



NEVADA COMMISSION ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS MEETING

Date and Time of Meeting: August 16, 2022, 3:45 PM

MINUTES
of the meeting of the
Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders
July 19, 2022

The Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders held a public meeting on July 19, 2022, beginning at 3:45 PM at the following locations:

Teleconference meeting was conducted via Microsoft Teams Meeting

1. **Call to Order:** Welcome and Introductions

The Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders meeting was called to order by Madame Chairperson Trisha Lozano at 3:45 PM.

2. **Roll Call:**

Ms. Carissa Russell took role at 3:47 PM. Members present were Madame Chairperson Lozano and Commissioners James Howells and Julie Ostrovsky.
A quorum was declared.

3. **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. Comments will be limited to three minutes per person. Persons making comments will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record, spell their last name, and provide the secretary with written comments.)

Brian Hager, President of the Grant a Gift Autism Foundation, asked for support in the state ARPA funding, which will be discussed at the Interim Finance Committee the next day. Mr. Hager reiterated the need for funding to hire more diagnostic and therapeutic staff to alleviate long waiting lists and provide better access to community and State of Nevada services for all families regardless of pay source.

Jennifer Frischmann, Quality Assurance Manager with Aging and Disability Services, clarified that this should have been an agenda item. However, she was notified at 12:20 PM today by the Governor's Board and Commissions Office. Several Commission members are terming out. Three members are terming out on October 31st, 2022, and one who resigned and was scheduled to expire in March of 2022. There are two vacancies, and Ms. Frischmann will forward the information sent from the Governor's office along with instructions as a heads up on this via email to the Commission Members

There was no additional public comment at this time.

4. **For Possible Action:** Approval of Meeting Minutes from the Previous Meeting held July 19, 2022

Commissioner Howells requested a correction of the spelling of his last name throughout the meeting minutes draft. Ms. Russell will ensure that those are updated.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howells to approve the minutes from July 19, 2022, as-is with the change in spelling of his last name. Seconded by Commissioner Ward and approved with a unanimous vote.

Motion passed.

5. **For Information:** Presentation from Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition

Cheryl Dinnell, Executive Director of the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition (NLRCC), shared her background as a caregiver to a son with multiple disabilities and her knowledge base of lifetime disability knowledge and advocacy in special education, vocational rehabilitation, adult services, and early intervention.

Presentation key points included: the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition's evolution from a nonprofit into a public advocacy group, a reiteration of the issues surrounding the great need for caregiver representation in seeking respite in the community, the challenges endured by NLRCC that include increasing respite barriers and ensuring availability during times of crisis such as displayed in COVID 19, and the general vulnerability of both the parent and person with autism spectrum disorders.

The NLRCC will form to work on a much-needed respite support plan, raise awareness, and remove any existing barriers, so respite is available to all caregivers. This body will explore/implement ways for respite to be a part of a package that strives to ensure caregivers flourish within a strength-based unified Nevada system, thereby improving families.

Ms. Dinnell stated that respite is a short-term break for providing care for the family caregiver to explore interests and participate in self-care. It assists in maintaining caregiver connections with caregiver family, friends, or colleagues, and it is to be preventative and restorative to the caregiver.

Ms. Dinnell detailed the research and data to spell out the need for improved benefits, regulations, training, and labor laws to protect direct care workers who are respite providers. Her presentations displayed a need for more care of direct caregivers and compared the risks resulting from the lack of Nevada legislation in this area for caregivers. It addressed a need to meet the long-term physical, emotional, financial, and long-term education improvements needed to address caregivers' health and social and emotional well-being. Furthermore, Ms. Dinnell pin-pointed the cultural assessments, risk factors, and social determinants of health needs for all families.

Lastly, Ms. Dinnell presented a wish to collaborate with CASD as a partner for future approved recommendations, input, suggestions, and collaborations as Nevada laws are developed.

Ms. Dinnell's contact information was given, and there were no questions.

Madame Chairperson Lozano had no questions but stated her appreciation of the information and stressed the impact this will have on the Autism community.

Ms. Russell will send contact information out via email since it was only received the previous day.

6. **For Information:** Nevada Early Intervention Services Updates on Autism and MCHAT Report

Randi Humes, a Management Analyst with Nevada Early Interventions Services, reviewed several reports before the Commission, including current MCHAT and Autism reports, displayed from today's accompanying data sent out in the agenda.

Information included:

- Compiled and collected fiscal year July 1- June 30, 2022 data sets
- Autism M-Chat Rollout
- Service-Related Report data

Graph 1 displays the children served by the early intervention system in FY 2022. Of the 6583 individual early intervention children served, 490 were autism diagnoses identified. Color-coded graphs displayed were broken out by the following:

- Gray = children who do not have a diagnosis
- Blue= children diagnosed at the beginning of the fiscal year, July - June
- Orange=children diagnosed before the fiscal year
- Approximate totals of 8 % of children identified have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder

The second table had M-CHAT 18-month and 24-month information, which included the following:

- A total of 3063 children screened for the M-CHAT
- The orange section outlines the primary reason for failed screenings as self-reported by the programs. Autism-related concerns were identified as the most prevalent reason.

- 368 children were diagnosed in the fiscal year 2022
- The average age of diagnosed children was 31 months of age.
- Analytics displayed, shown in green, showed that 49% of children failed the initial screeners.
- 74% of initial failed screeners were due to autism concerns. 24% of the initial failed screeners received a diagnosis within the timeline.

Of the 74% of initially failed M-CHAT screeners, a prevalence of autism concerns was first in attributions and global delays were second in attributing causes for failure areas. Most of the children diagnosed were seen in the southern region, 29% were reported in the northwest region, and 6% were reported in rural regions. After that, area regional geographical location explanations were given, as seen in the attachment.

Data sets of self-reported, scheduled, suggested diagnosed options, non-reported, and decline process information of where children are in their autism diagnosis was presented from a monthly perspective as seen in a snapshot in time in a June-July report. It showed the following:

- 287 of the children had Autism Assistance Program referrals for continuing support
- 13 children declined referrals to Autism Assistance Program

A variety of data system notes were displayed by Ms. Humes, which detailed how data was obtained, how data was generated, and the occurrence of the data.

There were no questions on this portion of the data presented.

Ms. Humes went on to display and discuss the Service-Related reports. Ms. Humes noted that the process of gathering data is currently scattered by the data collection and noted future data would be collected more consistently.

This information included:

- Data of children with a diagnosis in TRAC IV with the services received broken out by fiscal year
- Point and time data of children who are listed as a yes for identifying as having autism
- As of July 26, 2022, as identified from a full active caseload, 3266 early intervention statewide children were identified as having autism from state programs. 3% or 87 children who have an autism diagnosis are from community programs. This number does not include those children who are in the process of being diagnosed
- In service-related data specific to children receiving individual and co-treatment methods, a
- A 4 to 1 ratio of services and type was strategically broken down by targets.
- Special Instruction, Speech-Language Pathology, and Occupational Therapy were noted as the most used services displayed as prevalently pointed out in this snapshot. Past quarter information broken down by identification, periods, autism diagnosis, and service amounts were explained by Ms. Humes quickly due to time constraints, along with an explanation of her notes

Madame Chairperson Lozano has no questions but thanked Ms. Humes for her time today.

Commissioner Ostrovsky asked about the difference between service coordination and special instruction. Ms. Humes explained the difference to be that special instruction is more hands-on coaching, demonstration, and implementation of strategies from team members and therapists.

Service coordination is targeted case management. Ms. Humes and Nevada supervisory teams went on to further explain the correlation between low rates in service coordination in accordance with Part C to clarify Commissioner Ostrovsky's understanding of the presented information in relation to aides and technician staffing. Ms. Julie Dame, Ms. Bridgett Eure, and Ms. Humes explained the Special Instruction-specific endorsement and their function as the IFSP team lead. Ms. Dame added that Developmental Specialist act as teachers and leaders of the developmental support for the child as outlined in the IFSP plan.

No further questions were noted on the presented information in this presentation section.

7. **For Information:** Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) Updates

Samantha Jayme, Health Program Manager 3, reiterated that since her presentation last month, there was not a lot of new information. The prior presentation report with program updates for the Commission was sent for remediation and will be available tomorrow. ATAP is currently waiting for Subcommittee proposals and comprehensive plans to be discussed in the Friday meeting. No new information or changes are seen on the waitlist. In the interest of time, there is no need to present fully at this time.

8. **For Possible Action:** Discuss and nominate a Commission member to serve on the ADSD Olmstead Plan Steering Committee

Lisa Torres is a Community Engagement Manager but is speaking on behalf of the new Olmstead planning team today. The team is getting ready to start with a Social Entrepreneurs, Incorporated (SEI) contractor and needs to assemble a steering committee. Ms. Torres is coming before the Commission to see if anyone is interested in joining the subcommittee to build out the Olmstead plan. This subcommittee needs a handful of people throughout ADSD to give guidance and support for the new team on a timeline of September 2022 through August 2023. There will be a handful of meetings throughout the year to assist the core steering committee team in moving forward with the planning process.

Madame Chairperson Lozano asked what the commitment would look like. Ms. Torres responded that there would be 6-8 meetings throughout the year. Commissioner Ward asked if the person nominated had to be someone that was not terming out soon. Ms. Torres replied that they would like someone who is not terming out soon. Commissioner Ward also asked what the focus of the Olmstead plan is. Ms. Torres clarified that the State must have an Olmstead plan; therefore, the division is taking the initial step of creating one. From there, they will work with other divisions and state agencies to find services and where services are lacking to develop an Olmstead plan for the benefit of ADSD. The Olmstead plan will focus on ADSD as a whole for now, not just a single focus.

Ms. Frischmann specified that for members terming out, they could resubmit applications for the next term. Currently, the Commission Board does not have term limits like some boards that can serve two terms and term out indefinitely. She stated the Commission members could reapply on November 1st to serve on the Olmstead committee. The board members who are terming out are as follows: Terming out in October -Madame Chairperson Lozano, Commissioner Ostrovsky, and Commissioner Ward. All of these listed board members are eligible to reapply.

Commissioner Ward was interested in the Olmstead committee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howells to nominate Commissioner Ward for the Olmstead committee. Commissioner Ostrovsky seconded. The motion unanimously passed.

9. **For Information:** Discuss ATAP Budget and the Commissions Objectives as it Relates to Insurance Assistance Distribution, Policy on Supervision, and Impacts of SB96 – (An Act Relating to Disability Services; Requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to Seek an Increase to Certain Reimbursement Rates Under the Medicaid Program and the Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) for a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT), and Providing Other Matters Properly Relating Thereto), to the ATAP Budget

Madame Chairperson Lozano stated that Commissioner Lenise Kryk, spearheading this agenda item, is absent today.

Therefore, this item is tabled, and the Committee will move to agenda item 10.

10. **For Possible Action:** Review and Approve Draft Letter to Nevada State Governor on updates of the Commission as it Relates to Commission Objectives and Progress of the Commission

Commissioner Ward sent out a draft for the Governor's letter right before the CASD meeting. Therefore, the commission members decided to review the letter on the shared screen.

The letter was read by Commissioner Ward, who shared thoughts on Medicaid funding for adults, and she was unsure if it is currently a pressing issue. Billable rates are a critical issue for the community at this time. Commissioner Ward expressed the need for respite.

Key points of Autism community concerns within the letter included needed concerns for more staff, staff training, Burns study information, and billable rates in need of increase as future recommendations. According to DHHS Aging and Disability Services, the regional centers provide services to 7395 individuals, of which 964 or 13% are adults with autism. June 2021 rate information proposing a rate model study for the Department of Health and Human Services funding was mentioned.

Madame Chairperson Lozano asked for verification that the number of individuals served by the regional centers is the most current information. It was discussed that the mentioned numbers were taken from a letter of DHHS to the Governor and Director Whitley this fiscal year and that the Commission needs to ensure that these numbers are still the most current ones.

The Commission discussed sending any updated information to Ms. Russell and also discussed asking Ms. Jayme to support the Commission with updated information

Ms. Russell agreed to assist, and Commissioner Ward offered to review the mentioned DHHS letter to the Governor and Director Whitley to verify the information's date.

Madame Chairperson Lozano suggested continuing this agenda item at the next meeting.

Ms. Frischmann suggested that CASD commissioners send their edits to Ms. Russell by August 30th.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ward to send the Governor's letter edits to Ms. Russell by August 30th. Commissioner Ostrovsky seconded. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

11. **For Possible Action:** Review and Approve Draft Letter to Nevada State Legislators on behalf of the Commission as if Relates to Commission Objectives and Statistics on Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Commissioner Ostrovsky made edits right before the meeting to share and discuss at the next meeting. The due date of August 30th will be kept.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ward to review and send the potential state legislator letter with edits to Ms. Russell before August 30th. However, conversations were noted on whether the letter would have enough preparation time. The motion did not pass.

Due to time constraints, Madame Chairperson Lozano tabled the motion and moved to item 14.

Ms. Russell will send both letters for review in one email, including the drafted letter she just received today.

12. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and Approval of Co-Chair Replacement for Workforce Development Subcommittee and Subsequent Recruitment.

Commissioner Ward asked if a representative from Burns Report would speak before the Commission. Ms. Frischmann clarified that we would have a representative reporting at the next CASD meeting.

This agenda item was tabled to move on to the next agenda item.

13. **For Possible Action:** Approve Subcommittee Roles and Responsibilities as it Relates to the Current Community Strategic Plan, Including Approval of Public Entities and/or Members to be Contacted to Participate in Each Subcommittee in Preparation for the Upcoming Strategic Report

This agenda item was tabled to move to the next agenda item.

14. **For Possible Action:** Discuss and Approve Agenda Items and Discuss Future Commission Meeting Dates

A motion was made by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with a unanimous vote to hold the September meeting on 09/20/2022 at 3:45 PM

15. **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. Comments will be limited to three minutes per person. Persons making comment will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record and spell their last name and provide the secretary with written comments).

Commissioner Ward requested more information on the Olmstead Committee. (Ms. Russell will put the Commission in touch with Ms. Torres via email).

Ms. Abbie Chalupnik commended everyone for their important work and their flexibility with the facilitator changes. She reiterated it had been a pleasure to facilitate on the Commission.

There was no further public comment.

16. Adjourn

A motion was made by Commissioner Ward to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Howells, the motion unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 PM.

Autism Commission Members

Trisha Lozano (Chair), *Vacant* (Co-Chair), Julie Ostrovsky, Korri Ward, Lenise Kryk, James Howells. NOTE: Items may be taken out of order, combined for consideration, and/or removed from the agenda at the Chairperson's discretion. The public body may combine two or more agenda items for consideration. The public body may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time. The public body may place reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of public comments based on viewpoint.

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