



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 28, 2025



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

May 28, 2025

10:00am – 11:30am

1. Welcome & Safe Place Statement

- Review of Safe Place Statement
- Welcome new District 7 board member, Nikki Jaras, Executive Director, Lifeworks Autism Services

2. Approval of Agenda

- Review and approve today's meeting agenda

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Review and approve minutes from April.

4. Finance Report

- Financial Statements Review and Approval

5. Board Report

- State Budget Update
- 14C Bill
- Reform amendment
 - 1. Quality framework

6. CEO Report

- Strategic Plan
- Welcome our guests
 - 1. **Barbara Merrill**, CEO, ANCOR
 - 2. **Mary Sowers**, Executive Director, NASDDDS
 - 3. **Stacy DiStefano**, CEO, Consulting for Human Services (CFHS)

7. Open Forum

- Member Comments



Board of Directors Minutes

Date: April 1, 2025

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location: Virtual

Board Members:

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

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 Agenda</i>	Approval of Board Agenda. Motion: Jim Steffey Second: Ashley Brocious	Unanimously approved	
<i>Approval of Minutes</i>	Approval of January 2025 Board Meeting minutes. Motion: Lisa Reed Second: Michelle Madden	Unanimously approved	
<i>Finance Committee Report</i>	<p>Liz Owens provided committee report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue and dues are higher than this time last year. Investments are up 1.7% and 1.2% Deferred revenue for grant revenue – Works for Me grant revenue is expected soon P& L – net operating is better than budget; revenue is better than budget; expenses lower than budget Overall financials look good. <p>Pete Moore also shared an update on membership renewals coming in and updated training plan which will generate non-dues revenue.</p> <p>Motion to approve March financials.</p> <p>Motion: Tim Neville Second: Tami Honkala</p>	Unanimously approved	
<i>Board Report</i>	Adam welcomed Chris Wolf who is filling an at-large seat on the board. Pete shared update on vacant seat in District 7 – should be filled by next meeting.	Christine will provide an update to the Board and membership when the Senate version of the bill comes out.	Christine

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
	<p>Pete provided an update on the State Budget. House has been very “tight lipped” on where we stand. Several members did agree to carry the waiver rate increase amendments, but we won’t know if it is in the House version until we see the sub-bill later today.</p> <p>Christine Touvelle provided an update on other significant conversations taking place, including Medicaid and school funding formula/vouchers. The Success Group heard a rumor there could be some small cuts in programs/funding. Finance committee takes place today and will likely be voted out of committee and then the house fairly quickly. We will start to see testimony in Senate before they go on spring break for two weeks.</p> <p>Pete encouraged Board members to continue to reach out to Senators in their districts – invite them to visit, share good work you’re doing.</p> <p>Pete introduced conversation about amendments, and Teresa provided an update on OPRA amendments.</p> <p>Christine provided update on EVV. ODM has reconvened stakeholder group. DODD is also developing some tools with a focus on independent providers, but there will tools available for agencies as well.</p> <p>Pete provided an update on the federal visits last week.</p>		

Agenda	Discussion	Tasks/Conclusion	Responsibility
<i>CEO Report</i>	<p>Pete provided an update on the Great Provider Summit. Tied to strategic plan. The Summit is designed for professional development, team development, not so much “DD process” – this one is about you, teams.</p> <p>Will have in person board meeting day before with pre-conference session same day. Guest speakers at Board meeting include Barb Merrill, Mary Sowers, Stacy DeStefano.</p> <p>Great feedback from district meetings. Discussions around County Board relationships.</p> <p>Pete also provided a brief update and details around the Board Retreat.</p>		
<i>Other Business</i>	Jamie brought up concerns around free choice of provider and ongoing conversations with DODD. Teresa discussed DODD’s view around free choice of provider and SSA’s responsibility to discuss all available services and options. This has particularly come up around housing – which is not a waiver service.		
<i>Adjourn</i>	<p>Motion to adjourn: Lisa Reed</p> <p>Second: Michelle Madden</p>	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 Core Committee Meeting Wednesday, May 14, 2025 10am-12pm via Zoom

Meeting Overview

The Policy Committee met to discuss critical topics impacting Ohio's developmental disabilities system. Key themes included subminimum wage legislation, assessment tools, system funding challenges, and the importance of quality measures in an evolving service landscape. Participants emphasized the need for data-informed decision-making, collaboration with families and stakeholders, and the provider community's readiness to adapt.

Meeting Highlights

Welcome and Introductions

- Anthony Kukura is the newest Policy Committee member, replacing Chris Wolf.
 - Scott DeLong read the safe space statement.
 - Due to developments at the Statehouse, the agenda was adjusted to prioritize 14(c) discussion.
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Policy and Legislative Updates

Subminimum Wage (14c) Legislation

- Scott Marks reported on the reintroduction of a bill to eliminate subminimum wage.
 - The bill has gained traction with bipartisan support.
 - The Committee discussed crafting an OPRA position statement to engage in constructive dialogue rather than outright opposition.
-

ICF System Concerns and Reimbursement Redesign

Reimbursement Model Discussion

- Teresa outlined potential changes to the ICF payment system, including a ceiling-based model and the elimination of DDP.
- Members raised concerns about how these changes would impact providers serving individuals with high medical needs.
- The Committee emphasized the need for a shared vision for ICF services going forward.

Assessment Tools and InterRAI

- The group reviewed the possible adoption of InterRAI to replace the DDP and AAI.
 - There was skepticism about the state's claim that there is no correlation between DDP and cost.
 - The need for transparency, conflict-free assessments, and alignment with actual service needs was stressed.
-

Future System Design and Quality Measures

Managed Care, Payment Models, and System Transformation

- Teresa led a conversation on the future of service delivery in Ohio, including managed LTSS, mergers/acquisitions, and provider networks.
- A poll was conducted to gauge member familiarity with these concepts.
- Guest speaker Mary Lou joined to discuss quality strategy and system transformation.

Balancing Innovation and Quality

- Mary Lou highlighted the need to distinguish between medical and social support models.
- Emphasis was placed on reducing variation, improving person-centered planning, and modernizing system processes.

Medicaid Funding and Federal Risk

- Mary Lou reviewed the history of Medicaid funding and the threats posed by potential changes (e.g., per capita caps, eligibility modifications).
- Providers were encouraged to demonstrate value through internal quality benchmarks and outcome tracking.

Data Standardization and Quality Indicators

- Mary Lou emphasized the importance of shared definitions, quality indicators, and the use of data for performance improvement.
- Peter Moore acknowledged the culture shift required for providers to embrace self-assessment and quality ownership.

Complex Needs and Population-Specific Planning

- The group discussed designing models for individuals with intensive medical needs and for aging cohorts.
 - Mary Lou noted the importance of appropriate planning, customer satisfaction tracking, and service responsiveness.
-

Next Steps

- **OPRA team** to compile cost report data elements for ICFs to support peer benchmarking.
- **OPRA to reach out to DODD's Family Advisory Council** to explore how families define quality for eligibility-based supports.
- **Continue inviting guest speakers** to share expertise on future system design.

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, April 3, 2025

9:30am-11:30am

Quick recap

The meeting covered various aspects of developmental disability services, including budget discussions, legislative updates, and ongoing initiatives. Key topics included property tax issues, efforts to phase out subminimum wage employment, and updates on employment-related programs and training. The committee also discussed challenges in service provision, advocacy efforts, and the potential impact of federal budget cuts on programs supporting Ohioans with disabilities.

Next steps

- Scott to share the 14C legislation PowerPoint presentation with the committee members.
- Scott to share the customizable one-pager on vocational rehabilitation with committee members for potential advocacy efforts.
- Keith Banner to follow up with Steve regarding the possibility of modifying the RFP for training to allow for collaboration among providers.
- Keith Banner to keep the committee updated on the progress of the blueprint proposal.
- Scott to invite Dale Verstegan to the next Employment Service Committee meeting in May for a provider focus group discussion.
- Scott to send Keith Banner an email summarizing the suggestion for exploring a mechanism within NMT budgets similar to acuity budgets.
- OACB to continue educating stakeholders about property tax issues and their potential impact on DD services funding.
- OACB to assemble a list of providers to discuss potential support needed for transitioning away from subminimum wage employment.
- Budget coalition to determine approach for advocating with the Senate regarding budget increases.

Summary

OACB Budget Update and Involvement

Monica from OACB reports that the organization is primarily focused on the budget, with the House recently releasing their version. The committee is updated on the current state of budget discussions and OACB's involvement in the process.

Property Tax Impact on Services

Monica discussed the ongoing work on the waiting list rule and the blueprint. She also mentioned the work on the waiver modernization, specifically the assessment of different tools. Adam then discussed the issue of property taxes, explaining how the system works and the potential problems it could cause for the developmental disability service delivery system. He emphasized the need for awareness and advocacy efforts to protect the system from potential changes in property tax collection.

Ohio Levy System and Taxation

Adam explained the levy system in Ohio, stating that levies are renewed every 5 years and the amount collected remains the same unless voters approve an increase. He clarified that county boards do not automatically increase their tax dollars with property tax values, unlike public school districts. Adam also mentioned that the state law dictates the types of levies county boards can offer and that there have been individual pieces of legislation and constitutional elements that limit this. He suggested that the time for changing the levy system to be more like public school districts was a couple of decades ago. Adam also discussed the efforts of a freshman lawmaker, chosen by Speaker Huffman, to modify property tax law, who has already introduced 10 or 11 bills in the first three months of his term.

Legislative Update on Disability Services Funding

Adam provides an update on legislative activities related to developmental disability services. He discusses a bill that has passed the House eliminating local authorities' ability to issue replacement levies, which could impact funding for disability services. Adam also mentions ongoing discussions about eliminating subminimum wage for people with disabilities. OACB is engaging with a coalition to advocate on this issue and plans to meet with key legislators after the budget process. They aim to ensure adequate support for providers transitioning away from subminimum wage programs. Scott raises concerns about the likelihood of securing additional funding for these transitions given the current political climate.

County Boards Support Subminimum Wage Legislation

Adam discusses the county boards' support for legislation to phase out subminimum wage employment for people with disabilities. He notes that while there are some concerns, they generally support the bill but believe important conversations need to take place before a final decision. Tim mentions that similar efforts at the federal level have been abandoned. Scott questions why county boards don't simply stop authorizing subminimum wage services if they want to end the practice. Adam explains that the boards are engaging in this process to help steer the system in a positive direction, rather than waiting for natural attrition. Mary emphasizes the importance of creating sustainable employment opportunities and supporting group employment initiatives to avoid leaving people behind.

Employment Quality Readiness Program Updates

Keith provides updates on several initiatives. The Employment Quality Readiness Program funded 43 providers to build capacity around tech and staff credentialization, with survey results to be shared soon. The ADS Quality

Pilot's final payment was distributed, and a video showcasing success story is being planned. Keith mentions ongoing work on a blueprint proposal focusing on incentivizing group employment. He also discusses a new project with Dale Verstegan to assess and create a strategic plan for business engagement across state agencies, inviting providers to suggest employers for a focus group. Scott proposes inviting Dale to the next Employment Service Committee meeting as a potential provider focus group opportunity.

Exploring Budget Lift Mechanism for NMT

Scott proposed exploring the possibility of introducing a budget lift mechanism within the NMT budgets, similar to the existing mechanism in the acuity budgets. This would provide teams with more flexibility in discussing the special per trip rate. Keith agreed to take this idea back to MDA and promised to keep the team updated. Keith also mentioned that he is working with Lisa Combs at Oacb to create tools and resources for employment planning and plans to share these resources with the team. Mary expressed her concerns about the RFP proposal for enhancing training, suggesting that it excludes valuable content from different systems across the state.

Web-Based Training Modules and Legislation

The discussion covers several topics related to professional development and upcoming legislation. Scott mentions that his team is developing web-based training modules, with the first one on empathy-based care expected to be available by the end of May. Keith shares information about new employment services courses and upcoming innovation series events. The group also discusses the status of a proposal for BEST, with Keith indicating that they are working on it and hoping to have an update by the end of the month. Finally, Scott begins to present information about new 14c legislation in Ohio, noting that it has some significantly different components compared to previous versions.

New Legislation and Tax Credit Discussion

Scott discussed the new legislation regarding the subminimum wage phase-out over five years. He highlighted the tax credit for purchases from nonprofits employing people with disabilities, but expressed confusion about the eligibility criteria and the health insurance requirements. Scott also mentioned the elimination of subminimum wage for 14 C certificate holders and license holders in Ohio. He ended the discussion by asking for clarification on the tax credit and its application.

14 C Tax Incentive Discussion

Scott discussed the confusion around the 14 C tax incentive and its application. He sought clarity on whether it was aimed at incentivizing current providers or other community nonprofit employers. Scott expressed concerns about the timing of the proposal, given the uncertainty around the future of services and the economy. He also mentioned the opposition to the legislation due to its specifics. John asked about the eligibility for those without a 14 C certificate, and Scott clarified that they could be eligible if they met certain requirements. Harris mentioned the National Coalition to preserve employment choice and their efforts at the Federal level. Scott acknowledged the engagement of providers in the process and the potential challenges in the political viability of the proposal.

State Budget Process and Federal Cuts

Scott discussed the state budget process, noting that the House's version of the budget kept rates flat, with no rate increases from the previous year. He mentioned that the Senate's version of the budget is still being deliberated, and the two versions will eventually need to be reconciled. Scott also discussed federal budget issues, including the potential cuts to Medicaid and the future of Voc Rehab and RSA. He emphasized the importance of these programs for Ohioans with disabilities and shared a one-pager with statistics on their impact. Scott

encouraged the committee to advocate for the protection of these programs, regardless of where they end up in the reorganization of the Department of Education.

Discussing Support for Mobility Barriers

Mary Thompson discussed a situation where she is unsure about whether to allow a person with mobility barriers to go out with her friend, as it would require additional support. John suggested that providing support for free could be a problem. Scott and Jennifer proposed meeting with the other provider agency to discuss the logistics and potential solutions. Scott also mentioned the idea of involving a third-party volunteer agency or church to provide support. The team also discussed updates on best practices and health insurance for community employment.

The next Day Array Committee meeting is scheduled for June 5th.

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, May 1, 2025

10:00am-11:30am

Quick recap

Scott, Justin, and Paul, the co-chairs, welcomed attendees and introduced guests from OOD, who provided updates on Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, including a return-to-office plan, a front door pilot program, and a positive budget outlook. The group also discussed concerns about staff turnover, case transfers, and communication issues, with Brian promising to take this feedback back to

his team to improve the process. Additionally, Jay provided updates on vocational rehabilitation services, including the Provider Management Program, the Significant Incident Report Form, and summer youth programs, while Kyle presented a new initiative to incorporate remote support technology into individual employment services.

Next steps

- Scott to distribute Kyle Corbin's contact information to the committee members.
- Brian to take feedback about case transfers and communication issues back to OOD senior leadership and area managers.
- Jay to address the delineation of responsibilities for follow-up after incidents in the next SURF training.
- OPRA to consider putting together a "must-haves" list for documenting and billing systems, especially for OOD VR services.
- Paul to coordinate an informal Ohio meet-up for those attending the APSE conference in DC (June 11-14).
- Committee members planning to attend APSE conference to email Scott or Paul.
- Justin to email feedback from the meeting to Jay and Brian at OOD, and CC Scott.

Summary

Ohio Advocacy Event and OOD Presentation

Scott opens the meeting from Washington, DC, noting potential internet issues and mentioning his encounters with Ohio colleagues at various advocacy events. Justin and Paul, the co-chairs, welcome everyone and introduce guests from OOD (Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities). Brian Bumgartner, an assistant deputy director from OOD's division of policy and partnerships, begins the presentation by greeting the attendees and celebrating the arrival of spring.

OOD Updates and Budget Outlook

Brian provides updates on Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). The agency has implemented a return-to-office plan, with staff attendance varying based on office location and available space. OOD has also launched a front door pilot program in northwest and east central areas, focusing on efficiently handling increased referrals by having caseload assistants conduct initial intakes. Brian mentions that OOD's budget outlook is positive, with the agency being highlighted in the Governor's State of the State address for the first time and receiving a slight increase in the proposed budget.

Addressing Staff Turnover and Case Transfers

Brian addresses concerns about staff turnover and case transfers. He explains that turnover rates have not significantly increased due to return-to-office policies. However, he acknowledges the disruptive nature of case transfers and the impact on service continuity. Brian mentions that the agency is aware of these issues and is trying to minimize disruptions while still meeting client needs. He commits to discussing this feedback with senior leadership. Lindsay adds that case transfers have been an ongoing issue for over a year, particularly in the Northwest region. She also highlights that increased caseload sizes for counselors are causing delays in scheduling meetings and providing timely services. Brian acknowledges these concerns and mentions that caseload size adjustments are being considered as part of a pilot program.

Improving Case Transfer Communication

Brian acknowledges the issues with case transfers and communication raised by Denise and Ann. He explains that ideally, there should be a case transfer summary note and a letter from the new counselor, but admits this doesn't always happen, especially in cases of sudden employee departures. Brian promises to take this feedback back to his team to improve the process. Ann emphasizes the need for better communication with providers about staff changes, suggesting they be CC'd on emails or notified through the portal. Brian agrees to discuss these concerns with his group and encourages the use of liaisons for clarification in the meantime.

Vocational Rehabilitation Updates and Summer Programs

Jay provides updates on several topics related to vocational rehabilitation services. He reports that the Provider Management Program has been moved to a more stable technology platform, which should be seamless for providers. The Significant Incident Report Form has been streamlined to no longer require a wet signature and includes reminders for specific situations. Jay also mentions minor changes to the fee schedule, including updating language around rehabilitation technology and allowing non-credential rates for certain life skills training services. Regarding summer youth programs, Jay notes that OOD is gathering feedback from providers about staff training and communication practices with families. Paul expresses concerns about the utilization of new work sites for summer youth programs and asks for feedback from other providers on their experiences.

Summer Youth Referrals and Transportation

Liz and Ann report that summer youth referrals are down this year, with Liz noting about 14 openings out of 70 spots. They discuss challenges with the site collection tool and transportation limitations in rural areas. Jay acknowledges these issues and explains that the program has seen an 11% increase in service rates to support providers. He suggests checking locally for student participation and offers to review the accuracy of the site lists. Jay also mentions considering allowances for transportation in rural areas during the next fee schedule update.

SURF Process Update and Follow-Up

Jay provides an update on the SURF (Serious Unusual Reportable Form) process, addressing concerns raised by Lindsay and others about follow-up questions and information gathering. He acknowledges that providers can only include information they have and suggests that counselors may need to follow up directly with participants for additional details. Jay notes that the SURF process is relatively new and aims to streamline reporting. The discussion highlights the need for clearer guidelines on responsibilities for follow-up after incidents, which Jay suggests addressing in future SURF training. Providers express appreciation for the elimination of wet signatures and the overall simplification of the process.

Remote Job Coaching Initiative

Kyle Corbin from Safe and Home presents a new initiative to incorporate remote support technology into individual employment services, specifically job coaching. The project, developed in partnership with OOD, aims to use Safe and Home's existing network of trained DSPs and technology to provide job coaching services remotely. This approach could address issues such as lack of available job coaches, rural accessibility, and scalability. Kyle mentions that they hope to have some people on the service by summer, with the goal of ironing out details and potentially expanding to other provider agencies in the future. The model is expected to be more efficient, effective, and cost-effective than traditional in-person job coaching.

Software Solutions for Employment Services

The group discusses software solutions for documenting and billing employment services. Paul mentions challenges with adapting Britco for their agency's needs and asks others about their experiences. Justin shares that his agency uses Setworks, which he finds very customizable but notes that major changes can incur costs. Justin explains that Setworks allows them to bill for both waiver and OOD services, creating flat files for waiver billing and exportable documents for OOD billing that are then uploaded to the OOD portal.

Britco Software Benefits, Challenges and Solutions

Jason shares his experience with Britco, noting its usefulness for VR and day services but highlighting initial setup challenges and the need for dedicated management. Paul reports positive experiences with Britco for day services, billing, and payroll, emphasizing its cost-effectiveness and improved reporting capabilities. Ann mentions that the new Britco version may not support piece rate pay for 14c holders and discusses the system's benefits for incident reporting and management review. Justin concludes by praising Setworks' customer service and project management support during implementation.

Ann discusses her organization's experience with Britco software for waiver and OD services. They are transitioning to Britco 2.0, but have faced challenges with data entry, billing accuracy, and report generation for accreditation. Ann mentions that their intake process for VR programs is still paper-based due to its complexity and the need for a more personal approach. Paul shares that his organization is delaying the transition to Britco Pro for VR billing until after summer youth programs. He emphasizes the importance of having a dedicated project manager for software implementation. The group acknowledges the difficulty in finding a single software solution that meets all the diverse needs of their agencies, with some organizations opting for custom solutions using tools like Google Sheets.

Scott's Updates and Upcoming Events

Scott provides updates on several topics and discusses upcoming events. He mentions that the latest proposals from Dodd regarding best and group employment supports are still pending. The Great Provider Summit is scheduled for May 29th and 30th at the Easton Hilton, with a pre-conference session on May 28th featuring national speakers. Scott also reports on his advocacy efforts in DC regarding potential Medicaid cuts, noting that the target for cuts has been reduced from \$880 billion to \$500 billion. He highlights the possibility of achieving savings through deregulatory measures without impacting services, eligibility, or benefits. Paul invites attendees to connect at the upcoming APSE conference in DC from June 11th to 14th.

The next Day & Employment Services Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 3rd @ 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, April 17, 2025

10am-12pm

The Health Care Committee met in April. The committee heard from Dr. Melissa Desroaches, professor at UMass Dartmouth. Dr. Desroaches presented on her research on medical-surgical nursing care for people with I/DD and suggestions for improving this nursing care in in-patient settings. Christine provided a few updates and discussed future meetings.

The next Health Care Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 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)

OPRA Staff Lead: Christine Touvelle

OPRA Human Resources Committee Report
Thursday, May 15, 2025
10am-12pm

The HR Committee met in May. The Committee welcomed Bob Harris, partner at Vorys, to discuss changing immigration policy and how the changing policies could impact employees who are foreign nationals. This space is changing rapidly. Employers who have employees who are foreign nationals should watch the space carefully and seek counsel from an attorney who is familiar with employment and immigration laws. Christine shared Bob's presentation with the committee. Christine also provided updates on changing DOL guidance, DODD's DSP compensation survey, and the enactment of a new Ohio law on posting certain employment-related notices.

The next HR Committee meeting is scheduled for July 17th @ 10am

Residential Resources

Summary

The ICF & Residential Waiver Committees was combined as a forum for providers offering residential services, including ICF and waiver-based models. The committee explores funding, staffing, regulatory requirements, and issues that have a direct impact on the programs and services our members offer.

Committee Chair(s): Susan Berneike (Help Foundation), Bob Heinzerling (Heinzerling Community), Kurt Miller (Empowering People) and Jamie Steele (OVRs)

OPRA Staff Lead: Rachel Hayes

The new meeting structure beginning in 2025:

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM | Residential Waiver

Focused on updates, discussions, and presentations specific to the Residential Waiver service.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM | Department Updates/Presentations

Content applicable to both Residential Waiver (RW) and ICF services.

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM | ICF

Centered on updates, discussions, and presentations specific to the ICF service.

OPRA Residential Resources Committee Report
Wednesday, April 16, 2025
9:30am – 1:00pm

State Budget Process and Funding Challenges

The meeting begins with a discussion of the current state budget process and its impact on developmental disability services. Christine reports that the House has passed an omnibus bill, which is now in the Senate. Several amendments proposed by the group, including waiver rate increases and system reforms, were not included in the House bill. Christine notes that it will be challenging to secure additional funding in the Senate, particularly for waiver rate increases, due to recent Medicaid spending increases. The group discussed potential strategies for prioritizing their requests and communicating with legislators. They also touch on ongoing work by the Department of Developmental Disabilities on various issues and the need to monitor federal Medicaid discussions that could impact state funding.

Addressing Waiver Nursing and Documentation Issues

Rachel led a discussion on the issue of waiver nursing. The main concern was the unrealistic expectation that every medication error, including simple documentation errors, should be entered into the system. This was deemed an unfunded mandate and an unrealistic expectation. The team also discussed the potential consequences of this policy, including the potential for a nursing crisis and the impact on recruitment. The conversation ended with a plan to formulate a response to the department and to continue the discussion in the next meeting.

Residential Referral Process Challenges Discussed

Rachel led a breakout room and discussion on the challenges and suggestions for improving the referral process for residential services within counties. The participants identified inconsistencies in the referral process across counties, with some counties pushing for specific models based on philosophical beliefs. They also noted a lack of transparency and the need for a trusted tool to facilitate referrals. The group suggested that the provider search tool could be more effective if used appropriately. They also discussed the issue of counties owning their own housing, which could create conflicts of interest. The discussion ended with a mention of potential strikes by county employees and the need for providers to be prepared for such events.

Station MD Healthcare Assessment Transition

The issue of Station MD use was discussed. Sarah Davies from Station MD discussed the transition of the healthcare assessment to a waiver service. Sarah mentioned mixed reactions from providers and county boards and the need for ongoing education. Jennifer shared her experience with a denied waiver service for an individual, and Ann from Dodd clarified that the pilot for Station MD in ICFs would continue until June 30, 2025. Ann also discussed the workforce symposium, the extended travel rule, and the recertification process. She encouraged providers to request extensions if needed and to communicate with the reviewer. Ann also mentioned the DSP compensation survey and upcoming trainings. Lisa Burt from the Department of Compliance was introduced to discuss compliance-related matters.

Partnership and Collaboration in Service Provision

Lisa emphasized the importance of partnership and collaboration in providing services to individuals. She acknowledged the challenges in interpreting and applying rules and expressed openness to addressing concerns and questions. Lisa also discussed the need for clear documentation and the ongoing process of reviewing the ISP. Rachel asked about the compliance work tool, and Lisa explained the changes made to make it more specific and

transparent. Lisa also mentioned the need for a clean version of the revised tool, which will be posted on the website in the next couple of weeks.

House Passes Budget Resolution

The House of Representatives passed a budget resolution on April 14th with a narrow margin. Congress is now adjourned for two weeks, during which time subcommittees will review potential budget cuts, including those affecting Medicaid. Christine and Scott discussed potential impacts on developmental disability services, including concerns about provider taxes, work requirements, and changes to the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP). They emphasize the importance of advocacy to protect Medicaid services and highlight the uncertainty surrounding specific proposals and their potential effects on Ohio's budget and service provision.

Gainwell Contract Issues Discussed

Rachel led a discussion about issues with Gainwell, a company contracted to process claims. Kurt Miller reported that Gainwell had been clawing back funds without proper adjudication, affecting several individuals. The team also discussed issues with Prn medications, where physicians were being notified every time the medication was used, which was causing frustration.

ICF Referrals and Services Discussion

Rachel led a discussion about ICF referrals and services. Participants report mixed experiences with referrals from county boards, with some seeing improvements and others facing challenges. Michelle Madden notes improved referral information and communication in Portage County. Robert mentions Heinzerling has seen better networking with SSAs and improved referrals from Franklin County. Some providers, like Saint Joseph Home, receive most referrals from hospitals rather than county boards. Rachel emphasizes the importance of ICF referrals and services. She also highlights upcoming rule reviews, including behavior support rate add-ons and quality indicators, and provides resources for certification and survey information.

The next Residential Resources Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 18th @ 9:30am

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

The meeting scheduled for May 13th was cancelled.

The next Marketing & Communications Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, July 8th @ 10am