

**HDI Consumer Advisory Council
Online meeting in Zoom
Monday December 2, 2024, 10:30AM – 1:30PM**

CAC Members in attendance:

Jake Cruz
Robin Osborne
Katie Looney
Cathy Lerza
Kristen Beach
Joshua Seigle
Bithinny McKee

Bobby Begley
Meghan Ackerman
Camille Collins
Walt Bower
Skylar Koehler
Brie Alsip

Presenters: Katie Whaley, Elizabeth Kries, Haley Potter, Bailey Patterson, Kristen Dahl, Nancy Savage

- 1) Welcome & Introductions Jake Cruz

Jake called the meeting to order and all present members introduced themselves.

- 2) Review and Approval of September minutes Jake Cruz

Jake introduced the September minutes. Bobby made a motion to approve the minutes, and Kristen seconded. September meeting minutes were approved.

- 3) AUCD update – Council on Leadership in Advocacy (COLA) Joshua Seigle

Jake Cruz provided an update about the AUCD conference. Jake shared that the conference had helpful information about grants and disability policies and highlighted how the data presented by Dr. Rachel Womack in a poster symposium demonstrated disparities in how LGBTQ+ people with intellectual disabilities access resources.

Joshua Seigle detailed the proceedings of the COLA meeting. The first order of business included approving the August meeting minutes, council member introductions, and outlining the purpose of COLA. The council shared a needs assessment survey asking about education, meaningful employment, housing, home and community-based services, marriage equality, social security and SSI

asset limits, universal design, and exclusive research to indicate what areas they should plan to work on in the future. The council also discussed how to achieve greater alignment and communication amongst the COLA councils.

The final updates were about policy. Joshua indicated that the biggest takeaways from this meeting were the Autism CARES Act, the Grassroots Project, and trying to get the public more involved in redesigning the Medicaid waiver. New chairpersons were voted in, and the meeting concluded.

- 4) KY Supported Employment Training Project Katie Whaley
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Katie Whaley presented a Kentucky Supported Employment Training Project update. She assessed expectations of and pre-existing knowledge about the project from CAC members and integrated this input with who the project supports. Katie defined who is eligible for services under the project and how it is funded from the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Katie also defined what competitive integrated employment is and demonstrated the discrepancies in Kentucky of adults with IDD and serious mental illness who want to be employed versus how many of these individuals are meaningfully employed in the state. She explained the importance of meaningful employment for people with disabilities. Katie ended her presentation by taking questions and feedback from CAC members.

- 5) Olmstead survey update Elizabeth Kries
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Elizabeth gave updates about the responses from the Olmstead survey. She explained that the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is partnering with HDI to evaluate the Olmstead plan and indicated the need for as many responses as possible on the survey. Elizabeth also indicated that there is a need for more responses to this survey from people of various racial and ability identities. She encouraged CAC members to take the survey if they haven't already and share it with their own networks.

- 6) Disabled Playwrights Workshop Haley Potter
-Input and feedback from CAC members Bailey Patterson

Haley Potter and Bailey Patterson shared updates on the Disabled Playwrights Workshop, a project funded by the Fund for Excellence. They are currently

reviewing submissions to participate in the workshop. The workshop will last 4 days at the end of March and will consist of 4 playwrights who have been chosen to stage a 10-minute play with 2 directors and 3-4 actors. Playwrights have been encouraged to have disabled characters and/or themes of disability in their shows. They explained the importance of having space for disabled artists to write and perform works about disability. They ended their time by taking feedback from CAC members.

7) Break

8) Seasonal Affective Disorder Kristen Dahl
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Kristen Dahl opened her presentation on Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) by leading a mindful breathing activity. She then asked CAC members how the seasons affect their moods. She took this input to transition into talking about SAD, listing its symptoms, causes, and prevalence. Kristen differentiated it from the winter blues and explained that SAD is a more intense, pervasive version of the winter blues. Treatments for SAD include light therapy or sunlight, exercise, medication, eating a balanced and vitamin-rich diet, and keeping community. She also encouraged members to find a balance between their own feelings they may have at this time of year while also practicing the gratitude that is often encouraged around the holidays.

9) HDI sensory garden project Nancy Savage
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Nancy began by introducing herself and the work she's done with HDI. She explained that a sensory garden is intended to engage the 5 senses and showed pictures of the garden she created this summer at the Mineral Industries Building on UK's campus. Nancy provided pictures and lists of the plants she used to engage each sense. She credited Gregory Bow and Corey Cameron of the Kentucky Alternate Assessment Project for illustrating and creating the signs used in the garden to indicate which sense the plants were targeting. Nancy also explained that there are rock cairns and a watering can for visitors to interact with the garden. Nancy concluded with taking comments from members.

10) Agency Updates (P & A, DD Council, DDID, Each Agency
OVR)

Protection and Advocacy – Camille Collins is currently working on the federal end-of-year report, part of which involves listing the priorities from the previous fiscal year which ended September 30, 2024. Final priorities, a list of what is being proposed to the ACL for the next fiscal year, began on October 1, 2024. Other updates include that a new advocate has been hired and the P&A team is currently moving to a new office.

Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities – Jake Cruz shared that there are funding opportunities available for affordable housing for people with disabilities and funds open for rural projects. Both projects have \$374,650 allocated to them.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation – Kristen Beach reported that over 43,000 consumers have been served through OVR this year, including 15,000 new referrals and 10,000 new applications. There has been an average of 30 days between consumers submitting their application to determining eligibility, and 33 days between eligibility determinations and receiving services. There have been 3,700 competitive integrated employment outcomes. The office is currently working on a new case management system and increasing the number of vendors they partner with.

Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities – Cathy Lerza shared that the division is currently working with the Department for Aging and Independent Living and Department for Medicaid Services to update regulations and try to make the applications for these services more similar. Cathy took concerns from CAC members about the current state of accessible housing.

- 11) Election of New CAC Vice-Chair, Chair, and Setting of 2025 Meeting Dates All

Joshua Seigle nominated Katie Looney and Robin Osborne to be the new CAC vice chair. The details of the vice chair position were provided by Walt Bower. Katie accepted the nomination and Robin respectfully declined the nomination, instead offering support for Katie's nomination. The motion was approved, making Katie Looney the new vice chair for the CAC. Joshua Seigle will be adopting the role of CAC chair.

Walt announced the CAC meeting dates for the 2025 calendar year will be held on March 3, June 2, September 8, and December 1.

- 12) Engaging the CAC by-laws update
-Input and feedback from CAC members

Jake Cruz

The council approved a motion to table this discussion for the March meeting following concerns about the current meeting running over the scheduled time.

- 13) New Business and Announcements

Jake Cruz

Walt Bower shared a link to the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) rider's survey for members to complete if they wish. Walt shared that the survey will close next Monday, 12/9, and to complete the survey by this time.

Jake Cruz made a motion to close the meeting. Motion was accepted. The meeting adjourned at 1:42pm.

NEXT CAC MEETING: March 3rd, 2025 from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM