August 10, 2015

Minutes

Present: Lillian Scenna, Carrie Woodcock, Julie Brennan, Arthur Clum, Laurie Cavanaugh, Susan Perneault, Jaime Hoar, Darla Chafin, Ed Doggett, Suellen Doggett, Inga Sullivan, Mary Lou Dyer, Jennifer Putnam, David Thompson, Debbie Dionne, Brian McKnight, Jim Martin, Dave Projansky, Romy Spitz, Jennifer Putnam, Kim Humphrey, Diane Boas, Lebrun Joseph, Liselle Belanger, Kathy Adams, Patrick Moore, David Cowing, Luc Nya, Cullen Ryan, Vickey Rand. Via VSee – Biddeford (CPI): Todd Goodwin. Gardiner (Uplift): Sheri Dodge and Meagen Mayo.

Cullen Ryan introduced himself and welcomed the group. Participants introduced themselves. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes from last month’s meeting. Minutes were accepted.

**Featured speaker: Jim Martin, Director, Office of Child and Family Services.** [**www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs**](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/)**. Topic: What’s New at OCFS?**

**Cullen:** Nine months ago Jim became the Director of OCFS, after serving as the Director for OADS ([Office of Aging and Disability Services](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/)). This group has done a lot of work with the Blueprint for Effective Transition which ensures that all transitions throughout a person’s life happen seamlessly. One of the most important aspects of the Blueprint is eliminating silos. Jim, having been previously at OADS and now in his current role at OCFS, is in a unique position to work on this.

**Jim Martin:** It is great to see folks! I wanted to come and introduce myself in this capacity, as

 Director of OCFS. I will be presenting OCFS differently than what you’ve seen before. I started with OCFS in December; the time has flown by! We have been doing a lot of strategic planning within OCFS and I will be sharing that with you today. We are very much in line with attempting to eliminate silos. I prefer that this is conversation not just a presentation. Ask questions!

**Begin presentation.** [Click here to view the presentation.](http://www.maineparentcoalition.org/august-2015-presentation.html)

**Jim Martin:** For me, customer service is very important as a state agency. From something as basic as returning an email or phone call, all to way to how we interview children. In 2012, the department went through a large reorganization. OCFS integrated a number of positions and responsibilities. The formal title of Children’s Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) was eliminated. You couldn’t see it reflected anywhere. The intent and desire was that it would be integrated in other facets of OCFS. Even though there were the best of intentions for it to be integrated, this didn’t really happen. There was a lack of clarity and it was diluted; it was unclear where CBHS fit in. One of the first things I did when I came on board was bring Children’s Behavioral Health back under a clear structure within OCFS.

We have been routinely placing kids out of state because the current programs can’t meet their needs. We’re trying to shift that and build the support into the state to care for them here. We have youth in the state spending their days in ERs, or stuck in huge hospitals because there is no other placement option. We have a backlog within Maine that’s a huge problem as well. We have staff working day in and day out to change that. Transition is a major priority for us and will continue to be. Staff turnover is a major challenge for us to provide quality services to families – we’re working on this as well.

As a child welfare agency we have barriers looking at our practices in a retrospective manner. There is a huge gap between reflecting on what happened and learning to change policy to ensure it doesn’t happen again. Rapid Safety Feedback is a practice that allows real time quality assurance using a predictive analytic model (computer program); this will be Maine based. The system helps identify families at the highest level of risk. Instantly, quality assurance staff reach out to the case worker and work together to identify gaps in planning and change the trajectory of that case. With this we’re moving towards a system that removes retrospective quality assurance.

**Question:** This is interesting. If you don’t have a control group how can you see if the intervention that you did in real time made any difference?

**Jim:** We have an evaluator on board to evaluate this for the first couple years, at least. This is an analytic model that’s used to prioritize cases based on information and data we have here in Maine. We track the risk factors involved with serious injuries and deaths in Maine – those risk factors help with the predictive model. The evaluator will look at what happened to the family after the intervention. [Hornby Zeller](http://www.hornbyzeller.com/) is being used as the evaluator. They have decades of experience, specifically in Maine.

**Question:** Are families aware that an analytic tool is being used? I would want to know.

**Jim:** Not necessarily – it’s a completely internal process. That’s good feedback. We will be doing some public announcements about this as well.

**Jim:** I was shocked coming to OCFS that I couldn’t find employment reflected anywhere within CBHS. When we’re talking about transition, about kids becoming adults, employment is the expectation. We’re working with DOL ([Department of Labor](http://www.maine.gov/labor/)), DOE ([Department of Education](http://www.maine.gov/doe/)), VR ([Vocational Rehabilitation](http://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/)), and DOC ([Department of Corrections](http://www.maine.gov/corrections/)) to come up with ways to leverage current services and provide opportunities for vocational training. We’re looking to add vocational planning services to Section 28, Section 65, and iSPA (State Plan Amendment).

**Comment:** CMS ([Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](https://www.cms.gov/)) has different waivers – this is a new waiver from CMS. It is very different from a standard waiver. This is new territory for Maine – there are very few around the country.

**Jim:** For Section 28 and Section 65 we’re looking at how we can drive service planning in the direction of employment, if it’s appropriate. Previously and currently under Section 28 providers were not able to help consumers with anything related to getting ready for work, even though education and vocational training often overlap. Looking case by case, looking at all individuals within CBHS there are some with goals targeting employment. However, it’s not explicit within the rules that it’s allowed; it’s not restricted but it’s not explicitly allowed. We would like it to be explicit. At this point we’re just doing policy work.

**Discussion:**

MaineCare reimbursement for schools is now a fee-for-service setup. It was asked if there is any talk about looking at the structure of the reimbursement so schools can have an easier route providing those preventative services and avoid jumping through so many MaineCare hoops. Money raised through MaineCare revenues is deducted from the school’s reimbursement rate for education. This is a real disincentive for schools to develop those systems when they are very much needed.

**Jim:** The Section 28 service today includes a host of services, one of them being school-based. MaineCare is engaging with the DOE on whether breaking out school-based into its own policy makes sense. As a whole, Section 28 and 65 will be going through rate studies to determine if rates are adequate or not starting this fall. However, I don’t know specifically about looking at the fee-for-service setup.

If you broaden this beyond Section 28 and Section 65 and revisit the school-based issue in general you will widen the tent for all of the students that need transition work and employment needs.

**Jim:** This was a piece in the Blueprint for Effective Transition as well, I believe. We’re looking at a PCP process. The coordinated, consistent planning process is missing. Agencies are doing their own treatment planning. We’re looking at how we bring back services we know were successful, like wraparound, or models previously in place or piloted. How do we align it with the adult system? There are hiccups when a person on a caseload becomes an adult because OADS is a whole new system with new requirements. Why can’t OCFS align with them? We’re actively considering one plan that would bring together all the different aspects of the person’s life.

Children’s case management has only jumped in when there’s a problem instead of being preventative. This sounds like a great solution. The school plan and the MaineCare plan are often very different, sometimes with different time frames (school year vs. calendar year). This is something that needs to be taken into account if we’re going to be serious about transition from OCFS to OADS. From the provider perspective it would be great if expectations were similar across offices.

**Jim:** We’re looking at one plan that brings it all together. It is very fragmented today and it’s a challenge. Aligning the children’s system to the PCP process in the adult system would be very helpful.

Planning is difficult because you can’t set something up until waiver services are offered. If we could look at it ahead of time it would be easier.

**Jim:** The PCP process is more than funding; funding is just a part of it. The PCP should consider other pieces of the individual’s life and how you meet those needs. For a good PCP funding is irrelevant – it’s about the individual.

The transition bill died in the Senate (Special Studies Table). The department has had an internal workgroup on transition. What are the goals for next year? One of the biggest problems with these planning processes is that the engagement of stakeholders happens too late.

**Jim:** Cullen brought the Blueprint for Effective Transition to OADS and OCFS when it was still in draft from. It is a great foundation to start from. The workgroup is looking to align the work that is already underway and identify what pieces aren’t being worked on. This is a great next step in moving the Blueprint forward. For the past several months the workgroup has consolidated the internal department group with the Employment First workgroup. We have developed recommendations, some of which are being implemented like the transition guidebook. Massachusetts has a comprehensive guidebook that could be the basis for a great tool for Maine. We’re working with the Muskie School in creating this. We are very close to having a guidebook for the first time! We need to re-engage that group again and review the recommendations we created. Jenn Fales, SIS Manager at OADS, is in her last year of her MSW program and will be interning with us (while still working for OADS). She will work on bringing that group back together and developing some type of mapping of all the work happening across the state. Somehow we have to organize the work and identify where there are still gaps. Jenn will be with us for a year doing that work and reinstituting the state agency group that was going. Folks who have worked with me in the past know I agree regarding engaging stakeholders in planning process. The [SIS](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/disability/ds/sis/) work is a good example. I can’t think of any other state that has done the amount of stakeholder engagement work that Maine did – five years’ worth of constant engagement.

**Cullen:** When people think of transition they often think of transitioning from youth to adulthood. When the Blueprint group convened, the group decided it should be that transition as well as every other transition throughout one’s lifespan. But that key transition from youth to adulthood starts at OCFS. I wonder if you would be willing to call together the stakeholder group and really pull everyone to the table as soon as possible to get this jump started. We had this idea that had everybody, all the stakeholders, on board and engaged. Now it’s sitting stalled, waiting for someone to lead and move it forward. Could you be that person to move it forward, and start eliminating silos?

**Jim:** We are building this into the work Jenn is doing. I wish I could personally lead it all, but it doesn’t happen that way unfortunately. But yes, absolutely; I would love to support this and keep it moving forward!

**Cullen:** Fantastic, thank you!

It was asked what mechanisms are in place for staff and case managers to serve children and understand the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children, or children who are nonverbal. I know of children where there is no communication happening.

**Jim:** I would love to talk about this. I think a lot of people come to you (Romy) since you are seen as an expert on this but I would love to discuss this with you.

**Cullen:** Thank you for being here and for this excellent presentation and engaging dialogue!

**End of presentation.** *(Round of applause)*

**DHHS Update:**

**Brian McKnight (OADS, DHHS -** [**www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads**](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads)**):** We are continuing to look at Section 21, Priority 2, and reviewing selection criteria. We will have a better sense of this in the next couple of weeks. There are approximately 415 individuals to review. Individuals on Priority 1 continue to be offered services as they come up. In order to move from Priority 2 to Priority 1 Adult Protective Services has to be involved. The department is conscious of aging parents, and increasing medical issues. We are starting to look at other criteria to make those Priority 2 offers. It is very difficult when you start looking at 415 individuals who all deserve an offer. How do you serve the ones in most need? We’re working on that. Once we establish criteria we can start offering services. Some funding for Section 21 was included in the biennial budget, amounting to a little more than $7 million, which will allow approximately 200 people to be offered Section 21.

**Discussion:** Transparency through the criteria selection process will be very important. Additionally, we need to look at the Section 29 caps. There are some individuals that could be served well, and avoid needing Section 21 altogether, if there were simply more hours available under Section 29.

**Brian:** I agree. There are currently over 400 offers out for Section 29. The department is starting to use Resource Coordinators to reach out to the individuals to determine if they are going to accept the service or not. We are also going through the second round of interviews for Bridget’s position and hoping a decision will be made soon. [The Olmstead forums are continuing as well](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/archivednews_autosearch.shtml?id=648805).

**Lebrun Joseph:** The Section 21 rule has gone to the AG’s (Attorney General’s) office for review, with the goal of having a public hearing sometime in September. The RAI (Request for Additional Information) has been completed and is going back to CMS. Within the next few weeks we will be putting together a small parent focus group to look at ways to effectively communicate with families regarding the SIS. If there are any further questions on the SIS do not hesitate to email Jenn Fales: Jennifer.fales@maine.gov.

**Mary Lou Dyer:** The rules have gone to the AG’s office, then they have to go to the Commissioner’s office, the Governor’s office, and then go out for public hearing. My guess is we’re looking at a good seven to eight weeks before the public hearing, realistically taking into account summer vacations.

A parent stated that she received SIS rate figures a while back. She asked if these should be disregarded due to all of the changes being made based on the feedback the department has received.

**Mary Lou Dyer:** Put a big question mark next to them. There have been some changes – some of the limits have been changed, and that means the budgets would be altered. There have been changes in the ratios of workers to individuals as well. I think what you want to see is the proposed rules, they will have the new information.

**Legislative Updates:**

**Mary Lou Dyer (Maine Association for Community Service Providers** [**meacsp.com**](http://meacsp.com/)**):** The Legislature has finally adjourned! While the Appropriations Committee will be meeting once a month starting in September, very little will be done until January. January is a short session, and only emergency bills or bills that have to do with the budget can be introduced. There are a lot of carry over bills that will be considered as well. MACSP has a request out to have a SIS presentation for the Appropriations Committee. We haven’t heard anything back regarding this as of yet. Section 29 is in the process of being reauthorized. Comments are due at the end of August. They are not planning on changing a lot of things. This is a good opportunity to make our argument about increasing the budget limits for Section 29.

**Cullen:** I know you were in Augusta constantly during this past session. Thank you for everything!

**Housing:**

**Cullen:** On the federal side,Congress in on break for the month of August. There will likely be a flurry of activity this fall, and then no activity the following year due to the Presidential election. The THUD (Transportation-Housing and Urban Development) Appropriations Committee in the House and Senate had vastly different proposals. The Senate THUD bill kept fairly adequate funding for many programs but wiped out an entire program, the HOME program. The House bill cut many programs and diverts funding for the National Housing Trust Fund into the HOME fund, while still providing a heavy cut to the program. The disparity was designed to blow things up to force the issue of raising the overall budget caps. HUD funds are part of the very small amount of discretionary funding. Two years ago sequestration put a cap on everything in discretionary finding, for both non-defense discretionary funding and defense discretionary funding. With this everything was capped at an artificially low rate. Due to this 500 Section 8 vouchers are lost in Maine unless sequestration is cured. The Senate bill particularly forces the issue of raising the caps to solve that. Senator Collins played a key role in creating the THUD budget very strategically. This work would have to happen this fall. It is okay to reach out to Senators and folks in Congress to let them know you think HUD programs are important to fund, specifically Section 8.

**Dave Projansky:** MaineHousing andOADS are working on the HUD Section 811 program. MaineHousing still doesn’t have a contract with HUD for the grant; they are expecting it in September. We are collaborating on the purchase of the software system that would handle any kind of waiting list for the program. There are a lot of components to the software system where we can add other factors to it, like Homeward Bound, the waivers, specific criteria for different waitlists, and so on. We’re working on getting that up and running. MaineHousing has also said that they are going to add 33 1915c waivers in addition to the 60-66 vouchers under the Section 811 project. These will be for individuals who qualify for a voucher but are not interested in going into the areas covered by the program (Bangor, Lewiston/Auburn, Portland, Augusta). We’re thinking the rental assistance will be available in March but we’re still figuring out how it’s going to work. The 33 vouchers will be available as soon as MaineHousing gets the agreement from HUD. OADS is working with MaineHousing to develop a letter that will be mailed to everyone on all the waivers. It will be a generic letter asking anyone who is interested in applying for the waiting list for these vouchers should contact MaineHousing.

It was asked if the 60-66 vouchers are for any disability or only individuals with ID/DD.

**Dave:** In order to be eligible for the rental assistance they have to be on a waiver: The brain injury waiver, other related conditions waiver, Section 21, Section 29, or Section 19.

**Update on the DD/ID Continuum of Care**

**Cullen:** We have changed the focus of the discussions to better cater to the purpose.The purpose of this group is to be a think tank for the department, to draw on stakeholders’ knowledge to think about things such as quality of life and how to make the system work the best as changes and initiatives are implemented. There will be more updates from this group at future meetings.

**Other Business, Announcements:**

**Omlstead meetings**

**Arthur Clum:** Maine does not have an Olmstead plan. A plan was developed in 2002, but there were no goals, objectives, or processes to meet the requirements of the [Olmstead Act](http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/olmstead_about.htm). These meetings, organized by OADS, are to gather input regarding what Maine’s Olmstead plan should be. Attending the meetings is a good way to add input to the plan. [Click here for more information on the Olmstead forums](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/archivednews_autosearch.shtml?id=648805).

**Kim Humphrey:** There is a waiver advocacy call on Thursday, August 20th from 5-6pm. This is for people who have been following the SIS changes and for people who want to learn more about it.

**Cullen:** Check out our updated website [www.maineparentcoalition.org](http://www.maineparentcoalition.org)! You can find the title of any of our past presentations: Click the link, and you will be right in the minutes. The website can always use more pictures!

CHOM ([Community Housing of Maine](http://www.chomhousing.org)) will be moving offices in September. We will be able to host meetings one block up the street! Today’s meeting will be the last meeting at this location.We are investing in microphones that should offer better sound quality in hopes that the experience for the remote sites will be improved.

**Cullen:** At our next meeting on **September 14, 2015,** our featured speaker will be **Liz Weaver, Project Manager, Dementia Capable Service Expansion, Southern Maine Agency on Aging.** **Topic: Southern Maine Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative (ADI) Grant.** Also featured will be **Rachel Dyer, Associate Director, Maine Developmental Disabilities Council. Topic: National Core Indicator Results.**

Unless changed, Coalition meetings are on the 2nd Monday of the month from 12-2pm.

***Beginning September 14, 2015, the location of the meeting will be the Burton Fisher Community Meeting Room, located on the First Floor of One City Center in Portland (off of the food court).***