Teresa shared the tool ODM and ODA are using, but DODD has opted not to use. The group emphasized the need for person-centered approach to service delivery, rather than relying solely on the settings rule and particular interpretations of the rule. They also noted the confusion and miss focus in the implementation of the settings rule, which has direct impacts on people's ability to receive services. The team agreed to strategize about the approach and next steps in addressing these concerns, including a possible letter to the Department.

NEXT MEETING: Core Committee – **November 13, 2024** 10:00am – 12:00pm (In-Person Meeting at OPRA)

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 Chairs: Anne Haning (Belco Works), Chelsea Ashcraft (Ohio Valley Goodwill Cincinnati)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

OPRA Day Array Committee Report

Thursday, October 3, 2024

9:30am-11:30am

Quick recap

The meeting focused on updates from the Dd Budget Coalition, the future of the 14 C minimum wage program, and the ongoing work of the Ads Quality Pilot. The team also discussed the new NMT rule, the development of the Preet's curriculum, and the challenges and workflow changes related to the new fee schedule and services. Lastly, the importance of accurate data collection and the need for continued maintenance of gains due to funding and regulatory challenges were emphasized.

Summary

New Co-Chair Introduction and Updates

Scott initiated the session and welcomed everyone, particularly introducing the new co-chair of the day array committee, Chelsea Ashcraft. Chelsea shared her experience and role as the Director of Developmental Services at Ohio Valley Goodwill in Cincinnati. The committee also had a guest, Adam Herman, CEO of OACB, who was scheduled to provide updates. However, Adam didn't have much to share at that time.

Discussing DD Budget Coalition, Rate Increases, and 14 C

Adam discussed the ongoing work of the Dd Budget Coalition, emphasizing the need to maintain rates that can keep pace with inflation and the rising cost of doing business. He highlighted the importance of services for kids, particularly multi-system youth, as top issues. Adam also mentioned the need for providers to fill out a survey sent by Opera to provide data to legislators about the impact of the rate increase. Furthermore, he discussed the ongoing conversation within OACB about the future of 14 C, a minimum wage program for people with disabilities, and the decision to put a resolution on the agenda for the annual Delegate Assembly meeting. The resolution aims to outline the conditions under which the elimination of 14 C would be most successful and empower the OACB to take an advocacy position on any future proposal. Scott asked for more details about the resolution and potential funding avenues or models from other states.

Transition Periods and Financial Support for Providers

Adam emphasized the importance of a reasonable transition period for people with disabilities and their families, as well as changes on the provider side. He stressed the need for financial support from state departments for

providers making this transition, and business incentives for those with contracts to pay minimum wage. Adam also highlighted the need for preserving the flexibility of providers to move people with disabilities in and out of paid work status. Mary from the Fuse Network expressed concern about leaving people behind in the transition process, while Tim agreed and suggested providing permanent support for providers. Tim also expressed his desire to provide permanent employment opportunities to a certain number of people, despite the financial constraints. Scott then shifted the discussion, mentioning Tim's comment about superintendents being former adult day directors, and hinted at a further discussion offline.

New Committee Member, NDEAM Events, and Ads Quality Pilot

Scott proposed bringing in a new committee member with adult day background. Britta discussed National Disability Employment Awareness Month events and a grant for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. She provided an update on the Ads Quality Pilot and instructed the team on using the Outcome Tracking System. Kelly outlined questions for the Ads Quality Pilot, discussed non-medical transportation services starting in 2025, and clarified eligibility for Outcome-Based Payments.

Works for Me Initiative and OTS Assignments

The meeting focused on the Works for Me initiative, with around 15 to 20 organizations involved. Kelly suggested organizing a virtual call for all providers to network and share experiences. Concerns were raised about the deadline for OTS assignments in the Ads Pilot project, which was clarified as January. Scott raised concerns about the pushback around authorizing services for outcome payments, particularly around the 90 and 180 days requirement. Kelly clarified that the person needs to be included in the discussion and the service added to the plan, but it doesn't have to wait until a new plan year starts. Scott also raised a concern about the timing of authorizing payments for services that have not been authorized yet. Britta and Kelly discussed their recent activities and observations, with Britta sharing her experiences visiting and connecting with quality pilot providers in the region. Kelly expressed concerns about communication breakdowns between counselors and county boards, emphasizing the need to build capacity across their systems. Britta updated the team on the changes to the employment first website, including the new non-credentialed rate for supported employment. Scott expressed initial skepticism about the change in employment first participants' caseloads but has not received negative feedback about it. The team agreed on the importance of establishing strong relationships between county boards and their partners. Kelly and Britta discussed the recent challenges faced by OOD, particularly in terms of high turnover rates among counselors and the need to improve their employment knowledge. Jessica from OOD was introduced to discuss the work being done on the Preets curriculum.

New NMT Rule and Special Trip Rate Discussion

Scott discussed the final version of the new NMT rule, which includes a new special trip rate for competitive integrated employment. He highlighted that the main concern from the original draft had been addressed, but other aspects of the rule were not adopted. He also noted that the rule now defines commercial transportation and on-demand taxicab services, and that the special per trip rate is only available for single riders. Scott emphasized that the service will be monitored for potential changes in the future. He also mentioned that the new special per trip rate will be implemented in January.

Preets Curriculum Development and Pilot Update

Jessica provided an update on the Preets curriculum being developed by her team at OOD. The job exploration counseling service is in draft form and will be piloted before finalizing all five subcategories by February's end. The final curriculum will be freely accessible on the Employment First website. It features flexible, user-friendly design with benchmarks and activities for each service. Jessica discussed pre and post assessments to gauge student understanding, encouraging providers to use their own assessments if preferred. She acknowledged challenges from the recent fee schedule change.

Workflow, Fee Schedule, and Services Discussion

Scott initiated a discussion about the team's workflow, new fee schedule, and services. Chelsea clarified the process for receiving non-credentialed services and the need for staff certifications. Scott expressed concern about the transition from providing services under a waiver to the new fee schedule. The team also discussed delays in processing authorization requests and the challenges with the new employment 1st partnership. Scott also discussed the quality pilot program, the outcomes and bonus payment system, and the shifting reporting window. Kelly encouraged feedback on beneficial aspects of the pilot and mentioned preliminary discussions about incorporating these into the waiver. Scott raised a concern about the transition period between the pilot and the implementation of the waiver changes, which Kelly agreed to discuss further.

Accurate Data Collection and Industry Trends

Scott discussed the importance of accurate data collection for facility hours and community-based services, emphasizing that it should reflect all services provided, not just those billed under a specific code. He also shared a one-pager industry trend report based on provider surveys, highlighting the connection between the surveys and the report's data. Scott noted that nearly all respondents across all service settings saw growth in their starting and average wages since 2024, and staff capacity had either stabilized or improved across various services. He emphasized the need for continued maintenance of these gains due to funding and regulatory challenges. The conversation ended with Anne and Chelsea expressing gratitude for everyone's time and looking forward to the next meeting.

The next Day Array Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 5th @ 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 Committee Report
Thursday, September 5th, 2024
10:00am-11:30am

Quick recap

The team discussed the implementation of a new VR fee schedule, the ending of CESP allowances, and the introduction of outcome-based payments for Individualized Employment Support services. They also addressed concerns about the implementation of a new system, proposed changes to the Nonmedical Transportation rule, and the upcoming Ads pilot. Lastly, they discussed the challenges of getting county boards to authorize paid services and proposed changes to group employment services.

Summary

OOD Team Introduction and Updates

Scott welcomed everyone and requested those able to do so to turn on their cameras. The committee chairs, Justin, Nicole, and Paul, introduced the meeting and looked forward to the discussions. Scott then introduced Brian Baumgartner from OOD, who introduced himself and his role at OOD. Finally, Jay Burns from OOD joined the meeting and was given the floor for updates.

New VR Fee Schedule Implementation Update

Jay announced the upcoming implementation of the new VR fee schedule, effective from October 1st, following a successful collaboration with providers and stakeholders. He highlighted the availability of training for providers and the opportunity for them to submit questions ahead of a Q&A session on September 12th. Jay also shared that new forms have been posted, primarily focusing on adjustments to rates, and that the summer youth program was successful, with a record number of participants. Scott expressed gratitude for the prompt distribution of forms and asked about feedback on the online training for the fee schedule, which Jay confirmed had generated numerous questions, primarily about the timing of authorizations, Preetz parts model, and the justice-based incentive.

CESP Allowances Ending and Provider Capacity

Jay confirmed that the CESP allowances are ending at the end of September and a non-credentialed path is now available as an option for providers. This change is intended to open up more capacity for providers. A Q&A session was scheduled for September 12th to address any further questions or concerns. Scott raised a concern about discrepancies between the number of people served and the referrals received by some providers. Brian advised that any such issues should be addressed with local liaisons or Jay's team. Jay agreed with Brian's recommendation, emphasizing the importance of local communication and relationships.

Agency Focus, Referrals, and IES Payments

Jay emphasized the agency's focus on serving more students and youth, and suggested that providers offering Preetz, summer youth, and transition student services could see increased referrals. Scott and Brian agreed to gather more information about where these changes were most needed. Scott then discussed the implementation of outcome-based payments for Individualized Employment Support (IES) services, highlighting some technical issues that might prevent counties from adding these payments to plans. The poll results indicated that most counties had discussed adding these payments to some IES plans, but not all.

Addressing New System Implementation Issues

Scott sought feedback on the implementation of a new system, highlighting concerns about confusion and lack of training among staff. Paul noted that authorization delays were causing issues, with only two out of 24 requested authorizations granted so far. Katherine and Nicole also shared their experiences, highlighting differences in implementation across different counties and issues with supervisors failing to provide necessary guidance. Scott acknowledged these concerns and committed to addressing them.

New Service Confusion and NMT Proposals

Scott discussed the ongoing confusion regarding a new service and its integration within the ISP. He expressed concern about the timing and ability to backdate these, especially as the first payment was due soon. He emphasized the need for clear communication and education to ensure everyone understands the services. Scott then moved on to discuss proposed changes to the Nonmedical Transportation (NMT) rule, highlighting the introduction of a special per trip rate for competitive integrated employment and other changes. He sought feedback on these proposals, highlighting potential issues with the new definitions and documentation requirements.

Special Per Trip Rate Payment Proposal

Scott discussed the special per trip rate payment for transportation services. He expressed confusion about the requirement for smaller vehicles, suggesting that agencies should have the flexibility to use the most appropriate or available vehicle for each trip, even if it meant incurring additional costs. Scott proposed a change to allow up to four people to be transported as part of the service, arguing that this would not add any extra cost to the system. He also suggested dividing the first mileage band into three different bands to better reflect the actual mileage and payment rates.

Commercial Transportation Rule Discussion

Scott presented comments and concerns regarding the proposed rule for commercial transportation, emphasizing the need for clearer definitions and language, and requesting additional features such as a location specified by the individual for per trip rates. Mary Thompson expressed her opposition to the proposed requirement for new documentation specifying the time of transportation, arguing it would be overly bureaucratic. Scott agreed to consider this feedback and make further adjustments. The team also discussed the issue of no-shows and the cost of sending out vehicles, with Scott explaining that a percentage of no-shows was built into the rate methodology. The team agreed to continue refining the rule to improve the service for employment.

ADS Pilot and Reporting System Changes

Scott discussed the upcoming Ads pilot and the proposed changes to the reporting system. He explained that the new benchmarks, which are slight improvements on the baseline data, will not be tied to an outcome measure. However, one measure, the requirement for people to move up on the path to competitive employment, has been removed as a benchmark. Scott also raised a question about whether the reporting snapshot month should be moved to October, giving providers more time to prepare their data. Heida clarified that this would mean providers would report their data in November, but it would not be a permanent change. The team was asked for their feedback on these proposed changes.

Quality Pilot Changes and Provider Concerns

Heida clarified that the proposed changes to the quality pilot would only apply to providers within the pilot, not all providers. However, MThompson raised concerns about potential data inconsistencies if providers not in the pilot reported on different months. Paul questioned whether non-pilot providers would be asked the same questions as pilot providers, to which Heida confirmed that only pilot providers would have extra questions, but all providers would answer the community integration hours question. Scott emphasized the need for feedback from the provider community on these changes and mentioned a proposed rule from the US Department of Labor regarding the future of the 14 C program.

Addressing County Board Challenges for Services

MThompson and Nicole discussed the challenges of getting county boards to authorize paid services with inconsistencies between county boards and a sense of an administrative burden for their team. Scott agreed to send out a detailed proposal regarding proposed changes to group employment, which could potentially alleviate some of these issues. The proposed changes, intended to take effect in July 2025, aim to right-size people in

community vocab to group employment type services. The team agreed to keep the lines of communication open for future discussions.

The next Day & Employment Services Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 7th @ 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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Health Care Committee Report
Thursday, October 17th, 2024
10am-12pm

The Health Care Committee notes will be shared on the next Board Report.

The next Health Care Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19th @ 10am

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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Human Resources Committee Report

Thursday, September 12th, 2024

10am-12pm

- 1 Welcome and Introductions
- 2 Guest: Lanaya MacDonald, Reentry Specialist with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
 - a Presentation and discussion on certificates of qualifications for employment (CQE).
 - i Lanaya presented on the basics of the CQE program, what is required of applicants, and how provider might be able to assist potential employees receive a CQE so they can work in the DD system
 - ii Christine sent the slides and other resources through the HR Committee Listserve
- 3 Hot Topics:
 - a Christine gave an update on the OPRA Compensation, Benefits, and Turnover survey
 - b Sealed records and BCI check
 - i Committee discussed an emerging issue regarding sealed records involving convictions on the exclusion list and changes to information contained on the BCI reports
 - ii Anyone with additional concerns, examples, or questions should reach out to Christine
 - c Christine gave an update on the Vorys recreational marijuana FAQ

The next HR Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 14th @ 10am

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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

OPRA ICF Committee Report Wednesday, August 21st 2024 1pm – 3pm

Quick recap

During the meeting, several issues were discussed including cost report data, departmental updates, ongoing work group progress with a focus on the upcoming fiscal year, the implications for rates, ceilings, and wage increases. Additionally, a discussion was held on the challenges of transitioning children on ventilators from hospital settings to an ICF, the need for more resources for high behavioral needs, and the potential for overall savings by improving services within their own state.

Summary

Department Updates

Ann Weisent provided updates on various issues such as a recent grant opportunity, the importance of the DSP and provider training series, and resources on topics like choking, dietary needs, and human sexuality. She also reminded the group about DSP recognition week and assured them of her team's availability for assistance. Lastly, she shared Samantha Irvine's contact information for licensure development specialist inquiries and emphasized the importance of keeping the provider search tool updated.

Fiscal Year 25 Rates and Spending Discussion

TJ.Ely and Denise Leonard from Plante Moran discussed the fiscal year 25 rates, including the continuation of the ICF reimbursement formula, the direct support personnel payment add-on, the quality incentive program add-on, the professional workforce development add-on based on 2023 cost report data, and the \$900 ventilator add-on per day. He presented a breakdown showing the average rates for fiscal year 25. The rates are driven by the 2023 cost report data. Denise Leonard suggested the increased spending should be built into the ceilings and proposed analyzing potential adjustments to equipment and capital cost caps. There was doubt expressed about the professional workforce development add-on continuing after June 2025.

Discussing Fiscal Year 2025 Care Ceilings Changes

TJ.Ely and Denise Leonard discussed the changes in direct care and indirect care ceilings for the fiscal year 2025. They noted that while there was an overall increase in direct care ceilings across all peer groups, the peer group 2 scenario, where spending either remained flat or decreased, was a cause for concern. This was particularly evident in the indirect care ceilings, where the increase was due to an increase in cost per day. They also discussed the efficiency incentive, which remained the same for all peer groups except for peer group one. TJ.Ely further explained the calculation of the ceilings and how various factors, such as inflation and changes in the capital reimbursement formula, impacted them.

FRV Formula and Wage Trends

TJ.Ely explained the calculation of the formula, which multiplies two base indices by the county modifier, and adjusts bed days based on occupancy rates. Denise Leonard then discussed wage data, showing an increase in hourly wages for direct care staff over the past three years. She also mentioned that the goal for the next fiscal year is to further increase the average hourly wage to \$18. It was noted that the comparison between the current and proposed wage rates might not be accurate, as the former includes overtime and new bonuses while the latter only reflects starting salaries.

Team Efforts, Budget, and Resource Allocation

Rachel praised the member's efforts, particularly in the budget process, and announced a future discussion about the issues with the free choice of provider on the waiver and ICF sides. She also provided an update on the work groups, noting that we are still waiting for the MUI rule. Pete and Christine emphasized the importance of maintaining the budget formula without caps or rollbacks and discussed potential modernization of ICF and cost report processes. They also addressed the high costs of vehicles and vehicle maintenance. Lastly, they referred to recent discussions about serving children on ventilators, particularly children.

Transitioning Children on Ventilators to Home Settings

The group discussed the challenges of transitioning children on ventilators from hospital settings to their homes, and the need for more beds and licenses to support those with children who are currently living in the hospital. It was also noted for the need of a new definition of 'high medical need' to include adults. The team acknowledged the political difficulties in navigating the next budget and the need for a continued investment in the system.

The next ICF Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18th @ 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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

OPRA Residential Waiver Committee Report

Wednesday, August 21st, 2024

10am – 12pm

Quick recap

The group discussed various issues related to housing affordability, residential services, and the healthcare service program pilot, and the emergence of intentional communities in Ohio. They also addressed challenges related to their legacy provider status, room and board costs, and the need for more collaboration in the process of selecting providers. Lastly, they discussed proposed changes to the provider certification rule, and the implementation of the CMS Access rule.

Summary

Department Updates

Ann Weisent provided updates on system downtime, DSP training and recognition week, participation in events, a tech hub event, and patterns around choking deaths from a mortality review. She also discussed the status of the healthcare service program pilot and introduced Emily Martinez from Station MD in Ohio who can provide training.

Housing Affordability and Residential Services Discussion

Jen Welsh from DODD then gave a presentation regarding issues related to housing affordability and residential services. The group also discussed the use of Community Capital Assistance (CCA) funds, with Ann agreeing to share feedback with the CCA team about the potential benefits of using these funds to renovate larger settings. Issues related to referral patterns for open beds and the importance of ensuring individuals have access to information about available housing options were also addressed. Lastly, Ann clarified that there are no restrictions on the use of licensed beds for specific demographics and encouraged providers to submit development applications if they wish to use licensed beds in new developments.

Ohio Intentional Communities and Provider Support

The emergency of intentional communities and the importance of ensuring the health and safety of individuals in communities was noted. Ann also highlighted the importance of members reaching out to subject matter experts for support and to explore local resources. A question was raised about the referral process for technical assistance, which Ann agreed to clarify. Lastly, it was shared that OPRA would be hosting quarterly meetings with provider liaisons to discuss issues and identify opportunities for improvement and collaboration.

Addressing Housing Affordability and Subsidies

Jen Welsh addressed the growing issue of housing affordability in Ohio, particularly for individuals with disabilities and low incomes. She noted that the current Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payment of \$943 per month is insufficient for independent living, and many are forced to reside in congregate settings due to rental price increases. Jen also highlighted the challenges faced by vulnerable groups in accessing housing subsidies, with only one in four people receiving a subsidy. She discussed the efforts of the department to address this issue, including the Community Capital Assistance Program and the Rental Assistance Program, and the Ohio 811 program initiated in 2012. Lastly, she emphasized the importance of building relationships with local housing authorities to prioritize housing for people with disabilities and the need to address fair housing issues.

Rachel agreed to compile and distribute relevant information to the group via email. Scott presented proposed changes to the provider certification rule, including clarifications to the definitions of direct support assistants and professionals, and suggested modifications to the training requirements.

The team also discussed the implications of removing the high school diploma and GED requirement for direct support personnel and the confusion surrounding the term "DOO". Lastly, Rachel provided updates on the MUI and OISP issues, and the team discussed the need for feedback on proposed rule changes.

Waiver Modernization and Budget Coalition Efforts

Teresa provided updates on the waiver modernization and remote supports work groups. She mentioned that DODD and county boards were working on a stop loss proposal, and that feedback from OPRA members on remote supports would be used to inform the Department's redrafting of rules. Additionally, a newly formed compliance work group, led by Lindsay Nash, was examining the provider compliance tool and planning to

undertake a process to improve it. Pete then discussed the ongoing efforts of the Budget coalition, which was pursuing an ongoing increase or mechanism to trigger an annual increase, exploring cost-based approaches, and considering funding for specialized services to help children transition from hospital settings to community-based care.

Access Rule Implementation and Wage Changes

Pete discussed the implementation of the CMS Access rule and potential modifications to certain provisions. Rachel proposed moving the discussion of the free choice of provider to a separate meeting due to its complexity, and Susan agreed to this proposal.

The next Residential Waiver Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18th @ 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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Melissa Fannon

OPRA Marketing & Communications Committee Report

Tuesday, September 10th, 2024

10am – 11am

The Marketing & Communications Committee met on September 10th to discuss better messaging. Tim Hinds and Erin Sogal from Trailblaze Creative presented to the committee about sharing perspectives and "lessons learned" on nonprofit messaging. During the presentation, they covered core brand elements on how members can strengthen their organization's messaging, and the concept of dignified storytelling to ensure messaging resonates with audiences. They also encouraged committee members to reach out to them to further discuss the challenges they are facing regarding messaging and marketing at their organization.

The next Marketing & Communications Committee TBD