

## # 78 DD Advocates Meeting Minutes for NOW/COMP Waivers

Dearest Advocates:

On Tuesday, the Office of Developmental Disabilities had it's Advocates meeting (these meetings are held every couple of months) at 2 Peachtree office in downtown Atlanta.

I'm sorry that many of you could not attend due to lack of communication of the meeting. I sent out the information as soon as I got it Monday night. I did request for future meetings that the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities send a notice out of future meetings, as well as, the Office of DD post these meetings on their website.

With that said, there was a lot of great information given at the above meeting yesterday. It was very clear from me (as a parent who utilizes the NOW waiver and been very involved during this transition process) that we still have a long way to go to continue to help in the transition process and make sure everyone who has a waiver has access to services and providers.

I strongly recommend in the future if you have concerns or ideas that you would like to voice to Dr. Steve Hall (Director of Office of DD) and his staff that YOU attend these meetings. **The next meeting will be held on June 9 10:00am-12:00 at 2 Peachtree on the 26<sup>th</sup> floor of the building.**

Many issues were raised yesterday regarding the transition process for the new disability waivers (NOW/COMP) which included loss of services and providers, confusion with the overall process, roles and responsibilities of everyone involved, fiscal agent (Acumen), etc. . The only way the Office of DD is going to deal with concerns of the families is to hear the problems and work on real solutions.

Below are the meeting minutes from yesterday's meeting for further information prepared/distributed by Deirdre K. O'Brien of the Arc of Georgia. (I'm sorry for those that are not involved with these waivers. There are a lot of acronyms that I don't have enough time to clarify. For those that have the waiver, you understand the below meeting minutes. Things are very busy for me right now.)

***"UNITED - WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"***

Sincerely,

***Heidi***

**(Proud Mother to Jacob - 9 yrs old with Down syndrome and Jared - 7 yrs old)**

***"Help the Children Now, So They Can Help Themselves Later!"***

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Meeting Minutes from 3-10-09 DD Advocates Meeting with Office of DD:

Waiver Amendments

Process- amendments from office of DD go to DCH- then sent to OPB to make sure they are cost neutral. They then go to CMS in Baltimore. CMS has 90 days to answer amendment. Amendments were submitted first week of January and are in OPB

\*\*\*\*note any increase in fees will result in an annual decrease amount for that particular service to keep cost neutral.

Respite- increased rate to near \$4 from \$3/per 15 minute period. Allows options of using overnights –

CLS- increase to 19.72 per hour from \$15.20.

Community Access- office of DD will not put amendment to increase rate of \$29/hr. Darlene Meadows would like to know who has lost services under old NSE

Supported Employment- no amendment. Providers can bill while driving a reasonable distance to see a client but cannot bill the return trip \*\*\*need to document\*\*\*\*

SIS and change in waiver allocation amount

Allocations based on level of need of individual. If concerned with SIS results, notify Support Coordinator Or PL Administrator, a Master trained SIS administrator + circle of support

will then administer SIS. The results from the Master trained SIS results is the final result.

SIS is done 90-120 days before birthday- PDF format and can be sent to families via email or delivered by Support Coordinator (SC).

HRST is completed by providers. IF individual has a fiscal agent then HRST is completed by Regional Teams.

SIS is not yet normed for children under 15. Now the website will “kick out” the information if person’s birth date is younger than 16 years old. This is an additional safeguard. Ga. Is part of 7 other states working on developing a SIS for

Children

DENTAL-Approved in NOW but not COMP but not implemented in billing system due to cost. Office of DD hopes that eventually GA will join the rest of the nation in providing dental care to citizens.

### Community Access Services

This is meant for impactful period of services with 1 on 1 service delivery with a large amount of support that would gradually decrease over time (the support). The idea is to have the individual served have greater community access and involvement, which is great benefit for citizens with disabilities. A rate study will be done in the first year of implementation of the waiver and will be published by October 31, 2009. Will not be done annually but will be done more than once.

### Loss of Services

SC completed a study to find if individuals were losing services under new waivers- results found that many lost services were actually ineligible

\*\*Concern voiced whether the SC got the true picture of services lost, and did not access all individuals

### Dollar allocation

-if dollars are not used in particular area, and ISP amendment can be done and dollars re-allocated.

If individual in hospital cannot bill waiver- but they won't lose funds the next year due to lack of utilization as funding based on SIS score not on use of dollars

Concern voiced over Fiscal year end and PA flip

Waiver allocation per year goes from individual's birthday to birthday- not based on fiscal year. The PA will flip automatically with new fiscal year.

### Acumen

Major concerns from parent who self direct that Acumen is largely unresponsive and direct care staff have not been paid for months. This company does not answer calls/emails etc. They are the only fiscal intermediary.

Over time, more fiscal intermediaries will be hired- different companies. If having problems, contact your SC or contact the ODD. Issues involving non-payment should be sent to Doris Johnson [desjohnson@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:desjohnson@dhr.state.ga.us).

Dr. Hall is setting up another meeting with DCH, Acumen and members of the office of DD

DCH is sending a form to families regarding self-directed services (Program Integrity Form). ODD was unaware of this form being sent to parents and will speak to DCH. Concern voiced by parent of the waste of paper etc as this is sent monthly.

### Self Directed Waivers

Question- Is it possible for families to be audited by Medicaid. Discussion was that families are not being told by SC of the need to document services and what documentation is needed. Minimum required is to show service delivery. It would be wise for families to keep more detailed documentation – not necessary on a daily basis.

Manuals are being developed for families and should be available in draft form by March 15<sup>th</sup>. As soon as completed, then will be distributed

Family member recommended formal training for Families on Self Direction and that information placed on website. Manuals should be clear on regulations families should be following. E.g. DCH, DHR, documentation etc.

### EPSDT

Many states do not have waivers for children receiving Medicaid under age 21. They receive services under EPSDT. A lawsuit was won last year by GAO (Moore vs. Meadows) and is being appealed by Medicaid in the 11<sup>th</sup> circuit court.

GAO will continue to fight this battle. When complete what should happen is that a MD can write letter of medical necessity and Medicaid will pay. This is presently a losing battle for parents as Medicaid in GA continues to deny EPSDT.

Next meeting June 9<sup>th</sup> 2009- 10am-12pm 26<sup>th</sup> floor

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