METRO REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Friday, April 14, 2023
9:00 am – 11:00 am

The Regional Quality Councils shall:

1. Support efforts and initiatives that drive overall systems and social change to promote inclusion of people who have disabilities in the state of Minnesota
2. Improve person-centered outcomes in disability services; and
3. Identify or enhance quality of life indicators for people who have disabilities.

(Please Note: As the associate, Jeffrey has requested that if you do not understand him please ask that he types out his statement or reply for understanding…do not pretend).

Meeting Attendance

Council Member Attendance: Diane, Frank, Judi Marie, Cassandra, Robin

Guest Attendance: Tayler Guccione (Arc staff), Olivia Lape (Arc staff), Darrell Paulsen (Disability advocate)

Staff Attendance: Kerri, JoAnn, Donna

Meeting Overview

1) Introductions and Workgroup Updates @9:05am

- Self-introductions (everyone)
  All attendees welcomed Darrell Paulsen and did self-introductions. The Attendees are a mix of parent advocates who have adult children with disabilities, community advocates and providers, and DHS reps who work within disability services. Darrell is a disability advocate from Maple Wood working on behalf of people with disabilities and seniors in the areas of housing and transportation.
- Staffing Shortage Workgroup update (Kerri)
  The workgroup is busy researching legislative bills and creating plain language documents. They did due diligence on educating themselves on bills effecting people with disabilities. Since the end of the legislative session is nearing, the workgroup is now focusing its efforts on writing a letter to

legislatures advocating for Omnibus bills pertinent to the lives of people with disabilities and the workforce shortage.

Some examples are:

- ✓ The health human services bills containing articles pertaining to disability waiver rates- advocating for increases in rates so they account for changes in inflation and data collection.
- ✓ Competitive wages for DSPs- advocating for DSP wages to be comparable with other jobs and to increase it. The bills are making their way through the Senate and House and it is the House that needs more pressure from us to increase the chances of getting them passed.
- ✓ Life Sharing Service- roommate program paring 2 compatible people to live together and share a living space.
- ✓ MAEPD reform- advocating for changes to MAEPD to enable more people with disabilities to work as DSPs without the fear of losing their health benefits.
- ✓ Expanding access of shared services- enable people with disabilities to share staff and at the same time relieve the workforce shortage.
- ✓ Workforce retention and recruitment for providers- giving providers greater ability to retain their workers by allowing providers to give their workers incentives such as benefits and childcare.

Once the staff have finished editing the letter, they will send it out. Judi Marie mentioned once legislatures decide on legislative budgets, they form conference committees (6 to 8 people to a committee). It is the members of the conference committees who hold all the power and ultimately decide a bill's fate. The workgroup should focus on trying to sway these members. Darrell mentioned 2 members to focus on, Abler and Hoffman.

In addition to writing a letter, the workgroup is thinking about conducting a podcast interviewing people with disabilities and others and asking how the workforce shortage has impacted them. They are also thinking about holding a legislative forum.

2) Join Breakout Room Workgroups (60 min) @9:30am

<u>Workgroups:</u>

- **Employment Workgroup**
- **Housing Workgroup**
- **Culture of Safety/Data Action Group (DAG) Workgroup:**

- This workgroup meets separately.
- The "data action group (DAG)" meets the first Thursday of each month from 9-11am via Zoom. The DAG's purpose is to review systemic critical incident data from DHS' Culture of Safety reviews in an effort to generate considerations for disability services system change. In other words, this group is charged with summarizing the systemic issues that surface from the incident review data and provide recommendations to DHS about how the system could improve to better serve people with disabilities. Expectations of people who join the DAG includes reviewing data between meetings, engaging in discussions about the incident data and considerations, and using a "culture of safety" mindset.
  For more information, click on link below.
  https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/news-initiatives-reports-workgroups/long-term-services-and-supports/culture-of-safety/
- The next meeting will be on **Thursday, May 4, 2023 from 9-11am**.
  Down below is the zoom link to the meeting.
  https://arcminnesota.zoom.us/j/81121977247?pwd=SDBmVW1RQWFlVHBHKy96a1JESElEUT09
  Meeting ID: 811 2197 7247
  Passcode: 678410
  This workgroup would like more members. Please notify an RQC staff if you are interested in joining.

- **Staffing (DSPs & PCAs) Shortage Workgroup:**
  - This workgroup meets separately.
  - The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 25, 2023 from 11am-12:30pm
    Join Zoom Meeting
    https://arcminnesota.zoom.us/j/81885206657?pwd=emMvYVhjUWtEangvbE5mTUNJdFZCUT09
    Meeting ID: 818 8520 6657
    Passcode: 330275

3) **Group Discussion (20 min) @10:35am**

Share what each workgroup worked on with the rest of the attendees.

- **Employment Workgroup**

Kerri gave a synopsis of what the workgroup is working on. The workgroup is focusing on job seekers. They want to know what would be helpful to them in finding competitive work. They know current legislation is trying to ban subminimum wages. This ban might scare people at first but will have an overall positive impact in the future. People will worry how they will find competitive work

and obtain and maintain a desirable job. The workgroup wants to try to create and provide resources to relieve some of these fears. They will hold listening sessions and conduct focus groups asking people with disabilities already employed what they found helpful when they were job seeking. They will also ask people with disabilities seeking jobs what they need to find a job and to identify barriers preventing them from obtaining this. The workgroup wishes to help them overcome some of these barriers. Olivia Lape who is helping the workgroup gave an update on the results of her interviews with people with disabilities and their job experiences. Olivia mentioned they felt they experienced some discrimination. Only a handful of employers are known to hire workers with disabilities and people with disabilities tend to gravitate towards these employers when seeking jobs. However, it would be nice if more employers would hire people with disabilities. The workgroup would like to sway more employers to hire people with disabilities. The workgroup wants to do listening sessions especially with people from Voc Rehab services. They want to know what barriers they run into and what resources they have. The workgroup also wants to connect with Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTIC) and see what resources they have when working with transition age people.

- **Housing Workgroup**

Frank gave a synopsis of what the workgroup is working on. The workgroup is putting together some media content (videos) to bring more awareness to housing issues. Each video will have a goal in mind and will include peoples' personal stories relating to housing especially barriers. These include income caps and low wages, limited access and resources, and restrictive rules preventing choice. JoAnn added she reached out to Olivia who is interviewing self-advocates talking about housing. Olivia will have these interviews available to use so they can add more content to the videos. JoAnn was curious to know who else the workgroup should reach out to and expressed that anyone can participate and share their housing experiences. Judi Marie spoke up and said she could help and share the struggles her son goes through especially when it comes to transportation or the lack there of and the shortage of staff to drive him places.

4) Other Things to Share & Reminders

- Next council meeting is on **Friday, May 12, 2023 from 9-11am.**
- Actively seeking new council members.
  If anyone has someone to recommend to serve as a potential member for the council, please email Arc staff, JoAnn. Or if anyone has suggestions on how or where to seek potential members, feel free to share your ideas.
- Anything else???