

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
December 9th, 2019

Chair Kendra Johnson called the subcommittee meeting to order at 2:17 p.m. Member present included: Rep. Hensley, Harriet Williams-Glover, Cynthia Campbell, Dana Curry-Hamler, Lisa Elias, Susannah Eaton-Ryan, and Yemi Awodiya.

Rep. K Johnson welcomed the subcommittee members.

Rep. K Johnson transitioned to a review of the November 18, 2019 DSP subcommittee meeting minutes.

Members of the committee provided a few edits and a motion to accept the minutes with the provided changes was proposed by Yemi Awodiya and seconded by Dana Curry-Hamler.

Rep. K Johnson transitioned the meeting, noting that DDDS provided turnover and wage data. She emphasized that the data has been deidentified to ensure provider's privacy.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan added that supported employment provider agencies share their wage data with each other since there is an understanding that most agencies are struggling.

Rep. K Johnson said she would like to discuss the wage and turnover data provided to the subcommittee.

The subcommittee reviewed the wage and turnover data documents.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan opened the discussion stating that she was surprised the turnover data reported was so low.

Rep. Hensley said he would like to know how many DSPs must have an additional job to support themselves.

Dana Curry-Hamler emphasized that many providers are not data driven, which may lead to inaccurate reporting.

Cynthia Campbell highlighted the importance of pay packages and the role it may play in turnover. She specifically noted the increase in providers offering gas and mile reimbursements.

Rep. K Johnson asked Cynthia if DSPs were receiving gas and mile reimbursements.

Cynthia Campbell answered yes, stating that one provider is reimbursing miles and gas for trips over ten miles.

Rep. Hensley asked the subcommittee if the turnover data should be shared with the taskforce if it may not be accurate.

Rep. K Johnson emphasized the subcommittee may want to focus on the wage data since it is more accurate.

Rep. Hensley agreed, noting it is important to not confuse the General Assembly with unclear data.

Rep. K Johnson highlighted that if a provider does not have a quality improvement team, it is unlikely the data will be very accurate. Many providers are unable to use their resources on quality improvement, rather the resources are used to serve individuals with disabilities.

Yemi Awodiya asked what percentage of providers sent their data to DDDS.

Rep. K Johnson said she is unsure, but she can ask DDDS.

Cynthia Campbell added that turnover is a continuous problem and suggested the subcommittee use anecdotal evidence rather than hard numbers.

The subcommittee agreed anecdotal evidence is best to describe the turnover issue and to choose a few specific providers to share their stories.

Lisa Elias noted that she is concerned about the value system and accountability of DDDS.

Rep. Hensley noted the importance of employee climate surveys and expressed he would like to see the data from DHSS's climate survey.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan emphasized these concerns were addressed in the Structure and Leadership subcommittee. She continued to highlight the importance of the story behind the wage data and suggested the subcommittee uses anecdotal evidence for the wage data as well.

Cynthia Campbell said the subcommittee should add an anecdotal stories including a pay package.

Harriet Williams-Glover noted the importance of including a story of a DSP that has been in the field for a significant amount of time. Specifically highlighting their starting salary and how it has changed through the decades.

Cynthia Campbell agreed, emphasizing the importance of illustrating an individual's starting DSP wage versus thirty years later.

Rep. K Johnson agreed and said she would reach out to providers to obtain impactful stories that illustrate the struggles of DSP wages and turnover.

Susannah Eaton-Ryan added the providers should be diverse and include residential, day, and employment providers.

Rep. K Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Sophia Vassar

Public Comment:

N/A