

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (MDH)/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
ADMINISTRATION (DDA) RATE REVIEW ADVISORY GROUP**

Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Time: 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Location: GoToWebinar

Attendance:

Co-Chairs

1. Jennifer McIlvaine, Director of Finance, Medicaid, MDH
2. Robert White, Chief Operating Officer, DDA

Advisory Group Members

1. Donna Retzlaff, Spring Dell Center
2. Shauna Mulcahy, The Arc Frederick County
3. Gregory Miller, Penn-Mar
4. Karen Adams-Gilchrist, Providence Center (*excused*)
5. Laura Howell, MACS
6. Karen Lee, SEEC/EAG
7. Carol Custer, SDAN

State Panelists

1. Dr. Laura Herrera Scott, Secretary
2. Marlana R. Hutchinson, Deputy Secretary
3. Elizabeth Peters, Assistant Director
4. Wesley Huntemann, Chief of Staff
5. Nicholas Gabor, Director of Finance
6. Rhonda Workman, Director of Federal Programs and Integrity
7. Leslie Thompson, Acting Director of Programs

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 pm by Dr. Laura Herrera Scott, Secretary, MDH. Dr. Herrera Scott introduced Ms. Marlana R. Hutchinson, Deputy Secretary, DDA, MDH as the new Deputy Secretary for the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Ms. Hutchinson reviewed the DDA vision and mission statements. Ms. Hutchinson then reviewed the meeting agenda.

RRAG Charter and Membership

Dr. Herrera Scott shared that there will be no changes to RRAG membership for 2024. Reappointment letters will be sent to members by February 15, 2024. Dr. Herrera Scott explained that there are three vacant RRAG seats and requested members to submit nominations for the three vacant RRAG seats via Google Form by February 5, 2024 for consideration. Based on the vacancies, the language of the charter would need to be changed from a quorum of seven to a quorum of majority of the current members.

Motion by Dr. Herrera Scott: Move to approve the updated language on quorum from seven to a majority. Motion seconded by Ms. Karen Lee, SEEC and passed.

Dr. Herrera Scott then went on to discuss changes to the RRAG meeting structure and cadence for this year's rate review cycle.

FY 25 Rate Cycle Enhancements

Mr. Robert White, Chief Operating Officer, DDA, MDH recapped the accomplishments from the 2025 fiscal year rate review cycle. The rate increases for the 2024 fiscal year were reviewed.

Rate Development Goals and Expectations

Mr. White shared the goals and expectations for this year's rate review cycle, including making sure everyone is engaged, implementing a well-defined timeline, streamlining the feedback collection and review processes, fostering continuous improvement, and ensuring the sustainability of DDA rates. Mr. White explained the focus will be on enhancing the reliability and organization of the rate-setting processes, cultivating robust programs and demonstrating exemplary stewardship of public funds for greater impact and trust. He went on to review the steps involved in the rate development process. Mr. White reminded the group that recommended rates may be subject to State budget constraints, which DDA will address with transparency in the FY 2026 budget.

Mr. White reviewed the rate review proposed timeline for FY 2026, highlighting a focused data collection phase in the early months aimed at supporting key rate priorities. He also stated the importance of members' active participation through their organizations and extended networks to gather comprehensive data. Mr. White explained that the potential limitations of inconsistencies and

gaps in the data collected could impact the extent to which this data can be utilized in the rate development process.

FY 26 Rate Review Priorities Discussion

Mr. White reviewed each proposed rate priority for FY 2026 identified by RRAG members and stakeholders during the last rate cycle. Proposed rate priorities included employment services, nursing supports, acuity, geographic differential, reimbursement rate for self-directed services, productivity, and training. Mr. White shared considerations for each topic to include timing and the mechanism for addressing the issue. The RRAG members completed an anonymous poll to select the top three rate priorities to focus on for the FY 2026 rate setting cycle. Results of the poll were later shared during the open discussion portion of the meeting. The top three rate priorities based on the poll are *acuity, productivity, and employment services*.

General Ledger Data Collection

Mr. White explained that all providers are required to submit cost data for FY 2024 using the General Ledger Template that was released last spring and the submission deadline was set for September 30, 2024. The data collected from the General Ledger tool will help inform the rates for FY 2027. For the current FY 2026 rate cycle, provider-submitted data will be used to guide data-driven decision-making for identified priorities.

Open Discussion

Ms. Elizabeth Peters, Assistant Director, DDA, MDH presented the FY 2026 rate priority poll results where employment services, productivity and acuity received the most votes. A form will be sent out to the RRAG members to get additional information on the selected rate priorities to help determine how best to address them this cycle. The General Ledger data is due September of 2024. The team will create a separate data collection tool for this rate cycle that will be due 6-8 weeks following distribution. This tool will collect a limited set of data to address specific priorities. Ms. Lee shared that the previous Deputy Secretary, Mr. Bernard Simons, was working on an issue around career pathways for direct support professionals. Ms. Hutchinson will circle back to her team in order to make an informed decision as she was unaware of this commitment made by Mr. Simons. Time was provided for open discussion on the results of the poll and items not on the agenda.

Next Steps and Adjournment

Ms. Hutchinson shared the schedule for the remaining RRAG meetings for 2024. Meeting minutes will

be made available prior to the next meeting. Details were shared on how to register for upcoming RRAG meetings and where meeting materials can be found on the RRAG website.

Meeting was adjourned by Ms. Hutchinson at 3:06 PM.