**Maryland Commission on Disabilities**

Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2023

**Attendees:**

**MCOD Members**

Van Brooks

Janice Jackson

Adam Hays

Darrin Smith

Caroline Kobek Pezzarossi

Dave Drezner

Megan Jones

Dahlia Shaewitz

Janice Jackson

Nicole Webb

Mary Keane

Delegate Michele Guyton

Riley Williams (for Senator Zuker)

Ronza Othman

Chris Mason Hale

Katie Rouse

**MDOD Staff:**

Carol Beatty

Elizabeth Hall

Yesheva Kelly

Kim McKay

Maxine Morris

Jennifer Eastman

**Guests:**

Meridith Lawler, *Office of Innovation, Research and Development, Maryland Department of Health*

Hannah Markus*- MDH*

Kesha Shaw, *MDH*

Marja Lindsey Reed

Amber Woods

Veronica

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| **Welcome and Approval of Minutes - Van Brooks** |

Van welcomed the group and called the meeting to order. Commissioners were asked to put their names in the chat for attendance purposes.

Minutes from February 16th meeting were approved.

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| **Medicaid Check-In Campaign Presentation –** *Meridith Lawler, MDH* |

***Highlights:*** *(full presentation attached)*

* During the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, states extended continuous eligibility to all participants through the end of the public health emergency (PHE). In December 2022, the PHE and continuous eligibility requirement were no longer linked. As a result, Maryland began its renewal process in April 2023.
* The Medicaid Check-In Campaign is a statewide outreach and communication strategy to generate awareness of the Medicaid redetermination process in partnership with several Managed Care Organizations, State and Local Agencies, and some grassroot organizations.
* Eligibility Verification System (EVS) has been updated with redetermination dates. This upgrade could assist medical professionals with reminders to their patients of their Medicaid redetermination.
* Participants who fail to complete the redetermination and are disenrolled, have a 120-day reconsideration period which allows them to return to the system without starting a new application.
* Methods of advertisements for the campaign are done through local providers, TV ads, radio, social medial, digital media, billboards, etc.

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| **Attendant Care Program Presentation** *–Jennifer Eastman/Maxine Morris, MDOD* |

***Highlights:*** *(full presentation attached)*

* ACP is a financial reimbursement program which was established in July 1982. The program was created to supplement the costs of personal care assistance to eligible individuals with chronic or permanent physical.
* Eligible participants must be between 18-64 years of age, Maryland residents, have a severe chronic or permanent disability, and not receiving other personal assistance services for the same time period on the same day.
* Reimbursement rates are based on income and household size with a maximum of $308.75 bi-weekly.
* Applications are accepted through the OneStop portal. Applicants are currently being placed on a waiting lists until a space becomes available. The program prioritizes those maintaining or securing employment or individuals enrolled in higher education.
* ACP staff requested the assistance of the Commission with identifying individuals in the priority category.

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| **MDOD Update and 2023 Legislative Presentation** *– Carol Beatty, Kim McKay, Elizabeth Hall, MDOD* |

**MDOD UPDATE**

* MDTAP is the recipient of an Assistive Technology Alternative Financing Program grant from the Administration of Community Living. This expands access to affordable vehicle loans to Marylanders with disabilities with a focus on rural areas. The loans are available for adaptive and non-adaptive vehicles.
* MDOD in partnership with the Ethan Saylor Alliance is awarding 7 grants from $1000-$5000 for creative and innovative approaches between Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities and law enforcement or other first responder communities.
* Working with Prince George’s Department of Housing and Community Development and the Governor’s Federal Office to request 4 million dollars in funding to support funding for renovation costs association with PG County’s Right of First Refusal Program.
* MDOD celebrating the Anniversary of the ADA on July 25th at the National Federation of the blind in partnership with the U.S. Access Board. Townhall will be held from 1-3 p.m. followed by a reception.
* Solicitations for nominations for the Governor’s Disability Culture and Achievements Awards will be sent in June.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE** *(Highlights - full bill description attached)  
  
Bills Passed:*

* **SB622** – Higher Education- Maryland 529 Reform
* **HB0547** – Family Prosperity Act of2023
* **SB0732** – Department of Disabilities -State Coordinator for Autism Strategy and Maryland Commission on Disabilities
* **HB260** -Maryland Sign Language Interpreters Act
* **SB0343** – Maryland Achieving a Better Life (ABLE) program-Account Establishment Procedures
* SB940- Accessible Prescription Labels

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| **Commission Updates –** *MCOD Commissioners* |

**Ronza Othman**- National Federation of the Blind

* NFB championed a bill involving service animals and housing protections. The bill would provide protection to services animals that have retired and now considered “pets”.
* Supported voting bill in the general assembly to study accessibility/privacy concerns with electronic ballot return.
* Partnering with BISM to work with transitioning services for kids.

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| **Adjournment** |

Meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.