

# **1915C HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES WAIVER REDESIGN TASK FORCE**

## **Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2021 Interim**

**September 20, 2021**

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The 4th meeting of the 1915c Home & Community Based Services Waiver Redesign Task Force was held on Monday, September 20, 2021, at 1:00 PM, in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Julie Raque Adams, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Julie Raque Adams, Co-Chair; Representative Steve Riley, Co-Chair; Senators Danny Carroll and Stephen Meredith; Representatives Daniel Elliott, Norma Kirk-McCormick, and Pamela Stevenson.

Guests: Jason Vincent, Executive Director, Pennyryle Area Development District; Jarrett Haley, Executive Director, Jessica Elkin, Director of Social Services, Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency; Kelly Upchurch, Legislative Chairman, Kentucky Association of Adult Day Centers; Amy Staed, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of Private Providers; Brenda Wylie, State Director, and Julie Josphitis, State Director, Dungarvin.

LRC Staff: Chris Joffrion, Hillary Abbott, and Samir Nasir.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the August 2021, minutes was made by Senator Meredith, seconded by Representative Riley and approved by a voice vote.

### **An Overview of Area Development Districts Waiver Activities and Programmatic Challenged to Service Providers**

Jason Vincent, Executive Director, Pennyryle Area Development District, Jarrett Haley, Executive Director, and Jessica Elkin, Director of Social Services, Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency presented an overview of Area Development District's (ADD) role in waiver services, and detailed the barriers to service delivery ADDs are facing.

In response to questions and comments from Senator Meredith, Ms. Elkin stated that internal ADD staff run waiver case management and financial services in addition to work with various community partners. Mr. Vincent added that in the rural ADDs while

they have similar internal staffing responsibilities as other ADDs, community resources are more limited which leads rural ADDs to perpetually evaluate their performance and capacity.

Senator Meredith commented that there needs to be a top-to-bottom review of regulations relating to ADDs and waiver service providers to see if there is any flexibility to be found to help ADDs better serve all who need services.

In response to questions and comments from Senator Carroll, Ms. Elkin stated that turnover in case management is a problem due to caseload and burnout. Mr. Vincent added that this is not unique to ADDs but is pervasive in case management of this population. Ms. Elkin stated that the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) implementation has fallen on case managers, which creates an incredible workload and has little to do with the actual waiver program. Mr. Vincent added that all ADD case managers are already stretched thin with the services they provide; adding the EVV responsibility to their plate is contributing to overwork and burnout.

#### **Adult Day Health Services, Solutions, and the Workforce Crisis**

Kelly Upchurch, Legislative Chairman, Kentucky Association of Adult Day Centers, presented an overview of the services provided by adult day healthcare centers across the Commonwealth and the barriers they are facing due to workforce shortages and COVID-19.

In response to questions and comments from Senator Adams, Mr. Upchurch stated that beginning in March 2020, adult day healthcare centers closed their day centers and most shifted to community outreach to ensure their participants were receiving services despite not being able to come into the centers. Mr. Upchurch added that most centers have since reopened but some centers did not survive the COVID-19 closure and have closed permanently.

In response to questions and comments from Senator Meredith, Mr. Upchurch stated that ideally all waiver providers would collaborate with each other and resist the urge to compete. Senator Meredith added that provider collaboration is more cost-effective.

#### **Recommendations for Strengthening and Improving the Home and Community Based Waiver Services Workforce**

Amy Staed, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of Private Providers; Brenda Wylie, State Director, Dungarvin; and Julie Josphitis, State Director, Dungarvin, provided an update of the waiver service providers worker shortages and the impact on provider agencies, like Dungarvin, who are facing dire situations, including closure, due to lack of staffing. Ms. Staed discussed how rate increases for providers as well as higher pay-per-hour for service providers is vital to many providers in the state to continue to care for waiver participants.

In response to questions and comments from Senator Carroll, Ms. Staed stated that diversification of services does allow providers to use profits from some services to offset losses from other services, but this does not solve staffing shortages. Ms. Staed added that Dungarvin is a prime example of an agency that has the framework to provide a wide array of services but does not have the staffing to provide those services.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm.