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AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES
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MINUTES

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders
Funding and Insurance Subcommittee

Date and Time of Meeting: August 23, 2018
12:00 p.m.

Carson City: Aging and Disability Service Division
3427 Goni Rd. #102
Carson City, NV 89706

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Tache called the meeting for the Funding and Insurance Subcommittee to order at 12:02 p.m.

Members Present: Lynda Tache, Diane Thorkildson, Stephanie Christensen, Gwynne Partos, Shirley Gaw

A quorum was declared.

II. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

Ms. Thorkildson thanked Ms. Tache for taking over.

Ms. Gaw suggested that since there are new members to the group everyone can introduce themselves and give their background in Autism.

Ms. Gaw started. She is a parent of a child with Autism. Ms. Gaw's daughter is nine years old and was diagnosed when she was three years old. Ms. Gaw is a physical Therapist by profession. Ms. Gaw is very involved in the Autism Community to be a good advocate for her daughter.

Ms. Thorkildson is also a parent of a child with a neuro disability, not Autism but still needing most of the same services. Ms. Thorkildson's daughter is thirteen now and has epilepsy and some other mysterious neuro developmental issues. Professionally Ms. Thorkildson is a faculty member of the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities. Ms. Thorkildson is really involved in school district advocacy in Washoe County and has her hand in several other little pots in the Autism Community.

Ms. Christensen has an eighteen-year-old daughter who is on the spectrum, so Ms. Christensen has been traveling that path for some years now. Ms. Christensen is the program manager for Crossroads Behavior and Michelle Canning is the BCBA she works with. They both built Crossroads together in last eight years.

Ms. Partos has a cousin through marriage with Autism that is in his thirty's and went to UCLA and Lovaas. Ms. Partos met him when he was a young man. Around that time, she became a school Psychologist and she really enjoyed working with the children who had Autism, never thinking she would become a parent of a child with Autism. This really changed Ms. Partos perspective on things.

Ms. Tache is also a parent of a seventeen-and-a-half-year-old who has Autism, ADHD, other sensory issues and a learning disability. Ms. Tache started getting involved in the policy stuff back in 2007. Ms. Tache was a parent advocate that helped with the original Legislation; the funding, Autism tax force, which eventually turned in to ATAP and the Autism Commission. 2009 was when they first created the Autism Insurance Mandate which improved over time with benefits and stuff like that. Ms. Tache is excited to be on this sub-committee. Ms. Tache also has started a non-profit called Grant-a-Gift Autism Foundation in honor of her son and all the challenges she has faced. Ms. Tache has transferred out of the CEO position there this past December to spread her wings a little more to take everything that she has learned to work on more global level and policy and help more non-profits really understand how to give back to the communities.

Ms. Tache believes that this sub-committee can get a lot done with all the knowledge and passion everyone has on this committee.

III. Approval of the Minutes from the January 30, 2018 Meeting **(For Possible Action)**

Ms. Tache made a motion for the approval of January 30, 2018 Minutes. Ms. Thorkildson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IV. Discussion of Insurance and Funding recommendations for potential bills this session

Ms. Tache mentioned would like to discuss the possible bills that they can move forward with. Ms. Tache wants to throw out the three top issues that she has heard that's creating barriers for access to care and to providers to help these children.

First, is the RBT rates need to be higher so it will attract more providers, so they can stay in business while growing their workforce.

Secondly, the age caps. Ms. Tache mention that in the past in other sessions they have tried to increase age cap with health insurance reimbursement and with ATAP, since ATAP ages out at nineteen years old.

The last issue that's been mentioned is the Clinical Phycologists not being able to provide ABA services. This affects the directors that have multi-disciplinary services and work.

Ms. Tache advised that those were the popular issues that she has heard from providers and families, so she wants to ask the group if there's any other barriers that they've heard for any potential bills this session.

Ms. Partos agreed with all three issues mentioned. She advised that the RBT issue is probably the biggest issue.

Ms. Thorkildson agrees with the first two issues but is worried that the third issue would not fall under this sub-committee because it's more of a workforce development and there is a sub-committee for that.

Ms. Thorkildson did mention the waitlist and maybe finding a way to reduce these waitlists.

Ms. Tache stated that she recently met with the head of Medicaid and asked what is going on with the RBT rates and how we can fix that. Medicaid advised that it is not in their budget and it would have to go to Legislators.

Ms. Gaw asked what the RBT rate currently is.

Jamie Hutchison from Medicaid advised that the current RBT rate is \$31.31.

Ms. Christensen believes that \$35.00 would even still be too low. She advised that The Lovaas Center has put together a lot of information to help justify this and maybe Lovaas can help with this.

Ms. Partos advised that the sub-committee may have to provide some education behind all this. For example, she mentioned that it is hard to keep RBT's because they may be dealing with some physical aggression and what a difficult job it really is.

Ms. Hutchison from Medicaid advised that they have put forth a requested the RBT rate to be increased in their budget for the next biennium, but of course this is something that needs approval from the new Governor and Legislator. Ms. Hutchison advise that they have purposed three different rates; 5%, \$36.00 and \$38.00.

Ms. Tache believes that they should reach out to providers to help with this process.

Ms. Christensen mentioned that her BCBA Michelle is in contact with many providers, so Ms. Christensen believes she can assist with this and will get more information out by the end of this week.

Ms. Partos asked Ms. Hutchison how they came up with the three options for the RBT rates.

Ms. Hutchison advised that she does not currently have the answer to that question and if she does look in to it, she may need special permission to be able to share that information.

Ms. Christensen mentioned another issue that's coming up is the 90-day rule that ATAP must get a Behavior Interventionist certified to an RBT.

V. Discussion of future Insurance and Funding initiatives

Ms. Tache would like to hear some initiatives that this committee is interested in and ones that already set.

Ms. Thorkildson mentioned that they started on a strategic plan, which was used as a jumping point. The sub-committee didn't get very far with this due to some administration issues. Another one Ms. Thorkildson mentioned was ATAP expanding their willingness to pay for services beyond ABA.

VI. Make recommendations on additional non-voting Subcommittee Membership (**For Possible Action**)

Ms. Thorkildson mentioned that Brooke Adie with ATAP was involved in this committee previously, which was very helpful and believes if Jamie Hutchison would participate, it would be incredible. Ms. Thorkildson suggests that there's a core group of members for quorum purpose, but other than that, invite everyone to join the meetings.

Ms. Tache agrees with Ms. Thorkildson.

VII. Confirm Agenda Items and Dates for Future Meetings (**For Possible Action**)

The Subcommittee decided their next meeting would be on September 20, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

VIII. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

Dr. Tedoff is currently a provider in Las Vegas and has some comments of some things that he's been listening to. He believes that one major barrier is hours. With children being in school and parents at work, most are unavailable in the day time. Dr. Tedoff continued that with this, he is unable to offer RBT's the number of hours they would like. Dr. Tedoff has been monitoring the number RBT's in the state for the past two months and it

fluctuates around 710. With that, the workforce has not been growing and Dr. Tedoff believes it because of the hours. Also stated by Dr. Tedoff was about Clinical Psychologists. Many Psychologists do not go the extra mile in completing their BCBA, so they do not have the competency to perform these duties nor can they supervise RBT's. He stated that it really doesn't make for a claim to the board. Next, Dr. Tedoff mentioned the pay rate which is definitely an issue. He stated that he's had conversations with Brian Pachett, CEO of Easter Seals in Nevada, and he mentioned that at one point there were no speak pathologist's in Nevada and Medicaid waived the requirement for the speech pathologist to be licensed or to obtain their full credential and were reimbursing people for training. He believes this is something they should look at very closely because ATAP does exactly that. Dr. Tedoff also wanted to throw out a pay rate. Maybe for RBT's training it can continue at a \$31.31 rate, but for ones certified, a higher rate.

IX. Adjournment

Ms. Tache adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.