

Iowa Autism Council Meeting Draft Minutes
June 12, 2013
Meeting minutes taken by Beth Buehler-Sapp

Present: Steve Muller, Theresa Croonquist, Lin Wessels, Jim Mumford, Rachel Heiss, Robin Sampson, Laura Larkin, Barb Khal (for Debra Waldron), James Curry, Steve Johnson, Matthew O'Brien, Andrew Waldschmitt, Sean Casey and Beth Buehler-Sapp.

On Conference Phone: Josh Cobbs

Absent: Jan Turbes, Debra Waldron, Kathy Levine, Becky Harker and Alyson Beytien.

Meeting was called to order by Steve Muller. Meeting participants went around the room and gave brief introductions, 3 of 4 new council members were present.

Josh Cobbs via phone in made a motion to approve the March 12, 2013 meeting minutes and James Curry seconded the motion.

Robin Sampson asked if the group was interested in working on a resource directory and this discussion was deferred to the 1st council meeting next session (on September 11, 2013).

There was a review of who are voting members and who are non-voting members on the council and of what number of votes constitutes a quorum.

Josh mentioned that vocational work and housing were priority topics last year.

Members present took about 10 minutes to review the minutes from the last 2 meetings on March 13th, 2013 and November 7th, 2012. After review time, the minutes passed by an all in favor vote with none opposed.

There was discussion regarding the Health reform Bill.

Andrew noted to the council that due to new procedures under this bill his caseworker for benefits went from a caseworker at Magellan to a caseworker at Candeo and he found out through verbal notification from a peer rather than from written notification from a letter which he would have considered more appropriate and would have preferred. He felt this could have been done better.

This change has affected who clients work with and possibly in some cases services.

Laura Larkin stated, There are more outreach efforts going on to improve this process.

Steve Muller commented, System challenges are on a freight train and clients are affected in a trickle down process, transition is inevitable.

Laura Larkin informed the group that on Wednesday, June 19th at 2pm there is a meeting regarding reform with interested persons can attend. NAMI and DHS are partnering to provide this meeting.

Lin Wessels shared a story with the group that has affected her area. Due to the new law if the local school systems PARA aids working with students worked 30 hours or more in a pay period, the school district is now required to provide them with health benefits. Due to the tremendous cost this would impose PARA's are only allowed to work under 30 hours. This means, for example a child needing 40 hours of para assistance will receive some of this from one para and the balance of services from another. This will have a negative effect for some kids. Some students will suffer for this lack of continuity.

James Curry asked the question, Is there the possibility of redefining some roles in order to not have these affects on the process?

Sean Casey presented an overview of ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) Science to the Iowa Autism Council. Sean mentioned 2 national reports 1) National Autism Center Report and 2) Association for Science and Autism Treatment Report which are respected reports for reference.

These reports list Evidence Based Treatments which are in use for the treatment of Autism. They may also list other options which some individuals may choose to use and they believe in but which are not proven evidence based treatments.

Thoughts from the council on the Heaton Autism Fund:

Steve Muller – What funding to pursue based on benefits?
(Evidence Based Practices, Emerging Strategies, Non-Proven Strategies)

Andrew Waldschmitt – Where does the spending/serving level off?
Based on CAPs could be anywhere from 5 years at 40 hours/wk to 20 years at 10 hours/wk
Not that effective for client.

Barb Khal – Medicaid vs. private insurance to pay for ABA services?

Sean Casey – We should support things that are evidence based.

James Curry – Resources are too limited to spend on just any options.

Steve Johnson – Put your resources in where we need to build up the workforce.

Rachel Heiss – New things should be explored but maybe not taxpayer/system supported.
Resources need to be established for trying new options.

The report data looked at by Marty Ikeda with the Iowa Department of Education indicates that we're not getting a whole lot done in the school system with regards to providing services for students with Autism.

The report also indicated that there are a broad range of practices preferred for use by parents but that many of these are not evidence based and therefore are typically not covered by healthcare/insurance providers.

Three states have recently legally challenged the rights to use evidence based practices and the litigatory status' are as follows.

Florida – suit won to use evidence based methods

Washington – suit won to use evidence based methods (being appealed)

Michigan – suit pending

Steve Muller mentioned that Josh Cobbs has routinely lead the charge to try and get ABA treatment covered by the health insurance industry. Josh stated that he's not aware of a case pending in Iowa but now more than in the past it's possible that there are some families who have the resources to challenge the options.

There was an article in today's edition of the Des Moines Register under the consumer watchdog section that talks about just this. Josh will be sending the article out to the entire council.

Steve Johnson from Magellan Health (new member) was asked how this relates to his work.
Steve said, They provide services as covered by Medicaid.

Theresa Croonquist of Wellmark was asked what area she works in. She stated she works in the Utilization and Case Management part of the industry at Wellmark.

Steve Muller asked Jim Mumford of the IID (Iowa Insurance Division) if he's aware of what the status is in other states? Jim said, The IID doesn't follow other states in general but will follow-up on any requests made to their office, and that they follow-up on all complaints received by individuals.

Josh asked Steve Johnson, Who are setting the age caps on ABA services with regard to your client population? Steve said, State government and Magellan typically negotiate to determine these numbers. Magellan typically talks to providers to get input on services. They have consulted Homestead with some credentialing questions previously. Steve said service hours provided range anywhere from 10-40 hours a week nationally (broad spectrum).

Matthew O'Brien of CHSC commented that the assessment of Severe and Challenging Behaviors is a skilled acquisition.

Steve Muller asked, At what point do we see effectiveness? 30-40 hrs/wk vs. 10-20 hrs/wk

Rachel Heiss state that time spent is not the only factor. In her son's case an effective process that only occurred 2 times for a 2-3 hour session made a world of difference. (tremendous impact)

Sean Casey, "ABA let's the data define what works. Sean cautions that with the National Autism Center's data to realize that the participants had only a single Autism diagnosis and that there were no co-morbidity issues and that they were not taking into account overlapping treatments.

Josh Cobbs—National Certification Board for Behavior Analysts.

Steve Muller-What are the parameters for accessing services?

Based on Marty Ikeda's report results—Less than 2% of kids reviewed with Autism were receiving any services and almost 2/3 of kids were receiving non evidence based practices.

Matt O'Brien—I can't recommend methods which I don't see results with.

Sean Casey—Studies were conclude regarding the use of weighted vests. None of these had results that could establish effectiveness. Nothing wrong with trying a method but established results should be there in order to pay for services.

Linda Wessels stated that her local district's schools are already paying for non-evidence based practices.

Sean Casey—Various Reports Hayes Directory / Virues-Ortega / Reichou / Wolery/Eldenik Meta Analyses show that anything with a .80 effect size or higher = large effect
1.5% effect size language & adaptive skills.
For ABA these studies showed 1.5 effect in language and adaptive skills.

Within IEP's the school system is not using ABA therapies.

Sean Casey – starting with low data to improve what we're doing.
Let's partner with IHE's (Institutes for Higher Education)
Briarcliff University –set up
University of Iowa-in process
Loras College-contemplating
Drake University and Iowa State University are not interested right now.

Possible Funding – Heaton Autism Fund

\$2 million in DHS budget in Medicaid budget
For kids with Autism not on Medicaid
For ABA Treatment

A provider would have to be providing an ABA therapy and met the established criteria according to Chapter 147.

Sean Casey-Maria Valdevinos – Could a certified person apply to access these funds as payment for services provided?

Steve Johnson–Network is not where we want it to be with regard to ABA providers available.

Steve Muller–I recommend we build an open system.

Laura Larkin–If approved the expert panel will create the process.

Josh Cobbs–What do folks think will happen? BCBA vs. just any provider who qualifies under Chapter 148.

Laura Larkin–It’s harder to disassemble a program than it is to approve one.
Mostly because looking at the long-term it hard to determine sustainability.

Rachel Heiss–Complexities of what happen at the statehouse are high.

Steve Johnson–Magellan would be in favor of a program plan being written (tailored) to the needs of each individual.

Kids not otherwise eligible could get services paid for through this funding.

There was discussion regarding the insurance language which stipulates that a service is only billable if provided directly by an actual certified individual and not a colleague working with the certified individual.

Jim Mumford encouraged the council members to put together a list of their issues and communicate to him and he will communicate with Wellmark to help resolve existing differences.

Josh Cobbs–The language is the same that has gone on in many previous states in relation to these services to a special population and then to the general population.

Rachel Heiss suggested that as a direct service provider she has an NPI number which she uses to direct bill services.

Steve Muller didn’t think the Homestead did theirs’ in this same format which may be why they face some challenges for reimbursement.

Steve Johnson mentioned that the use of the pre-authorization process cuts down on the percentage of unreimbursed claims. Steve also said that they use the BHIS (old remedial) codes in contrast to many of the newer codes which creates inconsistency. All insurance companies have to be up to HIPPA approved codes.

James Curry–States ask for what they want and insurance company says this is what we can provide you with. It doesn’t do us a lot of good to implement a broken plan. They should be able to say this is the documented rate and it’s what you’re going to get.

Jim Mumford wants the council to present to the IID (Iowa Insurance Division) as a unified group rather than as multiple entities.

James Curry motioned for the group to present to the IID and Andrew Waldschmitt seconded this.

Steve Muller asked Theresa Croonquist what she can add to this process and she said she will speak to Tom on these issues.

Steve Johnson–You can put assurances in there when you set up a contract.

Rachel Heiss–Going to the IID has been hugely effective.

Andrew Waldschmitt – We should notify Jim Mumford that without resolution our next step would be contact DAS (Department of Administrative Services).

Review of policy for disseminating information. All e-mail correspondence which anyone wants to be sent to the entire council needs to be e-mailed to Beth Buehler-Sapp and she has to distribute to the council as a whole.

Laura Larkin–Difference between benefits individual provider vs. benefits the system systemically.

With Iowa being a non-categorical state it's different than looking at another state that makes categorizations.

Due to FERPA, HIPPA, it's harder to understand service needs. Teachers don't know what services students are getting.

2013-2014 Meeting schedule for the Iowa Autism Council.

The group looked at the calendar and agreed upon the meetings dates for next school-year for the Iowa Autism Council. They are as follows:

Wednesday, September 11, 2013	10am-3pm	Grimes State Office Building	B-100 (basement)
Wednesday, November 13, 2013	10am-3pm	Grimes State Office Building	B-50 (basement)
Wednesday, December 11, 2013	10am-3pm	Grimes State Office Building	B-50 (basement)
Wednesday, March 12, 2014	10am-3pm	Grimes State Office Building	B-100 (basement)
Wednesday, June 11 th , 2014	10am-3pm	Grimes State Office Building	ICN Room (2 nd Floor)

Voting in of New Chair and Vice Chair for 2013-2014.

Robin Sampson nominated Steve Muller for Chair and Rachel Heiss seconded the motion. Steve Muller accepted the chair for a 1 year term. This was passed with an all those in favor say I and with all those opposed Nay, had 0.

Robin nominated Rachel Heiss for Vice Chair but Rachel Heiss declined the nomination.

Robin Sampson nominated James Curry for Vice-Chair and Linda Wessels seconded the motion. James Curry accepted the Vice-Chair for a 1 year term. This was passed with an all those in favor say I and with all those opposed Nay, had 0.

Voting members at this meeting were Steve Muller, Josh Cobbs, (phone), James Curry, Linda Wessels, Matthew O'Brien, Andrew Waldschmitt, Theresa Croonquist, Rachel Heiss, Robin Sampson and Steve Johnson.

James Curry made a motioned to adjourn the meeting and Andrew Waldschmitt seconded the motion.