METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Friday April 13th, 2017
9 am – 11 am
The Arc Minnesota
2446 University Ave West, Suite 110
St. Paul, Minnesota
Hennepin/Ramsey Conference Room

Purpose Statement: The purpose of the Regional Quality Council is to promote and connect communities so that people have the services and supports to live a life based on their hopes and dreams. Implement a system to continually monitor and improve the quality of services and supports for people with disabilities by improving person centered outcomes, quality of life indicators and to drive overall systems change.

In attendance: Ann Cirelli, Kayla Nance, Rebecca St. Martin, Rod Carlson, Dagny Norenberg, Chelsea Lorenz, Georgann Rumsey, Tim Sullivan, Erin Paredes, Isabel Taylor

Guest: Wendy Gerlach

1. **Introductions/What's Happening?**
    a. Welcome to Dagny Norenberg, who will be taking over for Andrew on our council
2. **Wendy Gerlach- Microgrant Program Presentation**
    - Accepting applications from those who receive HCBS to help them achieve goals around employment, housing, and community integration. Must be 18, Minnesota resident, currently receiving services, or IEP level 3 or 4 in ages 16+.
    - Applications opened in October. 127 applications received so far and 67 or so have been approved. The rest are in the review process, waiting to be reviewed, or have been rejected. 45 days turnaround tops, typically takes about 30 days. Requests average $800. Hard copies of applications are accepted (though website is quicker).
    - If the grant is for $500 or over, The Arc sends the request to the DHS for approval. If a waiver will cover it, then they can save the Microgrant Program's "pot of money" for those whose waivers do not cover it. Also confirms they're on a waiver and thus eligible.

- Grant recipients sign a photo release so that they can be included in promotional materials.
- Examples of what microgrants have gone towards include deposits for housing, purchasing furniture, accessibility items, supplies and equipment for starting own business, clothing for interviews or specific job. Community integration is more of an open category—classes, registration fees, YMCA memberships, voice GPS, voice lessons. This grant is through the Innovation Solutions Grant Program—looking for creative ideas, things people want and need for themselves.
- Dakota County is working towards an agreement with Lyft, have funded 2-3 people who needed that bridging until the program is in motion. Pilot program in Dakota County. Hoping to expand.
- People in Intermediate Care Facilities are not eligible at this time. The Microgrants staff will be going to DHS in a month to ask to extend the program, because technically it ends in September. They are also interest in expanding eligibility**.** Since it was a new program, DHS wanted to keep it small. The initial goal was to fund 300 people at about $500-600 each; however, the average amount requested has turned out to be higher than that.
- Microgrants team has an outreach and marketing specialist—a lot of outreach is being done through vocational rehab, case managers, and the microgrants website. Calling case managers in different regions and tabling at different events. Case managers have been the best resource because they directly know about situations that could utilize these grants. Susan, Microgrants staff member, recently recorded a webinar on the program.
    - **i.** Rebecca has links to lists of licensed providers as well as Facebook group communities for self-advocates to share with Wendy to spread awareness
    - **ii.** Dagny does a webinar every month about person-centeredness, last Wednesday of every month, and can share this program during the announcements. Wendy can supply her/anyone interested with brochures.
    - **iii.** Tim can share contact info for about a third of the contracted case managers through the state through Hennepin County.
- Limitations are important to acknowledge—send Wendy the “plea” about the wider populations that could use these funds, and she will share ideas with DHS. Hoping to

keep going through 2019. If program is shown to be working, more likely to get funding. Still picking up traction. Wendy thinks DHS thought things would go faster, but the applications require thoughtfulness and creativity, microgrants aren't used for emergency funds, review process takes time, etc.

- Microgrants team hope to come to the SQC meeting in May to get the word out. Wendy shared some success stories—including ones where providers, insurance etc. should have been able to intervene but they didn't, so the microgrant made a tangible difference.

3. Tim Sullivan's State Quality Council (SQC) Updates

- Guardian issue is sitting with legal team for a response, still waiting on that front. Have an impermanent fix that we're using to conduct the interviews but we'd like a definitive answer before moving on.
- Another conversation is going on around longer interviews; the short interview is already 45 minutes. Should we scrap it or move forward with the long interview? Also conversations around what platform to use for potential long interviews.
- The rest of the work at SQC has been around the organization itself. Lingering questions about roles DHS, SQC should play now that we have added the RQCs. Frustrating to be in this process, but that's what happens when an organization grows—but it's taking forever to get responses, feedback on things we need to move forward. Next meeting, supposed to vote on bylaws which we technically haven't had over the years. Part of growing process was getting that together in one place.
- One question is the RQCs and who is responsible for creating new ones. RQCs have a contract with DHS—but doesn't delineate how DHS relates to SQC relates to RQC… everyone trying to figure out who has the final say in which portions of the triangulated agreement. Complicated with different divisions of the state disagreeing on topics—Ombudsman giving the okay to move on without guardian consent, review board saying we haven't done that in the past, etc. Guardianship conversation is important to have, and there are many issues. What kind of rights do guardians have? Sensitive topic.
- Also issues with DHS's databases that they can't afford to upgrade. Current DHS technology is not going to catch up, which impacts this process. Guardian info is frequently incorrect, or not included at all, which is a barrier. Info is only as good as what

case managers have put in the system, but there are so many contracted CMs now, they have limited time and data entry is not a priority.

4. **Regional Quality Council (RQC) Updates**
    a. **Interview Updates**
        i. Of the last batch of names, 50 or so didn't have phone numbers, but we're going ahead with sending the letters in case they want to reach out to us that way
        ii. As of today, we have completed 60 interviews, 10 or 11 this week. End of the month will be 20-25 total, most we've done in a month. Between Kayla and Isabel, 3 interns and 6 volunteers, we have been able to manage multiple interviews per week with 2 people attending.
        iii. Majority have been on CADI waiver, followed by DD and Home Care.
        iv. Biggest issues seen consistently:
            1. Housing—especially for those on Home Care waiver, without case managers or those resources to help them navigate the system.
            2. Employment. Out of 60 people, 33 are not working at all. Nearly all expressed the desire to work but don't have the resources to navigate the system, had to quit for health reasons/have been out for a long time and don't know where to start/can't work due to SSI. 6 individuals doing in-center employment, 9 people working, and all part time work.
            3. Staff turnover noted as an issue with most individuals. Some individuals who have had consistent staff for many years have had to settle for substandard care because they don't know if they'll be able to get anyone else. However, we have also encountered some special relationships between staff members and individuals.
            4. Transportation also an issue—if not, it's typically because a family member can provide transportation.
                a. (Rebecca has been able to access cab service and Lyft through a lot of self-advocacy, but it's a difficult process. Hopeful that the Dakota County Lyft program can provide this for more people.)
        v. What would the process look like if we started to intervene? How to go about this? Focus on smaller population or certain issue, i.e. people who are trying to

transition to a different type of housing? MNChoices integration-- would that require that we be more involved, and what would that look like?

1. Rod has been working with Simply Connect, which puts together statewide databases in multiple states. Exploring what it might look like if all of our info was in a place where you build a lifelong profile that connects to everything—pharmacy, doctor's prescription, ordering medication, etc. Database inaccuracy is a concern. Altair has a grant (because they serve more than 20% of people with disabilities in Minnesota), trying to figure some things out. "There are other states that have fixed" database concerns that serve more people than Minnesota does. Health Information Exchange—what might a broader database look like, how could it be more efficient. Other states are doing this.

b. Process for utilizing interpretive services

i. We have translated the materials into several languages and have begun sending out the letters. We will be working with The Language Banc to conduct phone calls and interviews.

5. Small Group Discussions

1. Membership/Council Process

a. Making changes to size stipulated in charter, discussion on whether or not the terms should have a renewal. Discussed making decisions more of a formal process with a larger group. Conversation will continue next time.

2. Reviewing Interview Summary process and follow-up

a. Summaries feel almost dictated, like they come right from the source, which is a positive

b. Small group had many ideas for resources to add to resource sheet, including peer support groups, Hennepin Housing Key, DHS website, and more (Isabel documented elsewhere)

c. Rod: asking the individual to rank their priorities as part of the interview and reflecting that in summary—direct way to know which issues are most important to those we interview, as well as where to start for each individual person

d. Different resources based on needs?

e. Different format options: dividing into sections such as housing, employment, etc., so individuals can pinpoint what they want; or grid/chart format for increased readability

6. What's Working/What's Not

a. What's Working

i. Love the Microgrant idea! Can we expand the language to include the arts?
ii. Thank you for always having little snacks and drinks
iii. Breakout sessions occurring in separate rooms
iv. Agenda flowed really well today—felt like we got everything we needed
v. Kayla! And staff/volunteers
vi. Small groups. I like the brain power!
vii. Clear agenda, great conversation

b. What's Not Working

i. Some are talking too fast still
ii. Snacks are in crinkly wrappers and cause communication interference
iii. Fragrance situation is better but may be due to few attendees. Good that I was able to find seating away from others who are wearing
iv. Must reach more people with Microgrant program. Can the internet somehow help?

7. Next Meeting- May 11th, 2018, 9am-11am