

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **State—HCPF/DHS/Alliance.**

- Department of Health Care Policy and Financing—
  1. Rural Community Centered Boards—HCPF is still working with CMS on ways to allocate some residential enrollments for rural areas to help maintain the capacity of providers in the non-urban parts of the state. So far, CMS has been very receptive to the concept and we are helping HCPF craft some language to propose.
  2. Conflict-Free Case Management—Still moving forward with our plan. No significant update.
- Alliance Summit—Five Community Connections employees attended the Alliance Summit in Breckenridge in June. It was informational, depressing and fun all at the same time. Reader’s Digest version—lots of things are changing but nothing is fully developed, there are going to be more rules and less money on the national and state level, everyone knows the rates are inadequate except HCPF, and technology is going to rule the future. But it’s definitely helpful to get together with people from all across the state (and even across the US) and remember that we’re all in this together.
- Legislative Session—If you have any interest in the bills that Alliance tracked and/or lobbied during this past legislative session, there’s a great bill tracker at <https://www.alliancecolorado.org/bill-tracker>. But a few bills that passed are most definitely on my radar and will impact us.
  - Equal Pay Bill—The intent of this bill is to close the gender pay gap, which of course I 100% support. The way the bill goes about it has the potential to be clunky and will absolutely create more administrative work for our Human Resources department. By January 1, 2021, we have to have a system in place to prove that all employees who are doing essentially the same job are paid exactly the same unless we can show the pay difference is due to an allowed factor (including experience, education, merit, and seniority). Our new Compensation Plan (see below) is going to put us in a very good position for compliance.
  - Homemaker/Personal Care rate increase—The IDD system got swept up in a bill intended for Home Care agencies. The good news is that the result of the bill is a 8.1% increase in rates for personal care and homemaker services, 100% of which must be passed through to DSP wages. The complication is that most employees who provide these services also provide other services that *don’t* have that rate increase. So we need to figure out how to pay employees different rates for different services and then report on how we did that.
  - Local Minimum wage—This isn’t definitely going to impact us, but I am watching how it progresses. The bill allows local municipalities to vote

upon a local minimum wage that is higher than the Colorado minimum wage. This could be very interesting if we end up with a different minimum wage in Durango than in Cortez than in Pagosa.

- EVV (Electronic Visit Verification)—I will include a brief fact sheet on EVV on the Board Google Drive, but in a nutshell, this is an effort by the federal government to prevent fraud and erroneous billing in home health and personal care services. Using new-fangled technology, providers will be tracked to show that home and community-based services are really provided at the times they are billed. The system is beginning January 1, 2020 (you'll note the fact sheet says January 1, 2019, which obviously has passed—they postponed the implementation after receiving feedback from providers about the barriers). As we figure out how to implement EVV locally, we're coming across lots of interesting issues like how to streamline this process with our other billing and timesheet processes to reduce employee frustration and errors, how to ensure that all employees have devices they can use to essentially "check-in," and how to deal with connectivity issues in certain parts of our communities. Did I mention that there is no funding to purchase any technology to support this requirement? There's no funding to purchase any technology to support EVV.
- Alliance to Durango in September!—Every year in September the monthly Alliance meeting moves to a different community outside of Denver. This year, they are coming to September, which means we get to host a bunch of leaders in the IDD community for a couple of days. However, that also means I might suggest we hold our Annual Meeting at a different time so that Ellen and I aren't trying to coordinate two events at the same time.

### **Local Community**

- Equity in Emergency Planning—Our first year of the collaborative grant with San Juan Basin Public Health is wrapping up at the end of June, so we've been squeezing in some great projects, including a full-day training with first responders around approaching community emergencies through the lens of potential barriers in Communication, Medical needs, Independence, Supervision, and Transportation (learn more in my June Creating Community Article in the Herald)! The team from SJBPH is also leading us through a tabletop exercise (a pretend evacuation of several of our host homes) and helping us make some improvements to our agency-wide and individualized emergency plans. This has been a very helpful resource for us and the communities of La Plata and Archuleta Counties.
- City of Durango—A group of nonprofit directors are meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup> to develop an action plan to working with the City of Durango on funding needs. I will have an update for our meeting.
- Behavioral Providers—This is a little convoluted, so I can go into more detail at our meeting. Our Case Management team and Shannon ran across some discrepancies with contracted behavioral providers and we started doing some cleanup. In the process, one of the providers decided not to work with us any longer. Since there are two Program Approved Service Agencies providing

behavioral services, we are trying to stay as much out of the behavioral “business” as we can.

## **Fundraising**

- Moniker Visit—Ellen and I had a very good visit with our fund representative from the Moniker Foundation. We discussed some of our strategic goals and ways the Moniker Foundation could support our community engagement efforts. I think our ideas were well received, and we’ll see if we are invited to apply again in their next funding cycle for our region.

## **Internal CCI highlights**

- Compensation Plan—For about the last year and a half, our leadership team has been working to devise a Compensation Plan that is fair and transparent, rewards experience, education and seniority, and (necessarily) fits within our budget. We recently participated in a training with our managers and Payscale (our compensation consultants) to get ready to roll out our new Tiered compensation strategy. We hope to implement that within the next month, but we want it to be absolutely right, for obvious reasons. Compensation can be a very touchy subject and either help employees feel fairly treated and supported or completely demoralized and unappreciated. We are shooting for the former.
- Technology upgrade—I think Laura has been working for almost a year to get our computer system upgraded. In January, Microsoft is going to stop supporting several of its older Windows products, so we need to upgrade the operating systems on quite a few of our computers as well as our server. Laura and our IT consultants (Netforce) were able to get us a great deal through TechSoup, so we’ll be switching to a cloud-based server and software in the next couple of weeks.
- CAP completion in Case Management—Congratulations to our Case Management team for completing three separate audits and Corrective Action Plans this fiscal year. We’re keeping our fingers crossed that this coming year will be a little lighter on performance reviews.

## **Facilities**

- Pine Street—A new, more accessible and vastly more sturdy side porch has been built at Pine Street and the bathroom remodel should be in process by the time you read this!
- Holly House—The roof is being repaired under the grant from First United Methodist Church.

## **Other**

*Happy end of the fiscal year!!*

## Acronym Cheat Sheet

- ART (Administrative Review Team) –The Executive Team and Program Directors oversight of Quality Indicators
- The Arc – advocacy organization for people with intellectual disabilities
- ANCOR (American Network of Community Options and Resources (for DD))
- BHO (Behavioral Health Organization)
- CCB (Community Centered Board) we are 1 of 20 in the state
- CCI (Community Connections, Inc.)
- CDLE (Colorado Department of Labor and Employment)
- CES (Children’s Extensive Services)
- CHCBS (Children’s Home and Community Based Services)
- CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) Federal
- CORA (Colorado Open Records Act)
- DHS or CDHS (Colorado Department of Human Services)
- DSP (Direct Support Professional) – field staff working with clients
- DVR (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- EI (Early Intervention) Developmental services for kids Birth to 3
- FOT (Festival of Trees)
- HCPF (Health Care Policy and Financing) State Medicaid office
- I/DD (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities)
- JBC (Joint Budget Committee at the Colorado legislature)
- MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
- PASAs (Program Approved Service Agencies) Marcy’s department
- PCA (Personal Care Alternative) residential services not in a host home
- RAE (Regional Accountable Entity) Medicaid Care Management organization
- Residential (a.k.a. Comprehensive – our adult 24/7 support)
- ROI (Return on Investment)
- SJBPH (San Juan Basin Public Health)
- SLS (Supported Living Services) – Services for adults living independently or with family
- TCM (Targeted Case Management)