

Summary of Proceedings - July 6, 2009
Most Integrated Setting Coordinating Council (MISCC) Meeting
Empire State Plaza, Meeting Room 6

I. MISCC Meeting Participants

Members

Commissioner Diana Jones Ritter, Chair	<i>OMRDD</i>
Commissioner Michael F. Hogan	<i>OMH</i>
Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen	<i>DHCR</i>
Chief Operating Officer Jane Lynch	<i>CQCAPD</i>
Director Michael J. Burgess	<i>SOFA</i>
Deputy Commissioner Rebecca Cort	<i>VESID/SED</i>
Frank Coco	<i>VESID/SED</i>
William C. Koester	<i>DOH</i>
Nancy White Martinez	<i>OCFS</i>
Bill Panepinto	<i>OASAS</i>
Thomas Vaughan	<i>DOT</i>

Ex Officio Members

Director Shelia M. Carey	<i>DDPC</i>
Elise A. Melesky	<i>OTDA</i>
Mario Musolino	<i>DOL</i>

Public Members

Patricia L. Fratangelo	<i>Onondaga Community Living</i>
Lisa A. Holmes	<i>Tompkins County Office for the Aging</i>
Constance Laymon	<i>Consumer Directed Choices</i>
Harvey Rosenthal	<i>NY Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services</i>

II. Chair Welcome and Remarks

- Commissioner Ritter welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledged and thanked advocates for attending, and noted that Michael Seereiter, Program Director for Mental Hygiene Services for Governor Paterson was present.
- Lisa Holmes, Director of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, was introduced as the newly appointed public member to the MISCC, representing expertise in recipients for services available to Senior Citizens with disabilities.
- Commissioner Carrión from the Office of Children and Family Services was thanked for providing the Braille translation of handout material for the meeting. Sign language interpreters were also thanked for being present to help with the meeting.
- Commissioner Ritter announced that the meeting would be extended by 30 minutes.

- Commissioner Ritter acknowledged the 10th anniversary of the landmark Olmstead decision. President Barack Obama celebrated the anniversary by launching "The Year of Community Living." The Obama Administration announced that it would undertake the task of aggressively addressing barriers that prevent some Americans with disabilities from enjoying a meaningful life as part of their community. A Coordinating Council of several federal agencies has been created to address barriers to community living. As a first step, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has published an advanced notice of proposed rule making in the Federal Register inviting public input on proposed changes to federal regulations giving states greater flexibility to serve people based on their individual needs rather than on diagnosis. A copy of the Federal Register was in the packets disseminated at the registration desk. Comments are due by August 21, 2009.
- Commissioner Ritter stated that the 10-year anniversary of the Olmstead decision is an opportunity to reflect on how far the MISCC has come in New York State towards helping people of all ages with disabilities live in the most integrated settings. But it is also an opportunity to look at how far the Council has yet to go. We all must become recommitted to meeting the full potential of the MISCC statute.
- The MISCC is at a pivotal point. There is great work happening in the MISCC Housing, Transportation and Employment Committees. There are wonderful cross-agency collaborations developing among state agencies; and new partnerships forming between agencies, advocates, providers, families and individuals with disabilities. MISCC has been very effective in reporting on its accomplishments but it is now time to transition to the creation of a statewide plan.
- Information and data will be a central part of this process. Each of the committees is focusing on data which will assess the needs of New Yorkers with disabilities and begin the process of planning for how these needs will be addressed. The first step in moving toward a plan will be evident in the 2009 MISCC Annual Report, which will include recommendations on data and regulations.

III. MISCC Report Template and Timeline

- There was a discussion of a new template and timeline for the 2009 MISCC Annual Report. Draft documents were included in the packet and on the website. The goal is to have a format that is easy to read and much more user friendly than the 200 page report that was done last year. It was also stated that this report should lay the ground work for a MISCC plan.
- Feedback on the drafts included the need for data that could impact budget recommendations. In addition concerns were raised about the role stakeholders will play in developing agency reports.
- In response, there was an acknowledgement that agencies are at different stages of stakeholder engagement but that the expectation is that stakeholders are actively involved in framing the MISCC agenda of each agency.

- Concerns were raised that while there are many positive things coming out of MISCC they have not be shared at the local level. In many localities, people are unaware of MISCC and the work it is doing. There was a suggestion that perhaps MISCC needs a communication plan.

IV. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act / State Budget

- SED/VESID reported on its efforts to use ARRA funds to meet the needs of more individuals. They have seen an increase in new referrals. They are working with RSA to implement increased Independent Living funding. VESID also reported on RSA's success in getting an amendment to allow ARRA Independent Living Center funding dollars to be spent over five-years instead two-years.
- OASAS reported on its state budget efforts to focus on permanent supported housing. Two programs were discussed that accomplish this goal: 1) a scattered site subsidy rental program for 600 individuals which would include employment counseling and supports, and 2) a 50 to 100 unit upstate housing initiative which would include six rural communities. Both programs build on the NY/NYIII initiative. OMH and DHCR also collaborated on these initiatives.
- OMRDD reported on its state budget efforts including \$26 million for new residential development to move people out of developmental centers, out of inappropriate placements in nursing homes and into individualized settings. There was also \$15 million to support people in individualized settings. These are supports that are wrapped around an individual to help them live independently within the community in places of their choice, receiving the types of services that include case management, employment counseling and transportation.
- OMH reported on its collaboration with DOL to increase the number of peer employment opportunities.
- SOFA reported on their Community Empowerment Grants. SOFA will fund 15 local groups to either fund or develop a plan for aging in the community and self-help types of projects, including six in rural areas.

V. Stakeholder Presentations

- OCFS- Mary Beth Metzger who is the Director of Personnel for the Office of General Services assigned to the Homeland Security office, and a former member of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped discussed her experience working with OCFS. Karen L. Clark, Ph.D., Director, Bridges to Health provided an extensive overview of the Bridges to Health Program.

- DOT- They did not have stakeholder groups as the human services agencies do but their presentation focused on paratransit. In 2008 there were 2.7 billion public transit trips, of which 6 million were paratransit trips. Funding is a challenge due to state budget cuts. There is \$15 million in ARRA funding for transportation but it can only be used for capital to replace existing vehicles not expand para transit routes. Chuck MacNeil, Deputy Executive Director for Operations at CDTA and Luis Acosta, Manager of Sales and Customer Service for Access Transit gave an overview of paratransit issues.
- CQCAPD- Regis Obijiski, Chair of the Advisory Board for the Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, presented on surrogate decision making committees and the Interagency Coordinating Council On Services to Persons who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind or Hard-of-Hearing. The thrust of this three-year initiative is to prepare legislative and policy recommendations to the Governor and Legislature. Seven state agencies are involved, as well as stakeholders who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard-of-hearing. The first report is due November 2009 and a second is due 2010 and finally a statewide plan is due in 2011.

VI. Public Comment Period

1. A stakeholder from the Newburgh area shared her personal story living in a group home when she would prefer to live more independently.
2. A stakeholder shared concerns regarding OTDA building and office accessibility. The importance of having ADA and Affirmation Action Officers was highlighted. There were also specific concerns raised about Schenectady County. An announcement was also made about the Disability Awareness Access Festival being held in July 2009.
3. A stakeholder residing at Broome DDSO shared her personal story of wanting to live in an apartment.
4. A representative from the Southern Tier Independence Center raised concerns about the fragmentation of the service delivery system, stressed the importance of discharge planning and expressed the need to partner with Independent Living Centers in order to achieve community integration. Concerns were also raised about dually diagnosed individuals in the OMH and OMRDD systems.
5. A representative from the Independent Living Center in Newburgh thanked Commissioner Ritter for recognizing the 10th Anniversary of the landmark Olmstead decision and voiced concerns regarding the direction of MISCC. He suggested that the Council provide a Mission, Vision and Principal Statement at the beginning of each MISCC meeting.
6. A representative from Community Access read statements on behalf of three individuals with disabilities seeking employment and housing. She also expressed the need to move from segregated to more integrated housing and employment programs and services.

7. An individual shared her personal story of success. She identified herself as someone diagnosed with relapsing and remitting Multiple Sclerosis who is living in the community. She wanted to thank the MISCC because she feels that she has had some success.
8. An representative from ADAPT advocated on behalf of someone who was hospitalized for a number of weeks and lost access to transition and consumer directed services. This individual wanted to get out of the hospital and return home. Her doctor said he didn't know how to fill out the appropriate forms so instead admitted her to a nursing home.
9. Another representative from ADAPT provided feedback on the MISCC stakeholder presentations. Concerns were raised about a lack of focus on moving people into the community. Concerns were also raised about agencies that have yet to engage their stakeholders. The speakers encouraged the Council to focus on measurable goals and to more actively engage the Independent Living Centers in their efforts.
10. A representative from We the People asked that survivors of forced psychiatric treatments be included in MISCC activities.
11. An individual from Westchester County shared her personal story of trauma and psychiatric recovery. She has worked for the past fifteen years as an advocate. She stressed the need for trauma informed services across all systems.

VII. Medicaid Infrastructure Grant

Commissioner Hogan provided an update on the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. Background information was provided in the packets.

VIII. Meeting Wrap Up

- There was not enough time for committee reports. Commissioner Ritter apologized for cutting this item from the Agenda. She noted that most of the MISCC work is happening in the committees and that they are doing an excellent job.
- Commissioner Ritter provided her closing comments and ended the discussion with an emphasis on the need for data.
- The next meeting of the MISCC will be on Monday, October 5, 2009 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in Meeting Room 6 Concourse
- Meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.