

KENDRA JOHNSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Fifth District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

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DDDS Task Force

Direct Support Professionals Subcommittee Minutes
November 1st, 2019

Chair Kendra Johnson called the subcommittee meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. Member present included: Susannah Eaton-Ryan, Cynthia Campbell, Dana Curry-Hamler, Lisa Elias, Gary Cassedy, Shane White, Yemi Awodiya, Temeka Thompson, and Vivian Turner

Rep. K Johnson welcomed the subcommittee members and asked each member to introduce themselves.

Rep. K Johnson transitioned to review the October 18th, 2019 DSP meeting minutes.

Members of the committee provided a few edits and a motion to accept the minutes with the provided changes was proposed by Vivian Turner and seconded by Shane White.

Rep. K Johnson thanked Susannah Eaton-Ryan for providing a list of day and residential providers, as well as the Staff Stability Survey. She asked the members to provide feedback.

Gary Cassedy noted that the survey data is from two years ago and may not be relevant.

Cynthia Campbell mentioned that she researched DSP salaries on Zip Recruiter and Indeed that provided some insight into the hourly wage of a DSP. She continued to note that Indeed cited Delaware's average hourly wage at \$11.70 and \$21,865 annually, while the nation's average annual wage is \$23,000.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan questioned how the website defines a DSP worker, as the committee mentioned there are many job titles that fall under DSP.

Garry Cassedy mirrored Susannah's concern and thinks there is more reliable data available.

Rep. K Johnson noted that the group will find a variety of job titles that perform similar tasks. Thus, she suggested taking a random sample of job descriptions.

Dana Curry-Hamler mentioned that the residential titles will be similar, while the day provider titles will differ quite a bit.

P.O. Box 1401 Dover, Delaware 19903
Office: 302-744-4351 Fax: 302-739-2313
Kendra.Johnson@delaware.gov

Temeka Thompson noted that the state provides a standard for DSPs and what is required of them.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan asked why the subcommittee is seeking job descriptions and wage data when DDDS already has the information.

Rep. K Johnson emphasized that the public and elected officials do not know this information. It is important to ensure that the masses know the full scope of the situation.

Gary Cassedy pointed to SCR 62, which states DDDS is to provide the data. Because of this, he suggested asking DDDS again for more concrete data.

Rep. K Johnson agreed and said she will ask DDDS for wage data.

Gary Cassedy noted the importance of de-identifying the providers names because of competition.

Yemi Awodiya asked if this information is provided through the data cost report.

Gary Cassedy noted that DDDS does not require the data cost report in their contracts anymore.

Yemi Awodiya, Dana Curry-Hamler, Susannah Eaton-Ryan, and Gary Cassedy all agreed that their respective organizations would be willing to share wage data.

Gary Cassedy emphasized the importance of data integrity. Namely, that many providers obtain their data differently, so the subcommittee needs to be on the same page when interpreting the data provided. He offered to provide the subcommittee with a draft of a definition of a DSP, the average hourly wage formula, and an example using the formula to ensure DDDS fully understands what the subcommittee is asking for and how to maintain the data's integrity.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan explained that the rates are broken down by services, so the subcommittee may want to breakdown the rate for residential, job support, and day supports.

Cynthia Campbell noted that she is often asked to donate money to providers, however she is concerned that fundraising for salaries is not sustainable.

Vivian Turner mentioned that the rate only covers 80% so the additional 20% has to come from somewhere. Thus, organizations have little choice but to fundraise.

Rep. K Johnson transitioned the meeting to the turnover data provided by DDDS since the last subcommittee meeting. She continued to explain that DDDS did not provide data

from all providers, however the agency has reached out to all providers to obtain the remaining data.

Rep. K Johnson continued, explaining that she spoke to Thomas Cook in relation to the current funding and how it relates to what wage can be supported. She provided the subcommittee with a copy of his breakdown, which illustrated only 81.2% of the rate is funded.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan urged the committee not to get lost in the numbers, rather the narrative that the rates are not fully funded. She expressed concern that many long reports have been written about the small mechanics of this, yet no one reads it.

Gary Cassedy emphasized that the \$10.35 per hour figure is the average DSP wage, not the starting wage. He is worried this figure is often misrepresented.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan asked how to best represent this information to the General Assembly and Governor.

Gary Cassedy suggested that the subcommittee provides brief and concise information and to use the data as supporting evidence.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan suggested providing an infographic that visually depicts the information in a concise way.

Yemi Awodiya asked what year the data was obtained.

Rep. K Johnson said the report was received in 2018 so the data used is 2017 data.

Vivian Turner offered to send the subcommittee a copy of the most recent rate study.

Cynthia Campbell suggested the subcommittee's recommendations include anecdotal evidence, such as how Elwyn increased their wages, which lead to greater organizational outcomes.

Rep. K Johnson agreed, but mentioned the subcommittee needs to be careful when portraying the success to ensure the readers have a full picture of the circumstances.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan reemphasized the importance of simplicity and clearness in these reports.

Rep. K Johnson redirected the group to go over the next meetings deliverables. First being, the DSP definition and rate methodology from Gary Cassedy. Second being, to request the wage data from DDDS using the above methodology with a clear deadline. Third being, to follow up with DDDS regarding the previously requested turnover data and fourth being, for Vivian Turner to forward the most recent rate study and for Susannah Eaton-Ryan to forward the infographic.

Rep. K Johnson adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Sophia Vassar

Public Comment:

N/A