



MINUTES

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Date and Time of Meeting: September 29, 2020 4:00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Commission members will be attending telephonically and via Microsoft TEAMS. Members of the public will also participate via teleconference

Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Lozano called the meeting for the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders to order at 4:03 pm.

Members Present: Trisha Lozano, Lenise Kryk, Korri Ward, Julie Ostrovsky, Antonina Capurro

A quorum was declared.

Public Comment

Ms. McLaurin is a proud parent of a child who is on the spectrum and is here today to make a complaint about an ABA provider that is covered under ATAP. The treatment received from the owner of this organization was devastating. This provider interrupted the child's schedule, spoke down to this family, and called Ms. McLaurin combative and discontinued her services. Ms. McLaurin mentioned how you cannot have two ABA coverages at the same time in the same month, so she was given only 6 days to try and find another provider. Not only was this improper treatment but she has the authority to advocate for her son. Ms. McLaurin asked the commission to continue to investigate these manners and requests that an action be made as a follow up. She thanks the commission for an opportunity to speak.

Approval of the Minutes from the September 15, 2020 Meeting (For Possible Action)

Ms. Ostrovsky made a motion to approve the minutes with the edit to change "end" to "send" on page 4. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Presentation from Washoe County School District on Reopening Plan Regarding Supports for Students with Autism

Ms. Lozano is a Special Education Administrator and Presented for Washoe County School District. Ms. Lozano's presentation is posted on the ASD website.

Ms. Kryk asked the following questions: If the school district sent out a questionnaire/survey to families for their input? If a teacher did not feel comfortable going into a school, were there options for them? How is it working with classroom aides?

Ms. Lozano answered yes. The school district did send out many surveys to families. For the teachers, there was not an option, only if there was a documented need. For teachers who had health concerns, they were able to apply through the Human Resource Department to be a distance learning teacher. These teachers do need a doctor note and to go through the complete process.

Ms. Lozano stated that they do use paraprofessionals, and, in the Spring, they did amazing things, such as small groups, individual instructions, innovative and creative things. Ms. Lozano also mentioned how some teachers are doing both remote and in person teaching and both are utilized their paraprofessionals. Ms. Lozano did want to mention that all teachers do teach in the school buildings.

Workgroup Updates

Ms. Kryk gave an update on the Insurance and Funding workgroup. She has been focused on the Medicaid and ATAP part of it. From the questionnaire that was sent out to the providers, 55% who currently serve Medicaid stated that they will either not continue, they will be cutting back or they have already dropped. When the providers were asked why, it was because of the Medicaid rates. 93% of the people from the north and south said they had concerns with the Medicaid rates – some being providers and some who are not. The ones who were not providers made it clear they will not become providers because of the rates.

Research for ABA evidence base levels and national standards at this point are somewhere in between 25-40 hours, depending on some factors. The BACB's guidelines discuss a Focus plan being 10-12 hours, a Comprehensive plan being 30-40 hours, ATAP covers between 10-18 hours for their plan types.

Ms. Kryk did get some data back from Medicaid – 2015 vs 2019. 2015 there were 150 children being served through Medicaid and receiving ABA services. In 2019 there were 595 children under the Fee for Service. In 2015 there were around 50 BCBA's in the field. In 2019 there were about 140 BCBA's in the field. In 2015 there were around 100 RBT's. In 2019 there were approximately 700 RBT's. In 2015, the average hours per week were 6.8. In 2019, the average hours per week were 4.7. Looking at this data, Ms. Kryk believes that the Medicaid rate is the issue for the drop in hours.

The mean across the nation is 48.29 and the median is 48. Ms. Kryk believes when they last submitted, the request was about 48, because it fell within that median. Some states even reimburse \$60/70 an hour for an RBT. Nevada is very far off from this rate and Ms. Kryk believes this is impacting the average hours for our kids receiving services. Ms. Kryk states that 4.7 hours is not going to get any kid where they need to be. Ms. Kryk believes this is something that needs to be discussed as a state. This is only RBT rates and information, where BCBA rates are another issue. The commission members would like someone from Medicaid to share this data more in depth, so questions can be asked.

Ms. Kryk stated that her workgroup continues to meet with Samantha and Rocio from ATAP and the discussions are going well. Some things that have come up are: Challenging behaviors, distribution of funding from insurance assistance and rates, policy vs NRS.

Ms. Ward updated everyone on the Adult side of the Insurance and Funding workgroup. They have gathered a significant amount of information about adult caps and asked the commission members how they would like this information brought forward? Ms. Ward asked if the commission would be interested in moving the age cap in the NRS for private insurance? In Nevada they have two insurance policies: One pays for services no matter the age and the other one does not.

Ms. Capurro gave an update on the Workforce workgroup. During their previous meetings they were focused on the following: Identifying the quantity and quality of the workforce, identifying a contact person from the Department of Education to come present on back to school plans. This workgroup met yesterday and discussed the presentations from Washoe county and CCSD on reopening plans. They also talked about gathering data for the commission on transition services and job trainings for older students and adults with autism. The group discussed some opportunities that are not available now that COVID has come and how to prepare these students for the real world once this is all over. They looked at what opportunities are still available and unique partners that might want to provide some job training opportunities. They also discussed the difficulty that teachers and students are having during COVID, qualified staff in the school districts, expediting process during COVID, a lot of teachers teaching autistic children do not have an endorsement and may be some barriers, some of the highest vacancies within CCSD are for autism services, Medicaid rates, review previous work from the previous subcommittee. Ms. Lozano agreed to review the minutes and information online from the previous Workforce subcommittee.

This group also had some information from the ABA board on licensed providers: 282 Behavioral Analyst, 34 licensed assistant Behavioral Analyst, 1306 Registered Behavioral Technicians. 54% Behavioral technicians and 50% of licensed Behavioral Analyst are registered in Medicaid.

The Workforce workgroup's next meeting is scheduled for October 16th.

Ms. Lozano stated that Clark County will be presenting on their reopening plan at the October 13th meeting.

Legislative Updates to Include General Discussion and Approval of Commission Strategies to Introduce or Propose Legislative Recommendations to Legislators (For Possible Action)

Ms. Ostrovsky has been going over SB216 and it sounds like we can not ask for any more money, but we may be able to fund what was lost temporarily or bring some back. But, if this is not in Medicaid's budget, then we cannot. Ms. Ostrovsky asked if ADSD can possibly ask to find this out?

Ms. Ostrovsky suggests possibly tweaking SB216 to allow more people to apply from the autism community, because the two vacancies still have not been filled.

Ms. Lozano stated that she was told that someone from CCSD did apply, so she contacted the board and they confirmed they received the application, and it is being worked on.

Ms. Kryk also had multiple parents that were disappointed because they did not qualify to apply.

Ms. Ostrovsky is following BDR's to see if they can possible piggyback or partner with any to benefit the disability/autism community.

Ms. Almanza chatted with an assembly woman last week, who has BDR 105, that is intended to be a modeled bill by Nebraska, the issue is the cost for that for recruitment, training, retention and data collection is \$___ a year (phone cut out) There is a committee to study strategies and policy options for when there is more money. (Ms. Almanza's phone was cutting in and out for the rest of the presentation and was not clear to put on record)

Ms. Capurro mentioned the workforce data collection bill and believes it may be a good one for the commission to use to ask the ABA board questions for some good data.

Ms. Frischmann stated that the ABA board is bringing up a new software for online registrations and licensure which will be collecting all the data. It will be compiled and provided, as necessary.

Questions can always be asked at: ABABoard@adsd.nv.gov

Discussion and Possible Approval of Topics for the Biennium Report to the Governor Office (Make recommendations / For Possible Action)

Ms. Ostrovsky thinks it is important to mention how this commission went over a year without meeting, to now meeting every two weeks and including the two workgroups that were created as well.

Ms. Frischmann shared the previous report with the commission on her screen.

Ms. Ostrovsky suggested for if each commission member to send Ms. Chalupnik their suggestions to then send Ms. Lozano since they are running out of time.

The commission members agreed.

Discuss and Approve Agenda Items for Future Commission Meetings (For Possible Action)

Ms. Ostrovsky asked for ATAP and Medicaid to be standing agenda item like it used to be.

Ms. Frischmann confirmed they will add ATAP and Medicaid to all agendas but cannot guarantee someone to present every time since this commission meets every two weeks.

Ms. Kryk asked how many agenda items can be on a commission agenda?

Ms. Frischmann answered that there is no limit. Ms. Frischmann made a shout out the ADSD team for the hard work and quick turnaround times for this commission that is meeting every two weeks.

Ms. Lozano stated that Clark county will present their reopening plan at the next meeting on October 13th at 4pm.

Ms. Ostrovsky made a motion for Clark county to present their reopening plan, but after the Biennium Report agenda item. Ms. Capurro seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Ms. Ostrovsky made a motion to ask Medicaid for a report on October 13th, if possible, and if not, still include on the agenda, to report on numbers, how many they're serving, duplicate numbers, how many hours children with autism are getting and a status update on the 6% reduction. Ms. Kryk seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Ms. Lozano adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm