STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

Health AND Human

SERVICES

Kim Reynolds
GOVERNOR

Adam Gregg
LT. GOVERNOR

Kelly Garcia
DIRECTOR

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
FEBRUARY 27, 2024, 3:00-4:30 PM CENTRAL TIME

Summary of Meeting Themes:

- Mathematica gave an update on the Needs on Waitlist (NOW) survey, reviewing the characteristics of the current waiver waitlist, goals of the telephone survey, and the included domains. Mathematica also shared sample survey sections and pointed to a one-page resources document that will be sent to people on waitlists and HHS staff who might get questions about the survey. Committee members raised the following questions about the NOW survey:

  - Can participants refuse to participate or refuse to answer survey questions? Yes, Mathematica explained that people taking the survey can decline to answer any questions or refuse to take the survey. The number of refusals so far has been low.

  - Is there a number that providers can direct people on the waitlist to call to take the survey? Mathematica agreed that people might be more likely to respond if they know the survey is supported by their providers. Survey outreach is being done in batches, so not all people on the waitlist are contacted at the same time. The Mathematica project team will think about how providers can help coordination in the survey process.

  - Wouldn't it be beneficial to survey the waitlist experience of an individual who recently obtained a waiver slot? Yes, Mathematica did interviews with people who were recently on the waitlist to help develop the NOW survey.

- Mathematica provided an update on the Universal Assessment Tool (UAT) including the purpose of the tool, how the tool was developed, references to the tools used in other states, details about interRAI assessment tools and their use in Iowa, and next steps. Committee members raised the following questions about the UAT:

  - Members were in favor of using the information from advancing states. They suggested having future assessment tools distinguish between permanent characteristics vs. changing characteristics, so the initial assessment is more thorough, but people don't have to keep being assessed on things that will not change. Mathematica agreed and said this is a part of ongoing discussions about reassessment questions.

  - Children get assessed in schools, could those assessments be considered to limit the burden on individuals? Mathematica will discuss this with HHS.

  - How will these assessments relate to cost control? Will the assessments be used in relation to the ID waiver tier rates, or would they be used to assess for a particular level of care? Mathematica said the assessment would inform the available amount for an individual's service package, but how this is done will not be decided until a tool is selected.

- Members had concerns about conflict of interest if the entity doing the assessment also controls the money. Mathematica acknowledged the concern and stated that it is being discussed.

- Mathematica provided an update on the proposed new waiver service packages. Committee members had the following questions and feedback on the waiver services package:

  - Members shared that Early Period Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) is difficult to access in the current waiver structure. If services are being changed, making this easier is important.

  - The ID waiver allows authorization of nursing and EPSDT services through the waiver, but will that change in the future? Mathematica said that it would be an option but would be done differently because children under EPSDT should get what they need even if it's above a cap on the state plan.

- Mathematica walked through key updates proposed to companion services, home maintenance supports, supported community living, independent support broker, community transition services, crisis planning and support, and peer mentoring. Committee members provided detailed feedback in the discussion. Below are definitions for each proposed service:

  - Companion services include non-medical care, supervision and socialization, provided to an individual with functional impairment(s).

  - Home maintenance support services encompass assistance required to maintain the home as a clean, sanitary, and safe environment, provided when neither the individual nor any household individual is capable of performing these tasks, and no other relative, caregiver, or landlord is responsible for them.

  - Supported community living services are provided by the provider within the member's home and community, according to the individualized member need as identified in the service plan.

  - Independent support brokerage (ISB) service is an optional service individuals choose when electing to self-direct through the Consumer Choice Option (CCO).

  - Community transition services are non-recurring set-up expenses for individuals who are transitioning from an institutional or another provider-operated living arrangement to a living arrangement in a private residence where the person is directly responsible for his or her own living expenses.

  - Crisis planning and support services provide intensive supports in the area of crisis prevention, crisis intervention, and crisis stabilization to an individual who may experience an episodic behavioral or psychiatric crisis in the community which has the potential to jeopardize their current community living situation.

  - Peer mentorship is provided by a peer who draws from common experience to support an individual with acclimating to community living. The peer supports by offering advice, guidance, and encouragement on matters of community living, including through

describing real-world experiences, encouraging self-advocacy and independent living goals, and modeling strategies, skills, and problem-solving.

- Mathematica shared ways for people to give feedback on the waiver services package including the online feedback form on the HHS website and the HOME project email at iowahcbs@mathematica-mpr.com.

- Mathematica provided an updated project timeline, also on the HHS website here and closed by confirming the next steering committee meeting on Tuesday, March 26, from 3:00-4:30. Mathematica will send the agenda and slides in advance.