

MCTRANS DDA Update Meeting: Tues Oct 8th.

DDA Staff : Janice Stallworth (Janice.Stallworth@maryland.gov), Director of Southern Region DDA, support Montgomery County, PG, etc.
and Gail Singletary (Gail.Singletary@maryland.gov) , Assistant Director

Attendees: 25 people participated.

We appreciate Janice and Gail attending our meeting and being open about what is happening in DDA related to the waivers and Resource Coordination in Montgomery County... as well as answering our questions and concerns.

After brief introduction, Janice and Gail spent time answering questions we sent them as well as answering questions from attendees.

Question: What is the status of combining of the Community Pathways Waivers currently? Future Changes?

DDA has a proposal for updated single DDA Waiver combining the Community Pathway and New Directions waiver under review by CMS (Center for Medicaid Services). DDA is still answering questions from CMS... and meanwhile have an extension of the current Community Pathway and New Directions Waiver until the updated Waiver is final. Once waiver mods are completed, the draft will be reviewed by a stakeholders (a group of provider agencies) before submitted for final.

Future Changes: 1) CMS has changed the definition of supported employment and DDA needs to comply. Definition of employment i minimum was with a minimum of 4 hours per day is required by an individual to be paid under the supported employment category.

Thus a new service CLS which allows more flexible support for individuals including support for

- Volunteer jobs
- community outngs
- non-paid internships
- work paying less then minimum wage and work less than 4 hours a day.
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2) For New Directions changes on how incidents are reported. New Directions participants are required to fill out the same incident paperwork as participants in the Community Pathways waiver are required to fill out and report them to DDA. This has not been happening in the past.

3) Independent Advocate for Individuals with New Direction Waiver Participants has been added to assist them in getting services. Janice will provide us contact information and I will post when available.

4) Still under consideration in New Directions is change to family member involvement as Support Brokers and Direct Support. However no change is imminent.

Question: What is status of DDA Waitlist?

There are currently 7856 on the wait list statewide that are eligible but do not have any services. There are 97 individuals considered in crisis resolution but unfortunately there is not enough money to fund everyone so they are served according to who is in the greatest need of services.

Question: How do we advocate for more money for DDA Services?

Possibilities:

Participate in DD Day, Advocate with Arc of Montgomery County, organize with a group of parents from MCTrans to meet with our State Representatives.

Question: What is the Definition of Crisis Resolution?

A DDA eligible individual is considered in crisis for example if:

- danger to themselves or others
- homeless
- being abused
- elderly caregiver can't take care of them any more

If considered emergency, then DDA works with provider to find an emergency safe place for the individual and work to find a long term situation as quickly as possible.

Question: Status of Resource Coordination in Montgomery County?

Late spring, some of existing Montgomery County DDA clients and their families got a letter offering 3 different choices for resource coordination. We were told to send in our choice for 3 choices:

- Montgomery County HHS
- Service Coordination, Inc
- Resource Connections, Inc
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Many struggled with this selection and some of us called the choices and asked questions. HHS was trying to reduce their caseload since DDA was changing the reimbursement rate which would have hurt HHS. So HHS planned to reduce from supporting 3000 clients to 1000 clients. However it turns out that Service Coordination and Resource Connections were not ready to support Montgomery County so HHS is in the process gearing up to support every one. Rates were not changed.

Because of this confusion, there are many clients and their families who have not received Resource Coordination and should be. Nine attendees at our meeting indicated their loved ones were not receiving Resource Coordination. Janice Stallworth took their names and contact information and will refer these names to HHS to help determine what is happening with Resource Coordination.

I have a copy of the list so MCTrans can keep track on the progress for these 9 individuals.

To date no communications on Resource Coordination problems have been sent to Montgomery County Clients. However Janice says such a letter is under consideration and should be sent out soon.

Question: On the DDA site there is a link to a new study that DDA is doing to emphasize the employment needs of their consumers?

Maryland is an Employment First State and the goal of the study is to find out the results of employment services for the DD population. DDA knows what services people are getting but doesn't always know the outcomes for people in this population. DDA is trying to establish baseline of outcomes for participants.

These are my notes so please if others have news I missed or misinterpreted please reply to this post.