



**Tompkins County**  
**COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD**

Tompkins County Whole Health  
201 East Green Street  
Ithaca, New York 14850-5421

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Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee

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**Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee**  
**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 10:00 a.m. Via Zoom**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Approved 6.13.23

**Present:** Jeffrey Boles, James Beaumont, Nancy Saltzman, and Allison Weiner-Heinemann

**Guests Present:** Briggs Seekins, Challenge; Anne Seepersaud, LifePlan CCO; Michelle Gravel, Springbrook; Jamie Kelly, OPWDD; Madison Saufley, Southern Tier Connect; Cassidy Stanley; Walaa Maharem-Horan; Sally McConnell-Ginet; Christopher Kiser, Racker; Patty, Tvaroha, TC3; and Cindy Sloan, Tompkins County Workforce Development (TCWD)

**Excused:** Sheila McEnery

**Unexcused:** Dorothy Lovelace

**Staff:** Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Deputy Commissioner; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant

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The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by James. Nancy motioned to approve the January 2023 meeting minutes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> by Allison; and Jeff motioned to approve the February 2023 minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> by Allison. All were in favor.  
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**Privilege of the Floor:** None

**Announcements/Correspondence:** James welcomed, Walaa Maharem-Horan, Cassidy Stanley, and Sally McConnell-Ginet who are all interested in membership on the Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee. Cindy shared that TC Workforce Development is planning a disability summit for the downtown Ithaca business area this summer and they are looking for sponsors.

**Provider Updates:**

**Challenge:** Briggs shared that a new vocational manager was hired who will add more levels for pre-vocations in the community. They are moving forward with the partnership with Ithaca College. Their staffing is good.

**Mozaic:** Jennifer Goodman, Director of Clinical Services gave a reminder that their Article 16 Clinic at Challenges location on Danby Road is open. It offers rehabilitation counseling, is accepting referrals, and looking to hire social workers and psychiatrists. Jamie added that some waivers were made permanent in the Waiver Amendment of July 2021 including Community Hab, broker services for people that self-direct. In answering a question regarding higher scrutiny of telehealth services and those needing the service, she said that at least one party must be in a certifying setting, either the clinician or the individual served.

**Racker:** Chris shared that the residential program will be completely full as of next week.

**LifePlan:** Anne shared that they are seeing people in person; preparing for flexibilities when Appendix K ends; connecting members to services; and increasing the outreach in Tompkins County to encourage enrollment into OPWDD services.

**Southern Tier Connect:** Madison shared that they are seeing people in person and preparing for Appendix K to end. Their Ithaca office is moving into an office with Springbrook across the street from the State Theater.

Springbrook: Michelle shared that they offer Access VR services, self-direction services, OPWDD, and pre-vocational to individuals in Lansing and Ithaca.

OPWDD: Jamie provided information regarding data collection on schools' active involvement. She said she couldn't find much more than what is on the website. OPWDD's transition team does reach out to every school district with four to six letters, emails, and telephone calls. She hopes this will encourage schools to be involved and attend these meetings. She said she is excited that school data collection is a focus of the strategic plan.

TC3 NADSP Trainings: Patty Tvaroha, Associate Professor at TC3 shared that she has experience in working with individuals with developmental disabilities and was excited when TC3 was given the opportunity to partner with SUNY to train Direct Support Providers (DSP) in utilizing the full extent of an available grant. With the shortage of DSPs nationwide, she was extremely excited about the opportunity and developed two micro-credentials using the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) criteria. The DSP I program will begin in the summer and DSP II will begin in the fall which will allow employees to complete the program by December 2023. Her PowerPoint presentation provided a graph of how the NADSP must be matched.

Each micro-credential must match the NADSP Badges (compliance of the grant) with two three-credit courses and one field credit course giving employees six credits of college-bearing credits and fitting right into the Human Services AOS program or the certificate program. The budget was drafted for 15 participants per micro-credential and the leftover funds can run again in the spring of 2024.

The MOU from NADSP requires employers to provide documentation of the completion of badges and allows students flexibility to complete the course. The grant covers tuition fees, books, wraparound services, and coaches, and includes an emergency fund.

#### Q&A

This program is for those currently employed as DSPs and looking to enhance their knowledge and skills to get a better footing for their career; and can include prospective DSPs. Patty will reach out to NADSP about available modules for students outside of the work environment regarding medication administration training as Briggs stated that most local residential agencies do not require DSP medication certification.

Patty believes the DSP certification will be helpful in retaining staff. Credentialed DSPs will receive a \$1 increase in salary once the employee completes both micro-credentials. The DSP grant offers stipends of \$250 for the completion of the first micro-credential and \$500 for the completion of the second micro-credential.

Tompkins County Workforce Provider/Job Fair: Cindy Sloan, Workforce Development Specialist at Tompkins County Workforce NY, Office of Employment training shared that a Provider/Job Fair is in the works to be held in-person at the YMCA and virtually. The hybrid fair will have tables to allow organizations/agencies to provide information about their organization, available services, how they can be of help to them or their family members or friends, job opportunity information for interested parties, etc.

TCWD will participate and will advertise through multiple social media platforms, and create flyers, and direct mailings to disseminate information about the agencies and organizations that will participate in the event. Individuals looking for employment would pre-register for an idea of how many to expect. TCWD in partnership with the Department of Labor will run job matches and have put on the New York State job bank. She noted that the last event like this one being planned was very successful.

James complimented Cindy on organizing this Provider/Job Fair event, customized for people with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities. Anne added her concern about it being a hybrid/virtual event. Cindy explained the details and how it has been successful in past events.

James stressed that the Provider Fair will have all local providers/agencies at the event to provide information, resources, and support. He feels it should take place before school ends and all agreed. He will reach out to providers including, Challenge, Unity House, Racker, Catholic Charities, Ithaca Youth Bureau, LifePlan, Southern Tier Connect, Springbrook, Special Olympics, Rally Sports, Access VR, Gigi's Playhouse, Best Buddies, Blue Sky to name a few.

In closing, James said that as discussed previously, a transition roundtable and a workforce roundtable are needed and will be looking for those interested in meeting outside of the DD subcommittee meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 11:11 am.

**The next Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee Meeting is  
May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 am.**