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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: January 23, 2017
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. Thorkildson called the meeting for the Funding and Insurance Subcommittee to order at 12:03 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Thorkildson, Brook Adie, Shirley Gaw (12:15 p.m. to end), Danielle Stage, Eric Lloyd

Members Absent: Gwynne Partos, Stacey Black

Guests: Lori Follett, Veronica Smith, Steven Cohen

Staff Present: Carol Reitz

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)

Mr. Cohen told the Subcommittee that the A Team run by Opportunity Village is organizing an advocacy day. It will leave from Las Vegas on February 26th and

currently has a waitlist. Mr. Cohen also stated that since Las Vegas is hosting a major military base that currently a diagnosis may need to be done on an biannual basis. He also shared that there was an article published in the RJ which stated that the reimbursement rate is going to be reviewed during legislative session.

Ms. Thorkildson read the public comment submitted electronically: “My name is Ken MacAleese, and I am a behavior analyst in Nevada. While I will be unable to attend the insurance subcommittee meeting in January, I do have a wealth of information around insurance, funding, and trends nationally and regionally. This committee may be the most important current committee that exists. Issues with funding are likely the biggest and most significant threat to continued service in Nevada. We are currently receiving significant downward pricing pressure that will create dramatic issues with treatment over time.

“Changes in ACA (which are likely in the next few years) are another threat, but it is unlikely we can do much to influence outside of sending letters, etc.

“If there are ideas or considerations the committee is considering, I would be happy to exchange information around this subject matter with committee chairs or boards if they would like to email or call.”

III. Introductions of the Funding and Insurance Subcommittee Members

Ms. Thorkildson introduced herself as an employee of UNR (University of Nevada, Reno). She is working on two projects that include being a clinic coordinator for UCAN and faculty member of LEND. Her primary role is being the mother of a child with a neurodevelopmental disability. She has been working in the human services field for years and parlaying her skills into the disability community.

Mr. Lloyd introduced himself as the president of Amerigroup Nevada. He was asked to join as the result of his relationship with Dr. Gaspar de Alba. He has been a big supporter of the Grant A Gift Autism Foundation. He believes there is a significant challenge with the reimbursement rate by Medicaid. They are working with the State to try to improve it and is interested in what the legislative session is going to bring.

Dr. Stage introduced herself as a pediatrician at Community Health Alliance in Reno. She is currently involved in LEND.

Ms. Adie introduced herself as the program manager for ATAP. She has been the manager for the last 4 ½ years. She has been instrumental in growing the program. They started by serving about 100 kids and spending \$1.5 million per year. They are currently serving approximately 750 kids and spend \$1.5 million per month. They serve Medicaid children, under insured, and no insurance. She has worked with the Department of Insurance to identify issues that they have encountered. There are some insurance providers that require neuropsych

evaluations and she has worked with the Department of Insurance on being able to serve them.

IV. Review and Prioritize the Goals of the Subcommittee (For Possible Action)

Ms. Thorkildson told the Subcommittee that she would like to review the goals and objectives that were provided on the grid. Ms. Adie reminded the Subcommittee that their goal is to advise and advocate. If they want to write a letter to legislation in support of or against, they can write the letter and then submit the letter to the full Commission for approval.

Ms. Thorkildson read the goal of the Subcommittee which is to maximize public and private funding sources to support the full scope of services needed for all Nevadans with ASD. She asked if there was any advisory information that can be submitted to the Commission. Mr. Cohen said 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 are hot button issues at the moment. He said the ACA repealment was signed to remove the 26 provision that allows adults to stay on their parents' insurance until they are 26. The 1.1.1 is another one that if they ban together, they can provide the best experience for Nevada families.

Ms. Adie told the Subcommittee that there needs to be someone that tracks the bills related to autism. There is a BDR with a placeholder but no language is present yet. She was unsure as to what they were looking for with that BDR. She suggested they also track the agency budgets so they're prepared to provide letters or testimony during the legislative session. She will send out any information she receives on bills.

Mr. Lloyd commented that what he hears being proposed is preparing information to share at the legislative session. He said on the Medicaid side, they had started earlier prior to the legislative session to increase access and availability. He realizes there's work to be done but wondered if they were starting late. He advised the Subcommittee that HHS will be presenting their budget on January 24th. He added they need to monitor the BDRs.

Ms. Adie suggested they work on 1.2.1 which is to identify and engage organizations that utilize self-funded insurance plans to increase ASD coverage. They can provide letters to insurance companies that are self-funded to let them know what the coverage and benefits would entail. She informed the Subcommittee that Dan Unumb from Autism Speaks gave a presentation to legislation to inform them of the cost to provide insurance coverage for autism which was pennies. She told the Subcommittee that there was a self-funded insurance plan that recently added ABA coverage but it is narrowly in scope. They can provide letters to opt in to encourage the insurance providers. ATAP is able to identify which insurance companies have opted out of the mandate.

Ms. Thorkildson summarized what their priorities should be which included watching the bills, finding out what is supported by other subcommittees and the Commission, and discussing reaching out to self-funding insurance companies.

Ms. Thorkildson asked Ms. Adie to provide information at the next meeting on the self-funded plans. Ms. Thorkildson asked Ms. Reitz to provide what the other subcommittees are recommended as far as Objective 1.1.2.

Mr. Lloyd said they have had challenges identifying all the members that are eligible for ABA services. Medicaid did a significant amount of work with identifying the codes, provider types but the flood did not materialize when ABA coverage went into effect on January 1, 2016. Ms. Adie responded that they have lists of children that ATAP is able to provide to Amerigroup in order to reach the kids that are Medicaid eligible. She added that ATAP is in the middle of becoming an HPN and Amerigroup provider. ATAP would be happy to work with them to identify and reach out to the families. She reported that 55% of ATAP's active and waitlist kids have Medicaid.

Ms. Thorkildson said she has heard that it is a workforce issue as well. Ms. Adie responded that it was a BCBA issue and not an RBT issue since they are easier to turn out. The other issue is the average age of the children on ATAP is 7 and 8 and most of the providers are booked solid during the hours outside of school. She is working with school districts to partner together in order to provide therapy during the school day.

Ms. Adie made a motion that they move forward with priorities that they discussed which includes they will watch the autism bills and BDRs and watch the HHS budget, look at what the other subcommittees are doing to support agencies and nonprofits, identify the self-funded insurance companies, and discuss letters of support or concerns. Ms. Gaw seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Confirm Dates for Future Meetings

The Subcommittee decided their next meeting would be on February 27th, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Ms. Adie made a motion to accept the date and time of the next meeting. Ms. Gaw seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. 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)

There was no public comment.

VII. Adjournment

Ms. Thorkildson adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.