State of New Hampshire
Department of Health and Human Services

MINUTES
Rate Structure Work Group Meeting
Friday, April 8, 2022 / 10:00AM – 12:00PM
Held via: Zoom Webinar

Attendance: Sandy Feroz, BDS Facilitator; Jenn Doig, BDS Facilitator; Christy Roy, BDS Facilitator; Alecia Ortiz, A&M; Drew Smith, A&M; Cynthia Mahar, ED Community Crossroads; Ellen McCahon, ED CSNI; Erin Hall, SD Brain Injury Association; Jacquelyn George, Myers & Stauffer; Kara Nickulas, ED of Community Programs Crotched Mountain; Kim Shottes, ED Plus Company; Krista Stephani, Myers & Stauffer; Larry Linden, Easter Seals; Lesley Beerends, Myers & Stauffer; Martin McNamara, Optumas; Matthew Cordaro, One Sky; Shelley Kelleher, CFO, Lakes Region Community Services; Sudip Adhikari, Gateways

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
Goals for Meeting	• Discuss Next Steps in Cost Report Design Process • Discuss March Work Group Assignment • Discuss Potential Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Wage Categories for Direct Support Professionals

Work Group members reporting day-to-day feedback from stakeholders	**Work Group Member Questions and Feedback**
	• When asked about the work one member states they simply report "We are in the early stages of trying to determine how the cost data will be collected"
	  ○ Feel it is too early to provide any details and that in itself is creating uncertainty and anxiety
	• Concerns heard by Work Group include:
	  ○ "How will the work impact me? (For both families and organizations).
	  ○ Will adjusted rates mean lower services?
	  ○ Concerns if Legislature will support rate / expenditure increases
	  ○ Concerns about Legacy budgets
	  ○ Concerns about costing out case management
	  ○ Concerns on block method to build rates, tiered rates, and need for COLA coverage
	  ○ Concerns of destabilizing the system

	• Myers and Stauffer (MSLC) encouraged Work Group members to bring questions they hear to this Work Group to discuss and provide answers

Provide an overview of the cost reporting development process	**Overview**
	• Goal is to increase meetings with this Work Group to continue to develop the cost report and issue for distribution towards the end of May.
	• Draft version will be sent out to solely look at the content and provide suggestions about verbiage, changes, additional questions to ask, additional cost which may be needed.
	• We will then have a beta test with a working copy of the cost report. The cost report will be revised based on feedback and then distribute to the larger provider group (vendors), Area Agencies (AAs), and direct service providers.
	  o This will allow this Work Group members to take back and evaluate on their own time, think about the concepts, think about what is going on or you can go back to your organizations and ask others in the organization, what do you think about this? Do you think something is missing, do we need to add or remove something?
	• MSLC anticipates holding a series of webinars to review the cost report.
	  o Possibly one specific for AAs, one for direct service providers and allow them to discuss their operations. These will be offline and not recorded. Used for discussion purposes because we are developing the cost report and will change between now and the final result.
	• The responsibilities of the Work Group are to test the cost report and review it in order to provide feedback on how to better document or ask questions to reflect your service delivery and we're also asking you to test the cost report for ease of completion.
	  o MSLC realizes there may be some complex issues, but if we can provide further direction in the instructions and in the trainings, we can do so, based on feedback.

Discuss feedback from March Work Group Assignments	**Overview** • MSLC appreciates all of the feedback that we received, we are evaluating it as we design the cost report. • In an effort to be efficient, we did not include all the costs that were suggested, but summarized into one spot, please know, we are evaluating that cost, including on the cost report as deemed necessary. **Feedback and MSLC Responses** • Feedback: Work Group members had various suggestions regarding including various cost information (direct support professional (DSP) wages, employee recruitment, background checks, etc).

- o MSLC Response: The cost report will be designed to collect this information. As we work through the rate design process, we can address each of the suggestions during those sessions.
- Feedback: Another suggestion was to collect expenses related to training.
  - o MSLC Response: The cost report will be designed to capture training expenses and also collect information related to time the DSP in a training program and unable to perform direct services.
- Feedback: Telehealth considerations for service delivery.
  - o MSLC Response: This is currently being evaluated. Clarification will be provided in the future.
- Feedback: Travel time, getting to the point to provide services or other travel time related to the DSPs may not be billable.
  - o MSLC Response: The cost report will be designed to collect information related to travel time incurred by a DSP when not providing direct services.
- Feedback: Considerations for non-medical transportation coverage.
  - o MSLC Response: Historically, this transportation was bundled in with other service definitions. In the new waivers, the non-medical transportation service will be separate.
- Feedback: Considerations for room and board.
  - o MSLC Response: Current Federal Rules prohibit reimbursement for individual room and board expenses. We can collect the information on the cost report and share with the Department.
    - ▪ Work Group members provided context for how room and board is funded today (through general revenue) and provided suggestions regarding considering models from Massachusetts on how their rates are constructed.
- Feedback: How will we track tasks related to service coordination and staffing ratios?
  - o MSLC Response: The cost report will be designed to collect this information. Depending on the service, there will likely be information collected for staffing ratios by shift. The cost report will be designed to collect information related to service coordination, such as caseload ratios, etc. Additional discussions can be held as we work through the cost report development process.

Work Group Member Additional Questions

- How long will the providers have to complete the cost report?
  - o MSLC Response: Currently asking for cost reports to be completed within 45 days. In our experience, providers report needing 40-80 hours to complete a cost report. We need to consider timelines for Department budget requests and need to consider time for data validation activities. MSLC will provide training opportunities for AAs and vendors to ask additional questions.

| | What methodologies will we use to capture consistent cost allocation methods? MSLC Response: We are evaluating the need for which cost will require a cost allocation and in the next few weeks, we can better answer. How do AAs and vendors avoid duplicating the reporting of costs? MSLC Response: As we further understand the services provided and the roles of the AAs and vendors, we'll be able to narrow down and collect costs in a way that avoids duplication in reporting. A Work Group member suggested considering Florida's system for how costs are designated between their AA-equivalent entities, case managers, and provider vendors for direct bill purposes. As part of this cost reporting beta test process, is the expectation that AAs are going to have to collect cost reporting data from all of the provider organizations, when a service is delivered through PDMS? Or will an area agency like that be reporting strictly on those services they directly provide (service coordination, etc.) MSLC Response: Envision the AAs and vendors will be reporting the cost for the services they provide. For families who provide direct services, we are currently evaluating how to collect those costs. Do you have a thought on how to collect costs for PDMS and shared family living? MSLC Response: We will provide additional clarification as we move along in the process. We are open to suggestions, feedback, brainstorming, and out of the box thinking to try to figure out how to get the cost information for the services. Work Group members suggested we need to be mindful that families are the back bone of service provisioning in NH and we do not want to disincentive that method of service provisioning with a rate which does not reflect true costs. A Work Group member suggested having AAs conduct a training for MSLC regarding PDMS and/or EFC frameworks. MSLC Response: We anticipate having specific conversations with this group about items like this to inform cost report design. A Work Group member raised a concern that Work Group might be missing folks who specifically support individuals who are living with brain injuries. Concerns that the cost submitted may not necessarily reflect the actual cost of providing service. MSLC Response: We do recognize that. The information we'll collect the cost information and then we'll also benchmark against other nationally-available data and other states within the Northeast region. The reported costs will give us a starting point to look at for rate adequacy. We will also consider Bureau of Labor (BLS) statistics, information from the DSP sub-Work |

| | | Group, efforts to recruit, training and hire for the positions and expenses related to onboarding new clients which are not reimbursed. |
| | | • A Work Group Member expressed concern about completing the cost report and their ability to amend something after submission.
○ MSLC Response: In our efforts to develop the cost report, we aim to develop the document to collect any information that we feel is relevant to rate setting. If the provider finds they forgot to report something or thought of another item we'll take that feedback as we go through the rate calculation process. We are always open to feedback and suggestions as we go through the rate-setting process, we'll have the discussions in the future, this is where the rates are falling or the numbers are falling or let's discuss this component of the rate.
• How will MSLC factor in costs for providing care to those individuals with higher needs?
○ MSLC Response: We're hoping that evaluating the assessment data in conjunction with the cost data and other information that we will be collecting will help alleviate this concern.
• Work Group members also expressed concerns regarding impacts of COVID-19 on reported data.
○ MSLC Response: The past two years don't necessarily reflect actual costs because most services are provided in the individual's home care. To address this we'll collect more information on specific service delivery.
▪ In response to this, members clarified that many regulations changed to allow for flexibility for where services may be delivered. This will be a concern to consider for costs.
• Cost for the same program can look different whether the services are provided by a separate vendor agency vs. an AA. How will that be addressed?
○ MSLC Response: We do recognize there will likely be a difference in the cost on that service delivery, depending on who is providing the service. Once we collect the cost information, we can evaluate the differences and how it can potentially affect reimbursement. The cost report will be able to identify whether an area agency is completing the cost report or a vendor agency is completing it.
• How will rates address the various service coordination needs for the individuals?
○ MSLC Response: We'll collect information and we're also currently researching the service coordination and that service description of what is entailed in delivering the services and as we develop and go through the process, we'll provide additional clarification.
• We need to think about have DD diagnoses, as well as mental health diagnosis. Is it possible we could develop a blended rate for a case management? |

	o The cost report there may be questions that will likely include on average, how many hours of support do individuals need? Really maybe identifying outliers there. As we work through the cost report development process, this is where your input is greatly appreciated for what are the appropriate questions to ask for the service delivery as service coordination and what goes into providing that service.
Evaluate Bureau Of Labor Statistics (BLS) job categories for DSPs	• The Work Group reviewed tables which represent some of the BLS occupational codes that were commonly used for the processes and the job functions. These codes are not all inclusive and MSLC/Optumas will look at and research other job categories that to add to the list. Feedback and suggestions are welcome. o Try to match services in NH to BLS occupation codes which may reflect the services. Some codes may only match part of the service, there may be no codes which match and we have to develop from scratch. It's just a starting point to help us move forward. o Within the BLS occupation codes, there is not one that specifically matches to DSPS, unfortunately. It means we have to look at some other similar codes within the list, there are a variety of education and training levels. o MSLC/Optumas will eventually narrow down this list to one code or a blend of codes that will handle most services, though there may be a few more specialized services that need separate codes. The feedback that we'd look for from you all is for a given service, which of the codes looks most appropriate. • Generally when using the block method to build rates, there is a code which is the basis on which the remaining rate components are built upon. • Using the BLS wage in the rate methodology, it is updated annually. It is easy to go in to see if the wages are going up, it will help validate or give support to an argument to the legislature to leverage this should be changed. It is just an additional support because it does get updated without having to go through the cost reports again. • This is a place to start the discussion, by no means is this the end of the discussion with the BLS wages. As we walk through and go through the rate process, rate buildout process, we'll revisit this information to identify the appropriate occupation codes to reflect the service delivery needs for each service. This is to provide you with an introduction of the information we are looking at for this process.
• **Assignment and Next Steps**	• Please refer to the corresponding Work Group PPT for details on assignments (if any) and next steps.