

**Interagency Committee on Autism (ICA)**  
**Quarterly Meeting**  
**12/04/19**  
**1-4 pm**

**Agenda**

- 1. Welcome and Introductions** *\*Please sign in*
  - a. Welcome new representatives!
- 2. Family Needs Report**
- 3. ICA Member Updates and Events**
- 4. Quarterly Strategic Plan Activities**
  - a. ICA members will be given an opportunity to share updates on contributions to the strategic plan improvement areas and outcomes. The Blueprint will be used as a guide for discussion.
  - b. DNEA updates will be included in under this activity.
- 5. ICA Updates**
  - a. Workgroups
    - i. Childcare
    - ii. Mental Health
    - iii. Education
    - iv. Adult Services
    - v. ASD Diagnosis
    - vi. ABA Reimbursement
  - b. Policies and Procedures
  - c. Other updates
- 6. DNEA Updates**
  - a. Materials and trainers
  - b. Funding
  - c. DNEA Director Search Update
  - d. Website
- 7. Other**
- 8. Public Comment (3:50pm)**

**Upcoming ICA Dates**

- General Quarterly Meeting: March 4, 2020 @ 1:00 – 4:00 PM
  - Location: UD Carvel Center (16483 County Seat Highway, Georgetown DE 19947)

## Interagency Committee on Autism (ICA) Quarterly Meeting Minutes

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Kent County

### **ICA Representatives Present:**

Autism Delaware: Brian Hall

Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS): Beth Mineo

Delaware Autism Program (DAP), Statewide Director: Mary Whitfield

Department of Education (DOE): MaryAnn Mieczkowski

Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS): Meredith Tavani

Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH): Wynne Hewitt

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): Dave Frye

Nemours Network: Laura Dewey

Parent/Caregiver for New Castle County: Dawn Maloney

Parent/Caregiver for Kent County: Andrea Creed

### **ICA Representatives Absent:**

Ability Network: Thomas Cook

Delaware Family Voices (DEFV): Ann Phillips

Division of Public Health (DPH): Isabel Rivera-Green

Parent Information Center (PIC) of Delaware: Tina Andrews

### **ICA Representative Substitutions:**

Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDDS): Charles Bryant

Part C/Birth to 3 System: Sue Gamel-McCormick

### **Others Present:**

Sarah Mallory (CDS- DNEA Interim Director)

Brian Freedman (CDS)

Kara Downey (CDS/DNEA)

Kellene Copeland (CDS/DNEA)

Dafne Carnright (Autism Delaware)

Annalisa Ekbladh (Autism Delaware)

Brittany Powers (CDS)

Maria Locuniak (DOE)

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

**a.** Two new ICA Representatives were present at this meeting.

**i.** Mary Whitfield is the Statewide Director of the Delaware Autism Program (DAP). She will be replacing Vince Winterling on the committee.

**ii.** Wynne Hewitt is the new director of the Promise Assessment Program at the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH). She will be replacing Joe Tegtmeier on the committee.

## **II. Family Needs Report**

**a.** Numbers are broken into total family navigation contacts and total number of family navigation contacts using DNEA funding

**b.** Autism Delaware will be looking into how the introduction of new family navigation and ACT program affects family needs

- i. The family contacts in ‘connections and support’ and ‘evaluation/diagnosis’ is increasing
  - 1. Connection and support: typically refers to emotional support, discussing experiences, home visits
- ii. Staff may mark multiple categories for a call
- iii. Mental health calls are low (1%) yet we know this is an issue
  - 1. Staff may mark multiple categories for a call
  - 2. AD suggested changing mental health to behavioral health
  - 3. Many families may not say mental health in the call for a variety of reasons
- iv. The committee discussed ways to utilize this data, other types of data from family navigation contacts, better ways of capturing information
  - 1. Ensuring data/reported data to the ICA reflective of the Blueprint
  - 2. Creating drop down menus under main categories
  - 3. ICA Workgroups will discuss what data may be helpful

### **III. ICA/DNEA Quarterly Updates**

- a. Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS)
  - i. CDS is the lead on the LEND program, which is focused on training pre-professionals in neurodevelopmental disabilities. LEND is interdisciplinary and added a school psychologist this year. On a monthly basis, medical residents will be coming to CDS to learn about its programs and supports. LEND is also currently designing a self-advocate trainee track to start next academic year.
  - ii. Spectrum Scholars is a college support program for undergraduate students with ASD at UD. There have been a few changes in the past few months:
    - 1. Spectrum Scholars is training other UD staff on supporting students with ASD including disability support services, res life, and academic departments
    - 2. The program is launching supports to any UD student with ASD including a social skills group with the UD Counseling Center and support around executive skills with the Office of Academic Enrichment
    - 3. Spectrum Scholars will continue to offer more intensive supports to students within the program
  - iii. Building Bridges (HRSA grant) developed 7 one-page handouts that are Delaware-specific. Print versions are ready and e-friendly versions with clickable links will be available soon. All 7 will be translated to Spanish (English on one side, Spanish on the other) with the hope of translating to other languages. A dissemination plan will be developed. The guides will be sustained by the DNEA moving forward.
- b. Prevention and Behavioral Health (PBH)
  - i. PBH has finalized contracts with Autism Delaware for family care support services and Easterseals for respite services
  - ii. They are in the final stages of a contract with the DNEA for additional training for staff and contract providers



**ii. Education**

1. Statewide Trainings for School Professionals: The DNEA has 8 new trainings with content in different stages of review. Four new trainings are being offered as part of its Winter 2020 Calendar.
2. LEA Training Initiative: started its LEA training initiative in Appo. SD this Fall. The DNEA will provide training to various groups in Appo. using a multi-tiered system of support.
  - a. This is currently a pilot year and the DNEA hopes to continue work in other districts next year. Appo. was chosen using an evidence-based tool analyzing need and readiness for change.

**iii. Mental Health**

1. Rockford Fall Lecture Series Nov 2019: DNEA was asked to present to community providers on ASD and mental health in children. Nemours took the lead on training and we had lots of positive feedback.
2. ASD Didactic Series: 10 session series began in November with 12 participants from varying backgrounds (school, private practice, outpatient). Bi-monthly topics including functional-behavioral assessments, visual supports, family engagement, etc. Nemours team is leading the sessions.
3. DNEA is continuing discussions with PBH regarding further training for MRSS

**IV. ICA Workgroups**

**a. Childcare**

- i. The DNEA developed a training for childcare providers, which is being sent to the DIECC for its quality assurance process (to ensure it is aligned with the STARS competencies). There was potential discussion of how to incentivize participants to attend.
- ii. The workgroup has not met for some time. Annalisa will work to reconvene the group.
  1. Members included: Annalisa Ekbladh (Autism Delaware), Cindy Brown (619 Coordinator), Kim Krzanowski (Office of Early Learning), Mary Moore (Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Director), Maryann Mieczkowski (DOE), Maria Locuniak (DOE), and Jamie Walko

**b. Mental Health**

- i. The workgroup is meeting on a semi-regular basis (every other month). At its next meeting the group will reexamine the logic model with past activities as they relate to the Blueprint to identify next steps.
- ii. The group has been in conversations with the Sussex County Behavioral Health Task Group around challenges in inpatient stays for people with ASD. The executive director of this group expressed interest in bringing this to the attention of the Lieutenant Gov., as it aligns with her larger statewide plan.

**c. Education**

- i. Workgroup will meet Friday 12/06

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- ii. The DNEA is continuing to develop more in-depth and intensive training content focused on evidence-based practice and implementation (i.e. new intro to ABA principles, prompting)
  - iii. Group of providers and state agencies meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month around special education- good place for the DNEA to give updates
- d. Adult Services**
- i. Group met for the first time in Nov. 2019 with Autism Delaware, DSAMH, and CDS represented. DVR and DDDS will be reached out to attend the next meeting.
    - 1. There is a currently a transition-aged workgroup of DSAMH, DDDS, and PBH that meets to coordinate services. Elizabeth Romero of DSAMH leads this group and may be beneficial to reach out.
  - ii. Next steps include using the Blueprint to analyze what is currently activities and look to identify gaps. Looking to develop a logic model similar to the mental health group.
- e. ASD Diagnosis**
- i. Group reconnected in Nov 2019 from work that happened over the summer and identified main focus areas with an ultimate goal of developing guidelines for the state:
    - 1. Screening process and making accurate referrals
      - a. Making sure families are understanding why they are being referred
    - 2. Medical diagnosis and educational classification disagreement
      - a. Increasing communication among entities
      - b. Poor evaluations conducted on each side (medical providers, school professionals)
      - c. Educating families on the difference between each evaluation
    - 3. Medical evaluation
      - a. ensuring the use of evidence-based practice and identifying need (i.e. when is a more comprehensive evaluation needed? When is it not?)
      - b. differential diagnosis
      - c. generating good recommendations post evaluation
  - ii. Christiana Care has started conducting autism diagnostic evaluations and outpatient services- they were part of this meeting
  - iii. Nemours now has 8 psychologists qualified to do autism diagnostic evaluations
  - iv. Thompson Center runs a monthly ADOS reliability training. Brian Freedman has reached out to connect for Delaware providers
    - 1. DOE formed a contract with ADOS trainer and offered course in Fall 2019. Potential of having this group/next cohort participate in the reliability checks.
    - 2. Potential of getting clinical and school professionals together
- f. ABA Reimbursement**

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- i. Workgroup met for first meeting in Nov. 2019 and discussed general background of the issues and challenges in Delaware. Attendance included: CDS/DNEA, Autism Delaware, PBH, Kent County rep., Nemours
- ii. Group identified other individuals to contact and will conduct a needs assessment and gap analysis of the challenge.

### **V. ICA Policies and Procedures**

- a. Document was developed from information gathered from ICA retreats and from feedback from members on previous drafts. Jerry Petroff supported the creation of this document.
- b. The ICA requested a digital vote, which the DNEA coordinator will facilitate.

### **VI. DNEA Updates**

#### **a. Materials and Trainers:**

- i. The DNEA created a training model of tiered supports (see PowerPoint)
- ii. Universal PowerPoint template created to ensure consistency, authorship, accessibility for participants. The DNEA is in the process of developing one-pagers and other training materials to accompany PowerPoints and serve as Tier 2 Technical Assistance.
- iii. Adjunct instructors: DNEA is preparing to hire adjunct instructors for trainings to expand pool of expertise and increase the DNEA's ability to offer trainings. Trainers will have advanced knowledge of ASD and topic area and are paid through an honorarium. They will receive training on DNEA content and delivery models; ongoing review and monitoring will be provided. This plan will be discussed in the education workgroup.

1. DOE mentioned Liz Lucas, SLP at UD, would be a good candidate

#### **b. Funding**

- i. DNEA, CDS, and Autism Delaware staff met with legislative staff and presented at the health fund committee hearings
  1. Senator Cloutier expressed interest in supporting the DNEA
- ii. Health fund recommended the DNEA funding source be changed from the tobacco funds to the funds built into the formal DHSS departmental budget
- iii. Now there is a process of ensuring funds are secured within DHSS
  1. RFP from DHSS for a training entity doing the work of the DNEA which the DNEA would have to submit a proposal
    - a. This could pose an issue as other organizations have the opportunity to submit proposals but more importantly the DNEA is legislated to be housed at CDS and specifies work via Autism Delaware.
- iv. Next steps: CDS and Autism Delaware will meet and pursue next steps with legislators
- v. DHSS released their strategic plan for public comment- opportunity to include activities related to the DNEA
  1. DNEA Coordinator will send to ICA

#### **c. Staffing**

DNEA Director search: A few recent applications meet the minimum requirement level and will be sent to the search committee

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- i. Annie Doordan will transition to adjunct instructor for the DNEA in Winter 2020

**VII. Website**

- a. DNEA website is live ([www.delawareautismnetwork.org](http://www.delawareautismnetwork.org)) and will serve as a hub for the community to learn about the DNEA and ways to get connected with support and resources
- b. Please send any comments or suggestions to the DNEA coordinator

**VIII. Other**

- a. Group of providers and state agencies meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month around special education- good place for the DNEA to give updates