

# PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Minutes

June 25, 2020 | 10:00 a.m.

---

### In Attendance, Welcome, Approval of Minutes

---

**Present:** Heather Freilinger, Judi Mahoney, Shawn Lybarger, Danielle McKiddy, Cliff Jones, Rob McAdam, Debbie Foley, Lorie DeCarvalho, Steve Schenewerk

**Staff Present:** Gillian Wesenberg, Susan Stiles-Sumstine, Cynthia Hurkes, Cory Ortega, Danielle Walker, Julie Hurley, Athena Wikstrom

---

### Early Learning Hub Collective Action during COVID-19

---

Gillian reflected that the Douglas Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) had a robust conversation last month about child care and the impact COVID-19 is having on families. She asked the group, "How are we keeping children and families safe in child care right now?"

Heather shared that the Early Learning Division (ELD) is providing weekly webinars for Providers covering a range of topics including emergency child care guidelines in English and Spanish. There have been 400 to 500 participants on each call, so the ELD is breaking down the number of participants into smaller groups to get more robust input from providers. The ELD is taking feedback from providers and using science to update child care guidelines. Once child care guidelines are updated, the ELD will send the guidelines to Oregon Health Authority (OHA) for approval. Once approved, the guidelines will be translated and be sent out to providers in mid-August so that all providers can receive the information simultaneously. The expected completion date coincides with K-12 school plan due dates. School plans will look different in each community and will change child care needs for each area. There is currently a rule allowing school age care cohorts to change weekly and is expected to continue through the school year.

Right now, half of Douglas County's child care programs are operating as emergency child care programs. While full day preschools have to be licensed, half day preschools only have to be registered. There are no typical full-day preschools operating as "normal" right now. ELD Licensing Specialists are not currently allowed to go to child care sites which delays the opening of new sites. There is a provider in Douglas County who is trying to open, but is being held up because of this delay with licensing. Relicensing is occurring virtually since the licenser has already been to the site in the past. Most sites are currently full, and the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), Care Connections and Education is calling sites frequently to find any vacancies. Child care facilities operating under emergency child care regulations have minimal openings for children. There are eight spots available in centers, 25 open spots in registered care, and four available in exempt care.

Two grants have been issued to child care providers through the ELD utilizing federal funds from the Cares Act to cover lease/mortgage, utilities, insurance, food and supplies, staff compensation and benefits, and other reasonable operating costs. Providers can only receive grant funding one time through this program. The grants help with the funding gaps created by COVID but are not enough to cover the full loss of revenue for child care providers. Applications for these grants have to be processed online and providers are required to get a government DUNS number. The CCRR is assisting with technology as much as possible for the process. The second grant covers the same items as the initial grant and is for providers who are currently open, or will be open by September. Applicants need to commit to stay open through September. Many providers have waited to open to see if the newly imposed regulations change.

It was observed by the group that normal has changed, and while many people want to get back to the old normal, we may never go back to how things were before the pandemic.

Sutherlin School District put a committee together representing different school buildings, minority groups, etc., to be a part of the decision-making process to determine what school will look like in the fall. In order to coordinate between schools and child care, Sutherlin would like someone representing child care to join the committee. There are a lot of pieces in the jigsaw puzzle to make the school year work best for everyone. Buses that could carry 80 people can only hold a fraction of that due to new regulations. Sutherlin School District has been advised that bus drivers can do a visual

screening of children and will not have to take the children's temperatures. Bus drivers, however, cannot refuse to transport a student if they are coughing or sneezing.

Dr. Lorie DeCarvalho shared that she has concerns with school buses and what that looks like for health care. Aviva is seeing patients in-person, but are completing screenings prior to the appointment to reduce the likelihood of patients spreading COVID. Until we know how things will look in the fall, doctors won't know how to fully help families. Aviva Behavioral Health is providing more telehealth services and is trying to offer as many resources as possible to families who are struggling with finances, food insecurities, homelessness, or other health risk factors.

Rob McAdam shared that Umpqua Health just completed and sent out their member newsletter which touched on how families can connect with others safely and how to stay active in healthy ways. Umpqua Health is working with health care providers to offer medical services as much as possible, including telehealth services and regular telephone appointments for those who do not have access to internet. Telehealth is difficult to provide services effectively for children, because children are not as able to clearly describe ailments and often need a physical exam to understand the concerns, while it is an option, it is sub-optimal. There will be more services and mental health support options when there is a clearer picture about what will happen with transitioning back to schools.

Community Mental Health Programs (CMHP) are going to transfer back to in-person services from telehealth services, and will continue working with individuals located in schools like they did last year.

Umpqua Health is providing New Days and New Beginnings. As part of a system of care and in order to solicit barriers that members are experiencing, there is a Barrier Submission Form that can be filled out by providers on the Umpqua Health website located at <https://www.umpquahealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/barrier-submission-form-3-3.docx>. The form is currently only in English, and is geared towards providers completing the forms for families and community members experiencing barriers. The Barrier Submission Form is not a member facing document as then it has to go through Oregon Health Alliance (OHA) for approval. Once a barrier form is submitted, it is reviewed by the local Umpqua Health Advisory Committee; if the committee is able to address the barrier through local resources, they will contact the person who submitted the form to provide information on the available resource. If the advisory committee is not able to address the barrier, it gets sent to the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee is unable to resolve the concern or create a new solution, the barrier is sent to the state for a resolution. The biggest goal for this process is to create data out of the submissions. The more forms that are turned in, the better chance the county has of prioritizing a program.

Wayne Patterson with the Umpqua Economic Development Project sent out a survey to employers to find out how everyone is doing getting back to work. Child care was the in the top five concerns that employers have with bringing their employees back to work.

---

## Supporting Children and Families with an Equity Lens during COVID-19

---

Gillian introduced Cliff and summarized the work Capacity Building Partnerships is assisting the Hub with.

Cliff acknowledged that we have been focusing on how to address concerns that are not yet concrete and in scenarios that we don't currently know. The group brain stormed possible scenarios that we may face in the fall. Some of the scenarios included:

- Teachers that don't have child care
- Half day school and a lack of child care options for after-school care which would present a problem for working parents
- Considerations for providing a COVID safe environment
  - Smaller class size requirements
  - Transportation considerations
  - Increased cleaning regulations
- Increased instances of sibling care out of necessity
  - Younger and younger children watching younger siblings

- Limited access to technology and challenges with distance learning
- Parents had the assumption that normalcy would return in the fall, and it likely will not.

Cliff observed that we generally like to have clear outcomes and goals but right now the challenges and objectives may change daily. There is a difference of what we know as providers and professionals opposed to what is known by community members. The idea of VUCA Leadership was presented to the group. A VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) approach can assist in shifting mindsets from relying on set outcomes to thinking of all possibilities in a challenging environment. It means that leaders are preparing for as many alternative realities, challenges, and issues as possible. We will also need to think about, look for solutions, and use approaches that are outside of the boxes within which we usually operate. VUCA Leadership has been found to be effective during uncertain times like we are experiencing right now as it builds plans for all of the possible scenarios, or as many as possible, starting with the most likely scenario.

Statistics are indicating that children are regressing, especially in mental health during this time and is something that may need to be prepared for. Cliff challenged the group to use an equity lens on the discussion around child care by answering:

1. What assumptions are we making?
2. What voices are missing from our assessment and solution generation?
3. What social identity groups are most at risk and farthest from opportunities?
4. Are there other considerations that should be made?

Assumptions the group identified included:

- There will be a child care crisis - data shows that this will be the case.
  - So far, this has not yet been the case even though it was planned for at the beginning of the shutdown.
- All parents want to send their children back into child care and are comfortable with that.
- The community wants the state to solve the problems.
  - Families may want kinship care or non-regulated care opposed to state-regulated care.
- Assumptions that medical care system will be taxed.

Voices missing that the group identified included:

- Families
  - Those who prefer child care in a traditional setting
  - Those who prefer family / friend care
- Providers
  - Non-State funded
- Food and housing resources
  - Food banks are full and pantries are receiving less requests
- Individuals from small communities

Social identity groups furthest from opportunities identified included:

- Transient population - families moving in and out of schools
  - It takes weeks for resources to catch up
  - Loss of work, resulting in families having to move

Other considerations identified are:

- People aren't accessing care
- Organizations may be reducing traveling for supports - reduced engagement in outreach
- Isolation is impacting a lot of people right now
  - Causes less information sharing
- Some families are experiencing survey fatigue.

There are opinion leaders in every community, individuals who people go to for informal messaging. Social dissemination of information can have a greater impact than formal messaging.

---

## Douglas County Health Update

Dr. Bob Dannenhoffer shared that this virus has been a humbling experience, doctors are more often wrong in their predictions than they are right when it comes to COVID-19. In his opinion, any sense COVID will be done in the fall is wildly optimistic. He is expecting to continue maintaining distance, and addressing COVID-19 concerns for at least

another year. The good news is, kids seem to get COVID less often than adults, get less sick, and infect others less often than they do with many other illnesses. Child care centers are very unlikely to pass around the virus, and large outbreaks will occur more often in work places than in child care settings.

Multi System Inflammatory Syndrome (MSIS), a rare side effect of the virus seen in children, which typically follows big peaks of COVID-19 in the community by four to six weeks. Children who experience MSIS, are often not seriously ill, or do not know they were infected with COVID-19, then experience MSIS about four to six weeks after they have recovered from the virus. Reducing COVID in adults is the only way to combat MSIS in children.

The US has experienced the largest rise in new COVID-19 cases this week, and COVID-19 transmission does not seem to be affected by the heat. An increase in cases is being seen in young people recently. The trend has been that we have seen an increase in the older population a couple weeks after an increase in younger cases. It is unclear if this is a second wave or a continuance of the first wave. COVID-19 is out of control in some counties and cities in Oregon, but Douglas County is not a hot spot and is doing well responding to the virus. Asymptomatic tests have all been negative in Douglas County.

---

## Director's Update

---

The ELD is sending out a letter to providers to give an update on the Preschool Promise Request for Application (RFA) process. The decisions are on hold, waiting for the governor or legislature to release funds. Preschool Promise applicants' frustration with the delay in communication for the intent to contract awards is understood by the ELD.

---

## Partner Update

---

**Shawn Lybarger- Head Start** - Early Head Start children are in session right now through emergency child care. Summer programming across the county starts July 20, for two weeks in July, and two weeks in August. About 150 kids will be enrolled in summer programming focusing on four-year-olds transitioning to kindergarten. Slots are 60% full, so families who are interested need to get applications in right away. Early Head Start is currently full for this program year.

**UCAN** - Housing and energy assistance grants are available, families in need should contact UCAN.

**Cory Ortega- UPLIFT** - referrals are at pre-COVID levels.

**Heather – Care Connections and Education** – Umpqua Community College has a closure week next week so Care Connections and Education will be out of the office. Tuesday webinars are available each week for providers. Bleach kits and some programming materials are still available for providers. There is a potential for the ELD to provide additional items by responses from providers to the ELD as they did at the beginning of the shutdown.

**Judi - Healthy Start / Healthy Families** – In Klamath County, Klamath Basin Behavioral Health (KBBH), the current contracted provider administering Healthy Start will not be renewing their contract to provide services. Judi is recruiting Family Support Specialists in Douglas and Klamath Counties, and a Program Supervisor and Home Visitors in Klamath County.

**Steve Schenewerk-** Faith Family and Relationship Advocates (FARA) is providing free virtual parenting classes and intensive therapy for children. Information for classes and services can be found at: [FARA4kids.org](http://FARA4kids.org). FARA will be offering Safe Families respite care. Steve also shared that Brian at United Way has gallons of free hand sanitizer available.

**Susan Stiles-Sumstine – Take Root** - Wrapping up parenting classes for the summer. They are finishing Ready! for Kindergarten today, and Growth and Development ends July 1. On June 30, the Baby 101 Workshop will begin; registration is open on Facebook. Take Root is looking to begin an Incredible Infants Parenting Group virtually and will also be offering Nurturing Parenting for Adolescents.

**Athena Wikstrom – Early Learning Hub** – The South-Central Early Learning Hub received a grant from Umpqua Health to provide items for families impacted by COVID. We are providing Pull-Ups, Sensitive Wipes, formula, and limited COVID related cleaning supplies for families by request through the summer. This is in addition to the Peri-Natal Task Force providing diapers and wipes to community members.

**Dani McKiddy– Family Development Center (FDC)** - Respite Care is going to be available for families beginning in July. FDC is enrolling children for next year, and is in the process of determining which teachers will be coming back next year.

---

## Future Topics

---

July - Equity Lens planning meeting

August - Fall updates (K12 and child care)

Guest speaker - mental / behavioral health community supporting children

Tools in tool kit to help children

Possibly Dr. DeCarvalho and Alison Hinson

---

### Next Meeting Date

---

July 22 – Equity Lens Regional Small Group - Virtual

August 20 – Douglas County PAC Virtual Meeting