

OREGON DISABILITIES COMMISSION – EMPLOYED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday • July 20, 2009 • 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Conference Room 137A/B • DHS Building • 500 Summer Street NE Salem, Oregon
97301

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Judith Cunio

Sara Kendall

Ron Heagy

Norman Kohler

Bill Lynch

Eugene Rada

Scott Lay

Tim Baxter

Ruth McEwen

Tina Treasure

Frank Synoground

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Kathryn Weit

Damon Terzaghi

Doug Stone

Mike Oliver

Brian Delashmutt

Mike Volpe

Jan Campbell

STAFF PRESENT:

Max Brown, Advocacy Coordinator

AGENDA ITEMS:

CALL ALL TO ORDER

- Introductions
- Review and Approve Agenda and Minutes

REVIEW PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

TOPICS FOR PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

DISABILITY AWARDS FOR EMPLOYERS

REVIEW FACT SHEET AND OTHER TOPICS

ADJOURN

This document can be obtained in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities upon request by contacting: Kelsi Eisele, 503-945-6482, Fax: 503-373-7823, or TTY: 1-800-282-8096. Available formats are: large print, Braille, audio tape recording, electronic format and oral presentation.

CALL TO ORDER

Bill Lynch called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Introductions

EPD Subcommittee members and staff introduced themselves.

Bill Lynch reviewed the agenda and the minutes. The committee raised no objections to either document.

Announcements:

- Bill distributed *Oregon Perspectives*, a publication by the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities that covers employment opportunities.
- Judy Cunio mentioned that her sister is now a participant in the EPD program.

Action items: Bill examined the minutes to discuss action items from the previous meeting.

Norm Kohler asked about an item (the letter on the Senate Finance Committee's health reform white paper) that was voted on in the previous meeting minutes. Bill Lynch and Max Brown responded that committee members were drafting a letter regarding the Senate Finance Committee's white paper on health care reform. One of the proposals calls for the states to no longer have income disregards, and another proposal is to have some higher income earners with disabilities join an insurance exchange pool. The letter would be sent to the Oregon Senate delegation.

Action Item – Once finished and reviewed by Sara Kendall and Damon Terzaghi, Max will send to EPD subcommittee for review.

The group discussed the DHS Form 539E that was sent to the group. The form includes a question for individuals in the EPD program – (1) has the EPD program made it possible for you to be employed? and (2) have you increased your income due to the EPD program?

Bill also reported on the action item of where the participation fee for the EPD program goes. SPD staff said that the fee is deposited with the Division of Medical Assistance Programs (DMAP).

Sara Kendall distributed a chart of different states Medicaid Buy-In programs. Max also included two different charts that compares Buy-In programs on criteria of eligibility, number of program participants, and data on earnings, medical utilization, number of participants charged a premium or fee, work stoppage protection, the year in which a state program began, and other program data from other states.

REVIEW PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The group discussed Scott Lay's paper on the EPD program from its founding eleven years ago. The paper discusses the philosophical underpinnings of the program – most notably the commitment to creating conditions in which individuals with disabilities can remain self-sufficient through employment and being allowed to retain more income and resources. It was suggested by several subcommittee members that the subcommittee meet with key SPD managers to discuss the program's philosophy, ensuring that the subcommittee is doing its work consistently with department policy.

TOPICS FOR PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The subcommittee looked at a list of ongoing issues the subcommittee has discussed in the meeting packet. The ongoing issues include:

- DHS Worker Training
- Public Outreach and Awareness
- Number of Individuals Leaving Work and Why
- Inclusion of New Groups into the Program (Developmental Disabilities, Physical Disabilities, and Mental Health)
- Retirement
- Employment Initiatives

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- Number of Participants not Working

The group also suggested the other topics from the first meeting, including:

- Residential offsets
- Resource limits
- Approved accounts
- Philosophy- poverty model vs. employment model
- Sustainability and growth of EPD
- Educating Legislators (this was a topic that was limited to Legislative Session if it appeared the EPD program was in jeopardy).

Sara Kendall mentioned that Jeff Stell was going to conduct educational sessions to providers and case managers in September. The audience will include Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities case managers in the county and brokerage systems, contract providers, and other community organizations. Ruth McEwen asked if this would include educational outreach for individuals with physical disabilities. Max Brown explained that this would be different than the quarterly, non-mandatory EPD training, which Sara added is a two-day training while this outreach is more high-level, half day training about the program. The group thought that inviting case managers from the physical disabilities side might be good to raise or deepen program awareness. Ron added that there are reporting requirements that clients and case managers must stay on top of; one could easily get in trouble if there is failure to report.

DISABILITY AWARDS FOR EMPLOYERS

Bill Lynch briefly mentioned that the Commission was exploring with other organizations, such as the Oregon Business Leadership Network, reviving an awards program for employers who employ individuals with disabilities. The awards would be competitive and would be in a few or several categories. The Commission is forming a subcommittee on this initiative.

REVIEW FACT SHEET AND OTHER TOPICS

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The subcommittee discussed the factsheet – there is a developmental disabilities participant that will be used for profiles. The next data run for the program can be used on the back of the factsheet.

Sara also distributed the new EPD brochure from the department. The subcommittee and the Commission submitted comments, many of which had an impact on the final version of the brochure.

Ron Hagee asked again about the future work of this subcommittee, and the group discussed the need for more SPD participation. It was resolved to draft a letter inviting SPD management to the next meeting in August. The group wants to make sure its understanding of the EPD's program philosophy, and possible areas for recommendation, are realistic and receptive to the department. Ron emphasized that the group is a set of professionals, and that the subcommittee must be oriented to accomplishing something to make the program better.

Bill Lynch will draft the letter, have the subcommittee review it, and then Max Brown will submit it to SPD.

ADJOURNMENT

The next EPD Subcommittee meeting will be scheduled for 17 August, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:00 p.m.