



The Individual and Family Support Program

IFSP State Council

Jan. 7, 2021, 12-1:30 p.m.

<https://dbhds.zoomgov.com/j/1601707836>

Passcode: #Ifsp2022

Attendees: Rachel Vamenta (she/her), Beverly Rollins, Christi Stafford (she/her), Dana Koenig (she/her), Darby Keep (she/her), Jennifer Rockwell (she/her), Maria Mitchell (she/her), Sean Campbell (he/him), Shawn Kirk (he/him), Tiffany Cobbs (she/her), Teri Morgan (Virginia Board for People with Disabilities), Molly Dellinger-Wray (LEAP), Nickie Brandenburger (VCU Family 2 Family), Kim Tarantino (VirginiaNavigator), Natasha Cooper (The Arc of Virginia)

Note: Some technical difficulties with Zoom on this day caused some Councilmembers to be unable to attend. Additionally, Nickie was unable to unmute herself, so she emailed her responses to Molly and Rachel to share for the Partner Roundtable.

I. Introductions and Agenda

- a. Introductions and welcome
 - i. Welcome from Heather Norton, DBHDS Assistant Commissioner, Developmental Services
- b. Icebreakers: Share your pronouns. If you were a vending machine, what would you vend?
- c. Funding Program Updates
- d. General Program Updates
- e. Educational component: IFSP Partner roundtable
- f. Educational component: Cultural and Linguistic Competence work at the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
- g. Wrap-up

II. Funding Program Updates

- a. The IFSP-Funding Portal experienced a breach six minutes after opening on October 7. The Portal was closed and DBHDS began an investigation.
- b. DBHDS is providing credit monitoring services for all individuals who were impacted during this breach.

- c. Additionally, DBHDS is funding all applications that were completed and saved before October 4 (the end of the Save a Draft period). So far, over 3,500 families have received funding; IFSP is working to distribute cards to those who still have not yet received them.
- d. Going forward, DBHDS will not use the Portal and will explore a new solution through WaMS. Ideally, the new system will be set up for distribution of a new funding cycle in the fall of 2022.
- e. If you hear from families, please encourage them to patient and please call My Life, My Community.

III. General Program Updates

- a. Logistics and staffing update: There are 2 key staff positions that need to be filled, the Program Manager and the Community Coordinator. Right now, Rachel is still the only person on staff.
- b. Regional revisioning: Regional Councils are still on pause until the previously mentioned IFSP staff positions are filled.
- c. The next State Council meeting date will take place in April 2022.

IV. Educational component: IFSP Partner Roundtable

- a. Tell us about your work, both generally and how it relates to people on the Waiting List.
 - i. Virginia Navigator maintains the My Life, My Community website and the call center, which is staffed by 2 operators who answer questions, triage needs, and provide guidance and reassurance to families.
 - ii. The Arc of Virginia, in partnership with IFSP, provides peer mentoring services throughout Virginia both to people with a DD Waiver and people on the Waiting List. There are limited slots for mentees who are on the Waiting List, but there is no difference in service delivery regardless of waiver status.
 - iii. LEAP = Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention. LEAP is a program at VCU's Partnership for People with Disabilities (PPD) that teaches adults with IDD and other disabilities what they can do to prevent abuse through four 90-minute healthy relationship trainings. Currently, LEAP plans to pilot an adapted training for teens.
 - iv. The Family 2 Family Network (F2F) at Center for Family Involvement (CFI) at VCU is part of the PPD under VCU's School of Education. CFI has 23 staff and 70 volunteers who are parents and family members of children and adults with disabilities. Staff are spread throughout 6 different regions and know what is available in their areas. They provide emotional support and systems navigation. They have a number of cultural brokers who help bridge the gap with families in specialized communities.

- b. Based on your experiences in your work with the people you serve, tell us about the most pressing issue(s) you encounter.
- i. VirginiaNavigator encounters families in a crisis who don't have a waiver. These families are overwhelmed trying to find supports, services, and other resources. It can be difficult for them to keep track of who does what. VirginiaNavigator also encounters families in significant financial need and some who are even experiencing homelessness.
 - ii. The Arc encounters families who need services, are faced with a lack of community access, and due to the pandemic, an increased need for socialization/social skills. Mentees and family members want mentees to have someone to talk to outside of the people in their own home. Navigating services is important, but having someone who knows where you are is just as important.
 - iii. LEAP trainings are designed to be in-person and activities are difficult to adapt for an online format. There would be no-shows, and sometimes providers would register instead of people with disabilities. New webinars developed for providers and families have been well-attended. Additionally, LEAP is taught by a person with a disability and a co-trainer, most of whom have not been able to do face-to-face trainings because they are considered high-risk during the pandemic.
 - iv. F2F receives many calls for school-age children related to special education services, which have made for lots of challenges since the pandemic. F2F also receives many calls from families with children newly diagnosed with autism. They are connected to sister family mentoring organizations in different states, and can help make peer support matches for families with children who have rare genetic disorders.
- c. Given Question 2, what do you see down the line? How would you like things to change? How can the IFSP State Council help?
- i. At VirginiaNavigator, an increased connection to critical programs and services on the VN family of websites (SeniorNavigator, disabilityNavigator, VeteransNavigator, and My Life, My Community). They would like to see coordinated efforts to spread the word and more waiver slots would be ideal.
 - ii. The Arc would like to see continued growth of the peer mentoring program. Now with the virtual option, mentees can choose the best mentor for them, regardless of where the mentor lives in Virginia. This allows mentees to receive support and guidance from mentors who can truly work best with them. Down the road, having the mentees become mentors down the line would be ideal.
 - iii. LEAP: The conversation about healthy relationships is not one people are

- used to having, or know how to have. There has been some success in the past with conducting trainings at day support centers, but with the pandemic, day support centers had no time or limited staff to incorporate LEAP into their services. It would be nice to resume that. Second is the pilot training for teenagers, and determining whether the best fit for LEAP might be in a school or a social group.
- iv. At F2F, they would like to see more diversity among volunteers from marginalized communities to improve reach to those populations.
- d. The “30-second commercial”: Please tell us in 30 seconds how people can connect with your direct services! Is there a cost?
- i. VirginiaNavigator: The [VirginiaNavigator](#) family of websites ([SeniorNavigator](#), [disAbilityNavigator](#), [VeteransNavigator](#), [My Life, My Community](#)) are free of charge. The My Life, My Community call center is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m to 4 p.m. at 844-603-9248, also at no cost.
 - ii. The Arc of Virginia: The Arc’s services and peer mentoring services are free, as are peer mentor trainings and consultations. You can find information at <https://www.thearcofva.org/>, Facebook ([@TheArcofVA](#)), and on My Life, My Community, but it is easiest to contact Natasha directly: ncooper@thearcofva.org. Prospective mentees can reach out to case managers and support coordinators, but that will lead back to Natasha.
 - iii. LEAP: There is no cost to LEAP trainings! The best way to connect are by visiting <https://leap.partnership.vcu.edu/> or emailing Molly at mdwray@vcu.edu. Will work with as few as 4 people, no more than 12
 - iv. CFI and F2F: Call 877-567-1122, email cfihelpline@vcu.edu, visit <https://centerforfamilyinvolvementblog.org>, Facebook ([@CenterforFamilyInvolvement](#)), Instagram ([@center4familyinvolvement](#)), Twitter ([@CFIVirginia](#)), and TikTok ([@cfi_vcu](#)). There is no cost for services.

V. Educational component: Cultural and Linguistic Competence work at the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities – Teri Morgan, Executive Director

- a. The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities is Virginia’s DD council. There are 56 DD councils across each state and U.S. territory. These councils were developed under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (the DD Act). Under the rules of that act, cultural and linguistic competence is discussed. Councils must conduct their work and serve unserved and underserved communities.
- b. Cultural and linguistic competence: Defined as services, supports, or other assistance that is conducted or provided in a manner that is responsive to the

- beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language, and behaviors of the individuals receiving the services, supports, or other assistance and in a manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring the maximum participation in the program involved.
- c. There is an expectation for each DD Council to serve underserved populations, including: those with racial & ethnic minority backgrounds, disadvantaged individuals, individuals with limited English proficiency, individuals from underserved geographic areas, urban and rural areas, and specific groups of individuals within the population of DD, including individuals who require assistive technology.
 - d. The Virginia Board has 39 members who lead and direct their work. When developing their current five-year State Plan (effective Oct. 2021), one priority was ensuring that work was culturally competent, and represented unserved and underserved populations. The Board had to identify how their work can represent diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and cultural competence on an ongoing basis in a way that continues to evolve.
 - e. Since July 2021, the Virginia Board is working with a professor from Georgetown University's National Center for Cultural Competence. Staff and the Board work together to develop common understanding, language, and framework for cultural competence and DEI. Learning about and reflecting on individual culture, different perspectives of the staff, and numerous cultural identities help gain greater understanding of the population at large and how they are responsive to that in a more meaningful and intentional way.
 - f. The Board's Training Alumni Association (alumni from Partners in Policymaking and Youth Leadership Academy) works together on issues of importance through grass-roots advocacy and other means. They have been organizing and conducting educational events that are live on Facebook. Past topics have included DEI and education, DEI and employment, DEI and disability intersectionality; their February 2022 event will look at DEI and justice.
 - g. Maybe the answer to achieving cultural and linguistic competence lies not just in reaching diverse communities, but in developing relationships with nontraditional partners and groups. This also extends to outreach the Board does for sharing information about their grants.
 - h. This reflective work has allowed for the staff to have new conversations that inform how they communicate and react to folks, and understand themselves better.
 - i. Connect at <https://www.vaboard.org/>, sign up for trainings on their Constant Contact list, or reach out to Teri Morgan at teri.morgan@vbpd.virginia.

VI. Wrap-up

- a. The Council had no questions for IFSP or IFSP partners about anything discussed during the meeting.
- b. Rachel reminded the Council where to find Minutes and other Council toolbox resources on the My Life, My Community password-protected State Council Portal.
 - i. Questions can go to IFSPCommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov.
- c. Next meeting: April 2022