



MINUTES
Rate Structure Work Group Meeting
Friday February 10, 2023 / 10:00AM - 12:00PM
Held via: Zoom Webinar

Attendance: Laurie Vachon, BDS Facilitator; Jen Doig, BDS Facilitator; Christy Roy, DHHS Facilitator; Abby Conger, BDS; Drew Smith, A&M; Krista Stephani, MSLC; Lesley Beerends, MSLC; Jacquelyn George, MSLC; Kim Shottes, ED Plus Company; Martin McNamara, Optumas; Will Walker, Family Member; Ellen McCahon, ED CSNI; Matthew Cordaro, ED One Sky Services; Shelley Kelleher, CFO Lakes Region Community Services; Sudip Adhikari, Gateways; Kara Nickulas, CMCC; Alecia Ortiz, A&M; Susan Silsby, Easter Seals

Please reference the corresponding slide presentation for the detailed agenda, including topics and themes covered in the meeting and corresponding takeaways and applicable action items.

Topic	Key Takeaways & Action Items
<p>Provide Information Related to Direct Service Providers (DSPs)</p>	<p><u>Review of How DSP Wages are Used in Rate Setting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Rate Work Group meeting, Myers and Stauffer reviewed the rate setting formula, and how the DSP wages are considered as part of building a service rate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The base of a service rate is the hourly wage of a DSP. This is generally the foundation of service rates. ○ For the rates that will be developed for waiver services in New Hampshire, Myers and Stauffer will use the information reported by Area Agencies (AAs) and provider vendors (providers) on the cost report. They will also consider information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and information from other service industries. ○ By considering all of this information, a decision can be made about an appropriate DSP wage to use in the rate setting formula. • The rate formula will also consider the DSP availability factor (which considers non-billable time) and other supporting components (like mileage or program support). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education and experience requirements for services will also be evaluated. • It is important to remember that the DSP wage used in the rate calculation is not intended to be the hourly rate required to be

paid to the DSP. The DSP wage used in the rate formula should not be considered a rate floor or ceiling.

DSP Focus Group Work

- The DSP Focus Group provided a lot of information on recommendations for DSP training, credentialing, and how the DSP position should evolve over time.
- Decisions are still pending as to how these recommendations will be used in the development of waiver service rates in NH.

Questions

- Will different DSP rates be used for different services, or will only one DSP hourly rate be used for all services?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: We will be considering different DSP hourly wages, for each service. We need to look at what the service entails to make decisions about what is the right DSP hourly wage to include for each of the new service rates.
- What rate will be utilized for July 1, 2023?
 - Department Response: For July 1, 2023, the same rates that are used today will still be used. The rates that we are working to develop will be used in the future, and will not be used starting on July 1, 2023.
- What is the timeline for when new service rates will be ready?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: We are hoping to start discussing the draft service coordination rate within the next month to month and a half. Within the next 2-3 months, we are hoping to begin discussions on all of the draft service rates. Final decisions on the draft rates are dependent on how the discussions of the draft rates go.
- What are the current service rates?
 - Department Response: You can find the current rates on the Department's budget template. It is posted on the Department's website. If you need additional assistance, please reach out to us.
- It is difficult to determine rates because the individual rates are not posted.
 - Department Response: Some rates have specific rates and there are other rates that show if they are an individual rate. When an individual rate is paid, the rate is determined based on the needs of an individual.
- Can you tell us how many cost reports you received? And do you know how many providers in the state did not submit a cost report?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: We received a total of 39 cost reports, which include a total of 10 from the AAs. The remainder were submitted by providers. We know of approximately 72 providers in the state.
- Did the list of providers come from BDS?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: Yes, the Department provided us with a list of providers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of companies can be drastically different. Did you get a range of small and large companies? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Myers and Stauffer Response: We will need to confirm after reviewing the data, but we did get some cost reports from very small providers, and some cost reports from very large providers. • Providers do not directly bill for services provided today. It is important for the providers to know what the current bill rate is. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department Response: Thank you for the feedback. We have started a provider specific meeting where this information can be reviewed.
<p style="text-align: center;">Comparisons of DSP Wages from Various Sources</p>	<p><u>Cost Report Data</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information presented during the Rate Work Group meeting was representative of the information as reported on the cost reports by AAs and providers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inflation was not applied, and some information from the cost reports was from state fiscal year 2021. • For case management services, a range of \$14.56 to \$52.07 was reported. There were a variety of common job titles and education levels also reported on the cost report. • Crisis Services reportedly had various job titles and education levels. The DSP wage ranged from \$12.02 to \$24.87. • Community Support Services mostly reported needing staff with only a high school education, though different job titles were reported. The DSP wage range was \$12.36 to \$19.96. • Day Habilitation services had similar job titles and mostly required high school levels of education. The DSP wage range was \$13.52 to \$29.90. • Enhanced Family Care (EFC) (additional staff support). This was reported for families who hired additional support. The hourly rates reported on the cost reports ranged from \$15.29 to \$29.90. • EFC Whole Model DSP wages ranged from \$15.92 to \$20.85. • Supported Employment DSP wages ranged from \$12.36 to \$20.14. Common job titles also varied and required education levels were high school or bachelor’s degrees. • Other residential services had various job titles, and mostly high school degree requirements reported on the cost reports. The hourly DSP wages ranged from \$9.95 to \$19.85. • Respite services were similar in terms of job titles and education levels. Hourly rates ranged from \$10.00 to t \$18.61. • Specialty services had a wide range of associated job titles and required education levels because of the nature of these services. The DSP wage range was \$19.08 to \$50.00. • Staffed Residential service DSP wages ranged from \$12.02 to \$21.81. <p><u>BLS Data</u></p>

- BLS data will be updated in March, and we anticipate updating information to keep current with the most up-to-date BLS data.
- The BLS information presented in the presentation deck also does not include inflation. However, if BLS data is used in the rate setting formula, inflation would be applied.
- These are common BLS occupation codes used for benchmarking home and community based services. The list in the presentation deck is not all inclusive, nor are final decisions made about which codes to use.
- Some BLS codes will be appropriate for one service, but not another.
- Blending of BLS codes may be needed, though no decisions have been made at this point about blending.
- There are percentiles we can use in BLS data. So if we like a BLS code, but the wage doesn't seem appropriate for New Hampshire, we can move up and down a range, based on percentiles.
 - All decisions will be based on what seems appropriate for a given service, based on feedback from the Rate Work Group and other stakeholders.

Wages in Recent Job Opening Postings

- Myers and Stauffer reviewed publicly available job postings for DSPs, service coordinators, licensed nursing assistants, and other job occupations with similar educational requirements and skills (like retail associates, grocery store associates, food service associates).
 - Other occupations were chosen based on these industries competing for workers similar to DSPs.
 - Myers and Stauffer also reviewed regional wages for similar job postings.
- Wages varied for each position. The wages were set by the employer in the posted job description.
- Based on feedback from the Rate Work Group, Myers and Stauffer will also review wage information from companies and industries like Fedex, UPS, Uber/Lyft, Amazon, paraprofessionals in schools, food delivery services, as well as wages in other states and neighboring towns.

Questions

- There are a lot of different types of case management. Are you looking at targeted case management specific to the waivers, or is the range you are seeing from online job postings?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: The range of \$14.56 to \$52.07 was reported on the cost reports. These rates were reported for time spent providing case management as a DSP. Provider data is included in this range as well. When we look at similar industries, we would make sure the job functions correlate with the waiver case management service coordinator position.

- For the case management rates from the cost report, are they billing as service coordination?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: If a provider had allocated time to the service coordination column in the cost report, we are capturing the hourly wage. We may not end up using the median from the cost report. Cost report information is one of the metrics to evaluate what the best information is to use for the DSP hourly wage. We are asking a number of questions to providers to verify the information reported on the cost report.
- Might there be a tiered approach to rates?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: There may be. We will look at information to make some decisions and we may end up having conversations about tiering in the future.
- I am concerned about if adequate information is being gathered from families and individuals. Families and individuals were not involved in gathering information or discussions about blending job titles.
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: To date, no decisions have been made about blending job titles or BLS codes. We did ask some questions a few months ago, but we were waiting to have all data before having further discussions. We are hopeful that when we have draft service rates, this will help families and individuals understand what this means as far as DSP wages.
- Can BDS instruct AAs on providing billing rates to providers?
 - Department Response: We will discuss with more with AAs prior to July 1, 2023. We did ask AAs for some information and we are still working with them to get contract units so that we can get a better comparison for you. This will help you complete your own fiscal analysis.
- Can Myers and Stauffer publish the median rates?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: The DSP rates we shared from the cost reports are not completely validated. We talked about including a median in today's presentation, but there is a chance we will not use the median in the rate setting formula for some service rates. If there are certain services that you are interested in seeing the reported median, please email us and let us know. The presentation deck will be posted to the BDS website.
- I assume that some of the lower rates in the cost report ranges are coming from legacy budgets. Is there a way to remove these rates because they are outside the standard deviation? This is an important piece in demonstrating to the Legislature that rates need to be updated.
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: We know that some of the reported wages are low and will not be viable going forward. This will be factored into the recommendations we provide to the Department.
- Were sleep and overnight positions called out in the cost report?

- Myers and Stauffer Response: Yes, when we look at draft service rates, we can factor in overnight situations, depending on the service.
- Are you developing a rate for EFC home care providers (i.e. stipends)?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: This is something we will need to talk more about. Some information was reported on the cost reports, but it may be difficult to determine hours to use in the rate setting formula.
- Is the BLS information presented today for the whole state of NH?
 - Myers and Stauffer Response: The data presented today is for the whole state of New Hampshire, though we have more information based on geographic differences. Additionally, once the cost reports are validated, we can also review geographic information as collected on the cost reports too.
- With us not having rates until 7/1, and the billable system for AAs will not be ready for 7/1, is this going to affect the ability of vendors to start billing on 7/1?
 - Department Response: There will not be a paper claims process in the future. All providers will be enrolled as Medicaid providers. They will be able to directly bill, or use a third party biller, for all individuals. Service authorizations will also be in the system.
- Why will DAADS be billed manually and not electronically?
 - Department Response: As of now, the DAADS payment will be a financial transaction to each AA. DAADS will not be billed against a code in the MMIS system, because these are administrative services. It should be noted that decisions are ever evolving, but it is not anticipated that the billing process will change on 7/1.
- Can you discuss how monthly reporting will look for an individual receiving multiple services?
 - Department Response: When an individual receive services, they are identified as to type and hours of that service, per week. In July 2023, we will be working with families and PDMS staff and case managers to report the hours of services provided per week. The process will be dependent on the service the individual receives. Some families have already switched to this process, but it may be a change for others.
- What is the percent of approved NH service providers who are enrolled as a Medicaid provider?
 - Department Response: This is an ever evolving number. We are reaching out to the providers we are aware of who have not yet fully enrolled.
- We have a lot of families who have contracts with out of state PDMS provider vendors. These PDMS providers do not want to become a Medicaid provider, but is there a way to protect these families?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Department Response: We will need to take this back and think about this for the provider meeting. We will connect with you offline to further discuss this.
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Myers and Stauffer plans on having the cost report validation process completed in February. ● Initial rates will be calculated; we will discuss these a Rate Work Group and will be transparent about how the rates were built. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The goal is to start with the draft rate for service coordination. ● Initials rates are estimated to be ready by the end of March or early April, 2023. ● If anyone does have questions or topics you would like Myers and Stauffer to cover in the Rate Work Group meetings, please reach out via email. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feedback from a Rate Work Group Member: I would like to see more collaboration with the Waiver and Rate Work Group work. We will need to discuss new services and the rates associated with those new services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Myers and Stauffer acknowledged that discussions regarding new services will happen, though the timing of these discussions is still to be decided.