

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 21, 2015

Waukesha County DHHS – Board Room

12:00 – 1:30 PM

Members Present: Sara Barron, Jane DeGeorge, Emily Enockson, Patrick Jauquet, Ann Shurte, and Julie Turkoske

Members Absent: Jennifer Bertram, Kristin Brost, Deb DeMaster, Amy Elfner, Kathy Evans, Dennis Farrell, Lisa Fusco, Elsa Gonzales, Mary Ann Jansen, Tina Kasper, Missy Kueht-Becker, Bonnie Siegel, Tracey Stanislawski, and Cheri Sylla

DHHS Liaisons Present: Diane Bazylewicz, Dan Borchardt, Ryan Smith, Corissa Sonnenfeld, Amanda Trelhoff, Casey Vullings, and Leslie Zersen

Guests Present: Kim Coronado, Charity Eleson, Jennifer Siderits, and Nikki Volk

Agenda Item #1: Introductions

Members introduced themselves and their roles (parent or professional).

Agenda Item #2: Solicitation of Agenda Items/Approval of Minutes from 2/19/15

Sara Barron moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Ann Shurte and approved.

Agenda Item #3: Compass WI Threshold

Charity Eleson

Compass WI Threshold has been working with Waukesha County since 2011.

Charity Eleson passed along a brochure explaining the services. The brochures are also available in Spanish and Hmong. Patti Glassburn can send additional brochures. Charity also shared a flow chart showing the 6 basic steps they take families through.

Threshold is funded by Department of Health Services (DHS), Bureau of Children's Services. They do eligibility for programs like Family Support, Children's Long Term Support Medicaid Waiver, Community Options, Autism Treatment Services, as well as the Katie Beckett Medicaid Program. Threshold allows one family to go through one process to get access to all of the programs. The family works with a social worker to determine the program they would like to work with. The programs can be used together as funding streams to fund the services. They help the families understand what the services are. Then, it goes to a county representative to have an assessment done. Waukesha is a family-care county, which means that they work with children up to the age of 18. At 17-1/2, they begin to be referred to the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center (ADRC). Another key partner is the Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.

Threshold is in 14 counties in the state. It was started as a project that was recommended to the Secretary of DHS by the Secretary's Children's Long Term Support Council. It was recommended because children and families were having issues figuring out where to go. Threshold started in 2010 with Racine and Walworth Counties. Waukesha and Kenosha Counties were started in 2011. In April, 2015, they added Dane County. Their intent is to continue to expand. They are in conversations with 3 counties in western

Wisconsin to start in 2016. Counties are not required to participate by the State, so it results in a productive and constructive partnership.

There are 6 primary steps for families to go through. Calls are returned within a 2-day time frame, which is one of the built-in time frame expectations Threshold has for clients. The Waukesha consultants at Threshold are Terry Wojciechowski and Eileen McCreary. The consultants will learn more about the child, the family, and what the expectations of the family are. They also attempt to learn if there are any urgent needs that need to be addressed. At that point, the information is given to Diane Bazylewicz to handle. Families can apply for any program as long as the requirements have met. Once the family gets the packet, it is up to the family to complete the packet as much as they can. Then, a home visit is scheduled within a 2 week time frame. The purpose of the home visit is to observe that the child is living in a safe and well-cared for environment. Also, it is to gather a large amount of information such as health care records, diagnosis, and behavioral records. Threshold will try to get as much information as they can. Threshold will also answer questions that the family has. They also try to connect them with other services that are available right away. Fact sheets are left for the programs being applied for, as well as the information they need. The consultant completes the Children's Long Term Support Functional Screen. This screening determines if the child meets the level of care. At this time, contacts are made to sources to gather additional information. It is then sent to DHS to have a nurse review the materials and make a determination. If a child is not eligible, it allows the nurse to find additional information. If eligible, the nurse notifies the family and Diane, and services are determined.

If we make referrals and have questions, we can contact Terry or Eileen.

Most programs require verification of the child's identity. Some programs do not require citizenship. They only consider the child's income – not the family's. They also observe the environments that the child is in – including home, school, day care, etc.

Threshold does not collect a lot of quality data. They set up certain segments to occur in a 2 week time frame. On average from when a parent calls and the home visit is completed, it is 8 days. The average review time by the DHS nurse is from 1 day to 7 days. It takes 24 days from contact to determination. If they have to go through the Disability Determination Bureau (DDB), it can add up to 92 days.

Threshold also surveys the families they serve, and they have a 25% response rate. They ask families to let them know what the experience was like on a scale of 1-4. "Quality of Consultants" that work with them rates as "Very Good." It allows direct feedback from the families to Charity so she can address it.

Threshold has many policies in place. One of the policies is for information sharing, which allows them to communicate with the counties. They also do not provide eligibility determination services for children in out-of-home care services. The counties that are not participating in Threshold, the children have to have disability determinations done for waiver applications that are not Autism Treatment Services. State waived the disability determination requirement if they are applying for other state programs. They began doing eligibility determination for children in state's guardianship in pre-adoptive homes.

The website (www.compasswisconsin.org) will have some changes launched soon.

Sara Barron mentioned that if a child already has social security or disability, she is telling people to call if they are looking for help for long-term support. Threshold gets high traffic from Waukesha County.

Casey Vullings said that the county takes a lot of calls regarding kids on the waitlist that are not actually on the waitlist. They may have applied for the Census. The DDB creates a lot of lag time. For a family that applies for, in example, the Family Support Program, they get a partial eligibility and then the final

eligibility is not completed for an average of 90 days. Families should contact the Threshold consultant, and the consultant can look into it.

Diane and Casey have noticed that the average time on the wait list has been close to 11 months to get funding for Autism Treatment in Waukesha County. Camps and other services, including respite, are offered for children on the waitlist. If there is an emergency, Diane should be contacted and updated.

Sara asked if the functional screen is impacted with a lower-aged diagnosis. Charity responded that behavioral issues are an aspect of the screen, but age and expectations change as the child ages. They may hold onto something until a later age if it could result in a functional eligibility.

Kim Coronado asked if this is a one-time eligibility determination that the child is eligible for funding. Diane responded that it is required by law that when the child is up for funding, eligibility has to be recalculated. The initial eligibility is what Threshold does, but every year, eligibility has to be redetermined. Level-of-Care is a federal level-of-care. Patrick Jauquet asked if other organizations get denial letters as well. Threshold and Diane get a copy of the denial letters, as well as the denial letters for level of care for Katie Beckett and Medicaid.

Dan Borchardt is taking a child off the wait list, and they just met with Compass about the Katie Beckett process. Even though we are doing the functional screen, should the family continue to go through the process of Katie Beckett? Charity responded that it depends on where you are at. For example, if the person is coming off the end of May, recertification would be done. This can be worked out with Compass and Waukesha County.

Agenda Item #4: ASD Benefit Change Update

Casey Vullings

Casey Vullings passed out some information from DHS. It has been confirmed that CLTS waivers will continue, however, we are unsure of what that will mean. The changes will be made tentatively on January 1, 2016, pending on approval from the federal government. There is a PowerPoint that was given at the annual conference that is on the website

(<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/autism/updates.htm>).

Agenda Item #5: Family Support Plan Update

Casey Vullings

Casey Vullings informed the committee that the Family Support Plan Update that was originally due on March 16th, is not due on June 30th, per the memo by the state. He is working entering the information in the portal. The numbers are in the previous month's minutes. The only policy change is that it was changed from being county-run to LSS-run.

Lauren Franson left and Corissa Sonnenfeld is going through training, and then she will be able to take some cases. Ryan Smith and other staff members have been picking up some cases in the meantime.

253 families have turned in questionnaires. 145 did not return the questionnaire. Out of the approximately 400 families, 80 children have already been taken off the wait list because they were served with the waiver. 56 families have allocated funding. Yesterday, 21 more families were sent to a service coordinator. We have served nearly 160 families in some way. It is typical for 130-140 families to be funded in a year, and we are at approximately 76 right now. Sara Barron has also been able to take 25 people off because of the waiver.

Julie Turkoske said that we can offer resources from the lending library that can be sent to families while they are waiting to come off the wait list. The materials can be mailed as well.

Agenda Item #6: Zachariah's Acres Resource

Emily Enockson

Emily Enockson passed some information out regarding Zachariah's Acres.

Zachariah's Acres is a donated 48-acre area in Oconomowoc. In 2012, they were given their non-profit status. Since then, they have had their first building put up in 2014, and over 1200 people have been served. Zachariah's Acres serves all ages and disabilities. They primarily serve ages 4-28, but have had people in their 30's and 40's come out as well. They are not drop-off, but they intentionally staff with volunteers that are retired, special education teachers, etc. that are the tour guides. The guides come along and help families by providing "extra hands." They have also seen a growth of volunteers and opportunities for teens and young adults with needs. 100 people can be held inside the barn. Each event has 50-75 families on average.

They went from quarterly to monthly events that are free and accessible to kids with special needs and their families. There are sensory activities and ride tours of the property. They are in the process of developing a Christmas tree farm that will be able to begin to be harvested in 6 years. There is a farm, a fruit orchard, fishing, hay wagon, etc. Future plans include a place for families to relax, such as a cabin or a respite facility. Families are asked to pre-register with Emily or on the website.

Emily also showed a video accessible via their website at www.zachariahsacres.org that explained more of what the facility does for the people they serve.

Upcoming events include a Barn Dance on June 14th that the community is welcome to as well, a camping-themed evening in July, and a day camp for a week at the end of July.

If the committee members want to come out, e-mail Emily.

Agenda Item #7: Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Diane hopes to have more information from DHS regarding ABA therapy.
- Patrick asked if there is anything related to the new state budget that would impact us, for example Family Support being replaced with COP, and change the wording focus to be more family-focused. Diane said that if we get direction from our Bureau Chief, we can share that. Julie can talk to someone on the council about coming to talk about the changes and recommendations, but also do a pitch for children for the council. Sometimes, we are not privied to anything special...

Agenda Item #8: Other Activities in the Summer

- Sara said that Broadscope and Ex Fabula is having an ADA-Themed Story Slam of Easy Access. It is on July 20th and tickets are \$5. The event will allow stories from Broadscope as well as the community on their experiences with the ADA. She passed out flyers.
- Sara has a camps list that she will send to Diane and Casey.
- The Down Syndrome Walk is September 27 at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

Sara Barron motioned to adjourn, seconded by Emily Enockson. Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

The next meeting is September 17, 2015 from 12:00 – 1:30 PM.

Schedule of 2015 Meetings

- November 19, 2015