

Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (MD EHDI) Advisory Council

Minutes October 17, 2019

| Members Present | Members Absent | Guests |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Jennifer Reesman, Ph.D., Chair | Meagan Ackerman | Jennifer Willis |
| Marny Helfrich | Bridgetta Bourne-Firl | Shee' Newman |
| Kelby Brick, Esq., CDI | Maryland Department of Health (MDH) | Cheri Dowling |
| Patty Muldowney | Tanya D. Green | Danielle Previ, Ph.D. |
| Robyn Miller, Au.D. | Stacy Taylor, JD | Kirsten Poston (Phone) |
| Mara Clement | | Richard Jeffries (phone) |
| Margaret Hargrove | | |
| Tina Backe | | |
| Brian Reilly, M.D. | | |

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Jennifer Reesman at 12:36 PM.

Welcome and Sharing of a Story

A moment of silence was held in memory of Congressman Elijah Cummings.

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the July 18, 2019 meeting were voted on and approved with no corrections.

Old Business

Newborn Hearing Screening Protocols/Best Practices Document Update

The Best Practices document is currently under MDH review. The document is being finalized and new branding guidelines are being applied.

Membership Update

One of two parent positions is vacant. Jessica Thornton has resigned her position as a parent member of the council due to work-related scheduling conflicts.

The Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD) position is currently filled by Bridgetta Bourne-Firl whose term has ended but she continues to serve until a new member is recommended by the Association. A potential candidate is currently being processed by MDH.

The term of the following position/member will expire on June 30, 2020 and will have reached its term limit/will not be eligible for a consecutive term:

- Mental Health Professional – Jennifer Reesman

Dr. Reesman recommended Danielle Previ, Ph.D. as her successor in this position. Dr. Previ is currently an intern at the Kennedy-Krieger Institute. Dr. Reesman also serves as chair of this Council. Once her term is completed, the Council members must select a chair.

The following positions/members have terms that will expire on June 30, 2019 and are eligible for a consecutive term:

- Maryland School for the Deaf - Patty Muldowney
- Parent Position – Vacant
- Governor’s Office of the Deaf – Kelby Brick

The board member application process will be initiated during March or April, 2020. Eligible members whose terms are expiring in June should inform MDH of their intent to serve a consecutive term.

Tanya encouraged council members to assist in seeking a parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child to be considered for the parent member vacancy. At Kelby’s request, Tanya agreed to send Council members an email reminder of the vacant positions.

Dr. Reesman asked if MDH could use their social media channels to also advertise the vacant positions. Tanya stated she would look into this possibility and follow up with the Council.

MD EHDI Program Update Statistics

Program statistics were provided and discussed.

MD EHDI HRSA Grant Update

The HRSA grant is in year 3 of 3 and will end on March 30, 2020. As in year 2, year 3 will consist a learning community in which pediatricians and their staff learn about the EHDI process in Maryland. Pediatric practice recruitment is currently underway. Grant writing is currently underway for a new funding opportunity provided by HRSA which has a project period of April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2024. The initiatives of this opportunity are similar to the current grant. The new opportunity is for a 4-year project period as opposed to the current 3-year project period. The new opportunity does not include the requirement to conduct learning communities. A document summarizing the goals and objectives of the new opportunity was distributed to council members. Some goals

include working with statewide stakeholders, increasing the number of families enrolled in family-to-family support services and deaf adult-to-family support services, and increasing the number of health professionals trained on key aspects of the EHDI Program.

Parent Connections Update

Parent Connections is currently inactive. A revised model of the Parent Connections is being explored.

MD EHDI brochure

No update

Follow up items from previous meeting

Update from MD EHDI on EI non-enrollment

At the previous Council meeting, there was discussion about the number of babies referred to early intervention (EI) services but not enrolled, and for those not enrolled, the reasons for non-enrollment. MD EHDI reviewed a data set of babies who have been identified as deaf or hard of hearing and their EI referral and enrollment status per the MD EHDI data system for the period April – July, 2019. During this period, 41 babies were identified and all except for 17 have a documented Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) date. “Eligibility unknown” was documented for several of those without an IFSP date. “Hearing status not yet determined” was indicated for 7 of the babies. Tanya clarified information provided at the previous Council meeting, stating the MD EHDI Program does not seek the reason for non-enrollment but Program staff will document these reasons if they are provided.

Mara Clement and Robyn Miller provided information reflective of Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program (MCITP). Robyn stated that they concluded that some of the babies referred to MCITP are receiving services, though not from Montgomery County. Some babies who are medically fragile are receiving services but are declining the services for hearing currently. MCITP staff are always available for consult, especially when it comes to language access, and are aware of the babies who have been identified but are not getting direct services. Some referrals were documented as no response and an example was shared where MCITP staff reached out 6 times and the family was not interested in services. Robyn added that when these children transition at age 3, a supplemental aid is added to their IEP which helps ensure they stay on the radar. Kelby emphasized that there is a public health impact, as in failure to thrive and other health issues when babies do not receive needed early intervention.

Robyn added that preschool is not mandatory which may contribute to some of the cases of non-enrollment.

At the previous Council meeting, Patty Muldowney (Maryland School for the Deaf/MSD) shared the approximate age of referral and was asked for the reasons for the late referrals. Reasons included: declined services, not eligible, chose Auditory Verbal Therapy, not interested in ASL, no response, inconclusive audiology results and more testing needed, unknown, and incomplete referral information. Some referrals were delayed for the following reasons: recently adopted, were referred to MSDE ITP initially and thus received later by MSD, delayed due to self-referral, health issues, late identified, lost hearing after chemotherapy treatments, recently moved to the area, and unknown reasons for delayed referral.

Chairperson Reesman suggested the MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletin be added to the MDH/MD EHDI website as this would be a way to allow more people gain awareness of the bulletin and could serve as another way to close gaps.

New Business

Nominations for Council chair and vice chair were requested. Patty Muldowney was nominated and accepted the nomination. Nominations will remain open until the vote which will take place at the next Council meeting in January.

Legislative updates

No updates

Announcements

Cheri Dowling will email Tanya with a list of upcoming workshops to distribute to council members.

Marny Helfrich stated that MSDE is close to implementing the newly expanded hearing aid loan bank. The website is being developed and materials are being ordered.

Shee Newman announced that the establishment of a hearing aid loan bank is under consideration within the Prince George's County school system.

Next MD EHDI Advisory Council meeting: Thursday January 16, 2020, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM, Hearing and Speech Agency; park in the rear lot.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:54 PM.