



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.

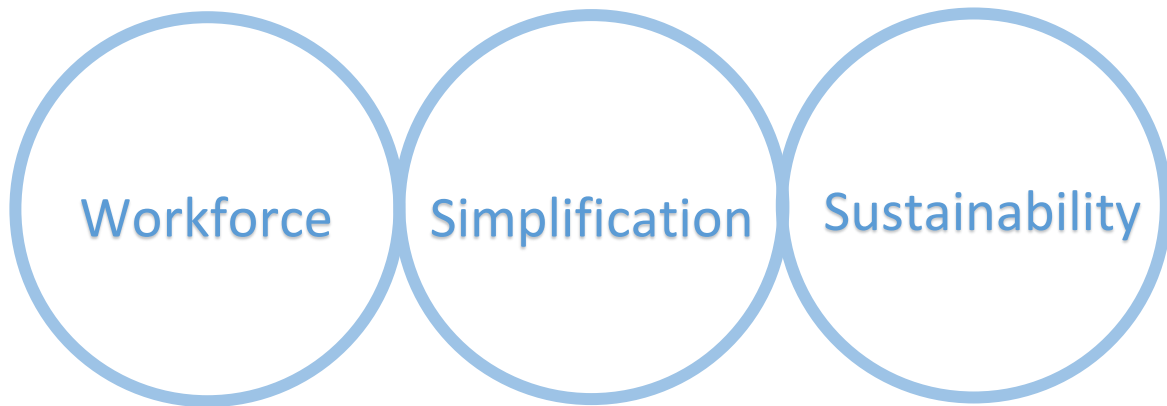
Board Policy and Committee Report

2.26.2020

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Strategic Plan



Workforce

OPRA will promote the value of working in the developmental disabilities field and support professionals to excel.

Simplification

OPRA will take a lead role in designing a system in Ohio that is simplified and values positive relationships.

Sustainability

OPRA will advocate to ensure adequate resources and support in order to provide exceptional services.

Policy Committee

Summary

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

Meeting Notes from the 2-10-20 Policy Committee meeting

- BEST
 - Scott Marks gave an update on the BEST proposal
 - CMS would not give approval of the BEST framework as two similar, but slightly different services at the same time for voc hab. CMS has given preliminary approval of one tiered services.
 - DODD hopes to have the waiver amendment filed and approved by CMS by November 1, 2020. The goal is to have an effective date of December 1, 2020.
 - Rule implementation workgroup will have to rework the rule to encompass the tiered approach
- Blueprint
 - Scott Marks gave update on DODD's Blueprint for Day and Employment Services workgroup.
 - The Charter of the workgroup was sent out to the Committee. The goal of the workgroup is to give Director Davis suggestions and recommendation on how to best improve day array and employment services.
 - The workgroup intends to have the suggestions by the end of the year. Any rule/service/waiver changes would be developed and implemented after the suggestions were accepted or rejected.
 - Scott gave an overview of the day array provider site visits he and the other OPRA representatives have conducted. From the visits, he, the other OPRA representatives on

the workgroup, and the Day Array Committee have developed “we believes” and areas with the highest priority for change. A full list can be seen in the presentation for the webinar.

- **Opportunities-** simplify fee structure and redesign integrated employment supports similar to ticket to work that incentivizes providers getting people jobs they can keep-
 - Redesign group employment supports
 - Rate for individualized or small group services in the community to align founding with philosophy
 - Gave pitfalls and areas of concern-
- Committee feedback- how are ICFs being considered in the employment conversations? ICFs programs and funding need to be considered when looking at changes to day service structure and rates. If Employment First continues to apply to ICFs, the workgroup needs to consider how will the initiative will impact the services.
- Single Plan/Single Assessment
 - Scott Marks gave an update on the piloting of the assessment and shared screenshots from the assessment.
 - If you are piloting please give your most honest feedback to DODD!
 - Conversations are moving to focus on the plan.
 - To build the plan the workgroup is considering a variety of questions: who is the plan for? For DSPs to provide services? To be for the individual to plan their supports? For financial planning? For all parties?
 - There is mixed consensus from the members of the state workgroup.
 - OPRA believes the ISP needs to be the primary tool for DSPs to know what they are expected of them. We don’t want providers to have to rework them entirely to get DSPs relevant information.
 - DODD evolving their stance on IT platforms and will likely have an IT platform to help streamline the roll out of the single plan.
 - DODD does seem open to having vendors hosting the assessment and plan but the platforms would need be interoperable.
- Provider Certification
 - Christine Touvelle and Scott Marks gave an update on the Provider Certification rule.
 - The workgroup has moved to the independent provider rule.
 - Will not likely see the rules go through the clearance process until the fall.
- Medicaid
 - Christine Touvelle overviewed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announcement that they would allow states to pursue block grants for healthy, childless adults (Health Adult Opportunity).
 - It is unclear if Ohio will take advantage of the opportunity.
 - Unlike the Trump administration’s attempt to roll out block grants in Medicaid, this would only apply to a small group of Medicaid beneficiaries. It would not impact most of the services OPRA Members provide but could threaten Medicaid for some DSPs.
 - The change was announced through a change in policy direction, not through a change in rule so there is no opportunity to formally provide feedback to CMS unless a state applies for the 1115 waiver.

- Christine Touvelle also gave a brief overview of an RFI released by the Ohio Department of Medicaid on the managed care re-procurement process.
- Member Topics-
 - MUI- Scott DeLong- county prosecutors getting involved when investigative agents press them to get involved. Bridge to Equality is starting to look at information on differences between geographic areas/IAs. The environment is having strong implications with staff and the overall workforce crisis.
 - DODD Waiver workgroup- Jamie Steele and Pete Moore discussed how information flows from the Policy Committee to the Waiver Workgroup.
 - The role of APSI- what are some steps a provider can take when you don't agree with some of the decisions made by APSI, especially when you think it puts an individual at risk.
 - A suggestion was made that Policy Committee request some time with DODD's main policy people to discussed priorities and initiatives.

Policy Priority Areas

Summary

The items in this section are the policies and issues that impact all of our members. There are many issues that impact all of our members that may be discussed during all of the committee meetings and it is important that we pull all of those thoughts and ideas together and make decisions

Priority Area #1: MUI and the Impact on Front-Line Staff

The MUI system was designed and developed to help both people with developmental disabilities and staff across the state. Over the past several years the MUI system/process has created a sense of stress and fear amongst providers and it has had a negative impact on front-line staff. We would like to begin working with our partners at DODD and the County Boards to address this issue and

Priority Area # 2: Workforce Sustainability

OPRA continues initiatives to help address the workforce crisis, looking to increase efforts to recruit and attract potential employees to direct support positions in our field. Continuing initiatives include C3PO and DSPOhio, as well as other collaborations with system partners and stakeholder groups.

OPRA and OADSP will be hosting a statewide stakeholders meeting for C3PO on March 19, 2020 to outline potential changes that we hope will improve the program and help attract students/employees with skills and interests that will benefit provider agencies. Strategies include movement to single year, 'seniors' only program and a focus on partnership with county boards as well as schools and providers.

After a successful media campaign featuring Gary LeVox of Rascall Flatts, OPRA continues to find ways to improve the website for DSPOhio to help achieve its goal of spreading awareness of the DSP Profession and creating a portal for potential employees to apply directly to provider agencies. OPRA is exploring a subscription model for the website to help ensure sustainability and investment in the site.

OPRA Leads: Scott Marks (C3PO) and Anita Allen (DSPOhio)

Priority Area # 3: Ohio Single Plan Workgroup

The statewide workgroup to develop a standard assessment and ISP across the state for use by county boards and ICFs is nearing completion of its initial draft plan. The assessment created by the group is currently being piloted by several county boards and ICFs, and the initial feedback has been that in general the assessment is still too long and has many duplicate or repetitive questions throughout.

We believe that although the workgroup has had a shaky start, the effort will be a big push towards simplification and streamlining many of the processes that have frustrated providers working multiple counties. The workgroup is scheduled to meet through June of 2020.

Priority Area #4: Provider Certification

Progress was made at the June meeting. We were able to agree on DSP qualifications and training requirements. The group has dropped the GED/HS Diploma requirement and given the green light for people under 18 to provide direct supports with limitations. Other notable changes – on-going training requirements will be agency specific, MUI training greatly reduced to just what is important for DSP's to know and the Individual Rights training will be replaced with training on the DSP Code of Ethics. The group will be discussing agency and CEO requirements at the next meeting.

The August meeting of the Provider Cert workgroup was somewhat productive. The group spent a lot of time focusing on the initial and annual training requirements for DSPs, requirements for initial agency provider certification, CEO experience requirements, and CEO training.

DSP training- DODD would like to mandate that their training for new DSPs be used, but the logistics of this brought even more discussion. Agencies want flexibility to integrate the DODD content into their own agency orientation process. As far as annual DSP trainings, DODD came with a few different proposals but the group was not able to come to a consensus on the proposals. DODD is gathering the feedback from the full workgroup and will present it at the next meeting.

Initial agency certification requirements- likely be proof of some level of initial operating capital (either cash, line of credit, or credit card), proof of a certain level of operating capital after the first year of operation, proof of a certain level of general liability insurance, and a surety bond worth a specific amount of money. The Department proposed monetary values for each of the requirements but the group did not agree with all of DODD's amounts. DODD tabled the discussion and was going to bring back revised numbers to the next meeting.

CEO experience requirement- CEO must have at least one year of human service experience. This experience does not necessarily have to be work. The group spent some time discussing the definition of human services. The group wants to make sure teachers could fit into this definition.

CEO training- this was tabled for the next meeting.

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. 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.
- **Facility Free Services Committee:** This committee is formed and designed for organizations providing, or thinking about providing, day array services 100% in the community and without a facility or hub. This committee provides a platform for information sharing, networking, deliberating, and problem-solving topics and issues unique to providing facility free services. Policy recommendation from this workgroup are taken to the Day Array committee for review.

Committee Chairs: Anne Haning, (Belco Works), Rich Patterson, (Nick Amster Inc.)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Rich Patterson, (Nick Amster Inc.)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

Priority Area #1: Blueprint Work Group

Introduction

OPRA Representatives

- Liz Owens, Alpha Group
- Kurt Smith, Arc Industries
- Scott Marks, OPRA

We Believe

- OPRA believes in the full spectrum of services, where all people have access to meaningful supports to achieve their goals.
- We believe the current adult & employment service package is inadequate, overly complex and ultimately unsustainable if not changed.
- We believe that people with the most significant disabilities require additional resources to help connect to community and employment.
- Ultimately, we believe that in many cases, the “philosophy does not match the funding”, highlighting the need for an improved rate structure for Adult and Employment services.

Opportunities

- Move to a **simplified, sustainable rate structure** for adult and vocational services, including the possibility of monthly, capitated rates and/or value-based payments.
- A better rate system for what is currently called ‘**Integrated Employment Supports**’. The current unit-based rate structure for job coaching and retention disincentivizes the support to help people maintain employment.
- Improved rates for ‘**Group Supported Employment**’. As we look at changes to Ohio’s prevocational services, we need to ensure that all employment supports are viable and properly funded. Group employment, which may be a key stepping stone towards competitive employment has been under-funded, leading more people to pre-vocational services, which are less integrated in the community by nature.
- Adoption of a rate structure that supports **individualized service in the community**. The expectation for adult and employment services are that people have support to connect and build natural relationships in the community. This is difficult when the current rate structure barely allows for small-group services, let alone individual.
- **Community Employment supports** need better funding overall. Employment providers are struggling to sustain programming, often having to “rob Peter to pay Paul” from other program areas to supplement employment supports through the waiver and OOD. As an Employment First state, Ohio needs to put its money where its mouth is when it comes to employment services.
- By **Simplifying Career Planning** services, DODD’s waiver funded services to help job seekers find employment may become a more viable alternative to pre-vocational and group employment

supports, providing a necessary service to those who vocational rehabilitation is currently not an option.

Pitfalls

- OPRA represents a diverse population of service providers, all with strong positions on aspects of this work. We must avoid “pitting services against each other” and advocate for a systems reform leading to **simplification and sustainability** for supports that fall under the adult & employment umbrella.
- This is a very large workgroup and the meetings will be dominated by lots of discussion, it can be difficult to **maintain positions and stay focused** above all the literal noise. DODD often takes advantage of this, developing important changes between workgroup meetings.
- Even the smallest changes create **new operational and logistical headaches** for members, so gathering feedback from other members to potential issues with proposed ideas will be necessary in attempting to avoid unintended consequences.
- The work around Basic Employment Skills Training is still not complete and further **complications from CMS** could have major impact on work being done in Blueprint group.

Employment

Summary

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)

Policy Core Committee Representative: Justin Blumhorst (Capabilities)

OPRA Staff Lead: Scott Marks

Priority Area #1: OOD Converting Policies to Administrative Rules

**Priority Area #2: Potential Changes to Waiver Employment Policies
(Blue Print Workgroup)**

Health

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(s): Shelly Wharton (The Society)

Policy Core Committee Member: Shelly Wharton (The Society)

OPRA Staff Lead: Anita Allen

Priority Area #1: Increase Committee Participation

Priority Area #2: Healthcare Training for Middle Management

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: Patty Schlosser (Manahan)

Policy Core Committee Representative: TBD

OPRA Staff Lead: Anita Allen

Priority Area #1: 2020 Salary Survey Participation/Completion

Priority Area #2: HR Tool Kit

ICF

Summary

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

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

Policy Core Committee Representative: Kurt Miller (Empowering People)

OPRA Staff Lead: Pete Moore

Priority Area #1: The Development Rule

Introduction

Over the past several years the development rule (rule #) has presented many challenges to our ICF members. The requirements outlined in the rule offer blanket regulation that doesn't consider the individual settings and the people that each ICF serve. Rule waivers have been used over the past several years as a way for ICF's to develop a strategy that better suits their needs but, unfortunately the use of the waivers does not offer a long-term solution. The ICF committee would like to open up a new conversation with DODD to discuss the Development Rule and partner with them to develop an approach/plan that makes sense.

Priority Area #1: Positive Outreach and Communication about ICFs

Introduction

ICF's play a crucial and needed role as a part of the entire spectrum of services offered in Ohio. In recent years ICF services have been portrayed in a negative way by many. Given the latest developments in the DRO lawsuit, the new administration, and the passage of a budget amendment in 2019 requiring ICFs be offered to people and their families as a viable choice, it is imperative the OPRA take a lead role in positive communications about the role and value of ICFs in Ohio. We will be developing an outreach strategy over the next few months that will be designed to break down the stigma that surrounds these valuable services.

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)

Policy Core Committee Representative: TBD

OPRA Staff Lead: Pete Moore

Priority Area #1: Bed Bug Reimbursement

Introduction

How providers deal with the bed bug issue (treatments/extermination) varies from provider to provider and county to county across the state. We are advocating for a consistent approach funded by waiver dollars to ensure consistency and to prevent an activity that a provider is unable to get reimbursed for.

We Believe

- Providers should be able to get assistance, through the waiver system, to deal with an issue that has a direct and negative impact on a person's health and safety.
- There is a need for a consistent approach to funding the extermination/treatment of bed bugs across the state.

Opportunities

To develop a consistent approach to the Bed Bug issue.

Pitfalls

A system where the provider is not reimbursed for treating bed bugs.

Next Steps

- OPRA Staff will study how the bed bug issue is handled by the department of aging.
- In cooperation with the OPRA Residential Waiver Committee, the OPRA staff will develop a proposal that will be shared with DODD. Next steps will be based on the outcome of the discussions with DODD.

OPRA Representatives

