

Iowa Autism Council Meeting

Final Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2019

Meeting minutes taken by Beth Buehler-Sapp and Wendy Trotter

Present: Erika Hertel, Evelyn Horton, Caleb Primrose, Beth Buehler-Sapp, Andrea Keith, Jenny Phan, Connie Fanselow, Andrew Beer, Jeanne Kerkhoff, and Wendy Trotter – guest, Julie Irish

Absent: Angela Logsdon, Nicholos Nopoulos, Christine Bowker, Blake Stephenson, Michael Zehr, and Chris Kliewer

Call-In: Matthew O'Brien, Angela Burke-Boston

Caleb Primrose, Co-Chair, brought the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Julie Irish from Iowa State University, public guest, was in attendance, so Council members took time to introduce themselves. Council members reviewed the minutes for the September 11, 2019 meeting. Edits were suggested and made. Erika Hertel made a motion to approve the minutes as edited, and Jenny Phan seconded the motion. A vote was taken by voting council members to approve the minutes as edited. Minutes approved.

Strategic Plan:

Wendy Trotter shared *Iowa's Strategic Plan 2016-2021: To Improve Services and Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their Families* to inform the new members. In the plan, the following areas of focus were identified:

- Get a good start
- Have access to obtain needed services
- Have well informed, empowered, and supported families and caregivers
- Successfully transition to adult life
- Be assured of ongoing coordination of systems of care and support

Updates on progress on the Strategic Plan were provided:

Focus Area A (Get a Good Start)

- Wendy Trotter reported that the DE is continuing the Autism Navigator project for Iowa's Early ACCESS providers (early intervention providers) – just enrolled Cohort 5 participants.
- Erika Hertel reported that the Regional Autism Assistance Program (RAP), along with Kelly Pelzel, PhD, updated CHSC's Autism Screening Protocol to help determine if further evaluation is needed.

Focus Area B (Have Access to and Obtain Needed Services)

- RAP is collaborating with the University of Iowa Autism Center and Iowa City Autism Community to present a workshop series. *Tech Options to P.R.I.M.E. your Child for Success* was offered in Iowa City November 9, with Kelli Robertson, Grant Wood Area Education Agency Autism Consultant and Assistive Technology Coach presenting.

- Wendy reported that the work of the ASD Design Team has identified social emotional engagement as the focus for work moving forward – specifically, exploring how to provide professional learning to teachers to support social emotional engagement within specially designed instruction and other academic lessons at the universal tier. The DE posted an RFP to solicit proposals for moving this work forward and scaling it statewide, and a contract was awarded to Emily Rubin with Communication Crossroads, Inc. and their Social Emotional Engagement – Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS) approach. More information to come as this work progresses.
- Wendy also reported that Grant Wood AEA is hosting a training December 10 & 11, 2019 for Peer-to-Peer programs. Peer-to-Peer programs are volunteer programs linking general education students, with students who have autism or other disabilities, in order to support them throughout the school day. The pairing of students leads to greater socialization and independence.
- Connie Fanselow shared the following information regarding the Autism Support Program (ASP) for FY19:
 - The number of children being served and the number of new applications has been decreasing – hoping this is due to families being able to access coverage now with their insurance providers with the new law in place.
 - Getting more calls from families who after talking with Connie, discover that they are actually eligible for Medicaid.
 - Connie expressed that it would be helpful to families if there was more flexibility in rules on how the funds can be used (i.e. extend the limit for ASP funding so that a family of a young child who used their 2 year limit but could still benefit from more ABA services, but has no means to fund additional services)
- Evelyn Horton asked if this should be a recommendation in the council legislative report. It is a recommendation in the legislative report that will be reviewed later in the meeting.
- Balance Autism – Evelyn reported:
 - They are still in negotiations for a building site for a clinic in Iowa City.
 - Admissions process now has 2 levels – must actually complete file before officially on the waitlist which allows folks to come off the waitlist and into services much faster when an opening comes up.
 - Two areas that they are no longer offering services: private pay social skills groups and telehealth
- Evelyn also reported that there is no movement regarding Iowa Medicaid covering telehealth for ABA services. Right now there are 5-8 states that are able to bill for telehealth services through Medicaid, and 3 more are moving in that direction. The CPT Codes committee stated that it was never their intention to restrict telehealth with the new codes. Most states are using a modifier.
- Jenny Phan shared that another provider called Axis (in Ankeny) has a several month waitlist for ABA services. They do not accept Medicaid at this time. Another location in Ankeny (Select PT) is also offering ABA, PT, SLP and OT services – and they do accept Medicaid. She also

reported that Metro West just started a social skills group for children and adolescents – they are looking for participants.

- Tanager Place – Andrew Beer shared information regarding their Clinical Academy – which is designed to increase comprehension skills for clinicians in regard to children and adolescents on the spectrum. Includes both school and outpatient programs.

Focus Area C (Have Well-Informed, Empowered, and Supported Individuals, Families and Caregivers)

- Erika reported RAP is offering the Autism Basics webinar series twice/year. This 4-week series is aimed at families with a newly diagnosed child. It has also been approved for foster parents' continuing education credits. The last session was in October and the next is scheduled for February of 2020.
- Erika also reported RAP is collaborating with the University of Iowa Autism Center and Iowa City Autism Community to present Autism Safety Trainings to several police departments, fire departments, first responders, dispatchers, and other emergency personnel, presenting at the Linn County Sheriff's Office in Cedar Rapids in November. They are looking into how to expand the training to reach more communities across Iowa. ChildServe was intending to replicate this training and use it to train Nevada PD.
- At the last Expert Panel meeting on October 9, 2019, crisis planning was a topic of focus. The panel is hoping to develop resources to share with families related to crisis planning.
- Jenny Phan added that another need is training hospital staff – in particular, Emergency Room staff.

Focus Area D (Successfully Transition to Adult Life)

- Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) Update – Andrea Keith shared a brief overview of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
 - On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) into law.
 - The provisions related to IVRS' work in the schools creates a continuum of services that aligns with IDEA but does not supplant the legal responsibility of the schools.
 - Mandates the schools and IVRS to jointly develop a system so students achieve competitive integrated employment, and do not work for a CRP at sub-minimum wage.
 - This had a major impact on IVRS – 15% of their budget is now devoted to pre-employment transition services which includes: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities, workplace readiness training, self-advocacy instruction, consultation services provided to improve the transition of students from school to postsecondary education or employment through system development, and attending IEP meetings
 - More information can be found on the Department of Education website:
https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/special-education/special-education-programs-services/secondary-transition#Workforce_Innovation_and_Opportunity_Act_WIOA
 - Or on the Iowa Workforce Development website:
<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa>

- Julie Irish from Iowa State University, public guest, shared information about their housing initiative.
 - Over fifty Iowa State University students have been working on a project that looks at repurposing buildings and converting them to appropriate accommodations for adults with ASD – building a community not just housing.
 - The students are focused on designing spaces that can best support individuals with ASD. These are just plans at this time, but hoping that investors will adopt the plans and run with them to create the spaces.
- Evelyn reported that all twelve homes through Balance Autism are up and running and full. They have experienced some push-back from a few neighbors. They currently have 3 homes in Ankeny, 3 in Pleasant Hill, and 6 in Altoona.

Focus Area E (Be Assured of Ongoing Coordination of Systems of Care and Support)

- Erika reported that Iowa now has a Family Peer Support Specialist (FPSS) certification that all Child Health Specialty Clinics Family Navigators will obtain. This is administered by the Iowa Board of Certification (IBC) and more information can be found at: <https://www.iowabc.org/mhpss>.
 - **REQUIREMENTS**
 - Certified Family Peer Support Specialist (FPSS)
 - Complete the application for FPSS and satisfy all requirements for education, experience and supervision.
 - **Education Requirement**
 - High School Diploma or GED.
 - A certificate of completion must be submitted for either the Family Navigator training or the Family Peer Support Specialist training provided by the University of Iowa. The training must be at least 40 hours in length to include a minimum of 10 hours in each domain as follows:
 - Practice with Professionalism and Ethics
 - Engage Families
 - Teach and Support Families
 - Advocate and Find Resources for Families
 - A certificate of completion verifying 8 hours in either Mental Health First Aid training or Youth Mental Health First Aid training.
 - **Experience/Practicum Requirement**
 - A minimum of 500 hours of work/practicum experience within the past 6 years is required.
 - Documentation of these hours are included in the application and verified by the supervisor.
 - Supervision Requirement
 - Applicant is required to have a minimum of 25 hours of direct face-to-face supervision by a member
 - of the organization’s documented and qualified supervisory staff as per their job description. As per Form 06 of the application for FPSS, the

applicant will need to send a letter from their agency stating that their supervisor is in good standing with the agency and that it is part of the supervisor's job description to provide supervision to Family Peer Support Specialists within that agency.

- Documentation of these hours are included in the application and verified by the supervisor.
- **Exam**
 - The applicant will need to send verification of passing the proctored online exam. To get scheduled for this exam, or to obtain verification of passing the exam, contact the Iowa Peer Support Training Program at: iowapeersupporttraining@healthcare.uiowa.edu.
- Erika has asked the folks at Autism Navigator to work on getting the Jumpstart to Coaching course approved for CEUs for Family Navigators.
- CHSC is currently advertising for a Family Navigator in Storm Lake for the new HRSA grant.

Jenny Phan reported that the survey task team met and began work on a survey to gather data and information related to progress on the focus areas identified in the Strategic Plan. There will be two sets of questions: one for providers, and one for families/individuals with ASD.

Legislative Report:

The Council reviewed the draft 2019 legislative report. Council members suggested edits. Edits will be made by Wendy and a final draft will be sent out for electronic vote.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2020.

Caleb Primrose made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jenny Phan seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.