

**Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council  
Empowerment through Information Committee  
Mini-Retreat  
February 21, 2013**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Participants:** Ray Morris, Ed Myers, Rosemarie Strout

**Goal #3:** Empower persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and persons who support them by linking them to information that promotes informed decision making about their choices and their quality of life.

The goal is a good reflection of the work of the Council and the Committee.

**Objectives**

Current objectives relate to the website, providing information on a variety of topics, and educating people about how to access the information they need. Significant progress has been made on all objectives.

When the objectives were written, the Council was just developing its own website. Prior to that time, the only web presence was the Council's link on the Governor's website. Now the Council has its own website, which is easy to access, well used, and useful. The Committee wants to maintain the website objective, but reflect the new priorities of updating and improving the website and increasing utilization, at least in part by using Facebook to drive the public to the website. It will be useful to learn which other sites drove users to the Council website and use this information to plan outreach strategies.

The Committee would like to further focus the information and education provided via the website and other means and the contracts that they support to achieve the objectives. Currently, information and education are provided on a variety of topics including community supports, education and early intervention, health, housing, public policy, quality assurance, and transportation to self-advocates, family members, service providers, and organizations that impact persons with developmental disabilities via the website, trainings, and conferences. Information and education is provided by contractors, Council members, and Council staff. A resource directory is in development. As best practices are being developed, these will be shared broadly and embedded into the work of the Council and hopefully its partners.

As the Council moves forward, the Committee recommends that all information provided (and contracts) be categorized by: 1) audience, 2) topic, and 3) method of delivery. Recommendations for future audiences, topics, and methods should be consistent with the State Plan, based on the Comprehensive Review and Analysis (CR&A), and informed by input received from the focus groups that are currently being conducted around the state. Based on currently available information, the Committee recommends focusing on the same audiences as now and making the following topics priorities—education and early intervention, health, public policy, transportation, and community inclusion (which is overarching). Need for addressing these topics is support by the CR&A and the annual Council focus group, which was held this month. The Council should continue to provide information directly, coordinate with new and existing partners, and provide funding for priority projects.

Committee members agree that the Council needs to maintain its focus on public policy. Beyond that, decisions about focus topics will be driven by the needs of the Council's stakeholders and should be made with awareness of what other partners are doing so that the Council does not duplicate their work unnecessarily. The Council will need to work with these partners and coordinate efforts.

The Committee recommends a new objective related to reaching underserved populations throughout the state. A consistent definition of an *underserved population* is needed but it should be fairly broad. Work on this objective should be coordinated with the outreach efforts of the other Council Committees and contractors (e.g., the Self-Advocacy Committee has proposed an objective related to promotion of self-advocacy among underserved populations). New RFGAs could include reaching underserved populations as a priority.

Proposed new objectives are as follows:

- Objective 1: Increase access to and utilization of the website through use of social media and other means.
- Objective 2: Provide reliable information and education on a variety of topics that are important to persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and persons who support them.
- Objective 3: Provide information, education, and support to underserved populations to increase their access to services and supports and promote community inclusion.

The ultimate measures of success for all Council objectives should be systems change and increased capacity. Outcome measures will be needed for all objectives, either embedded in the objective or in the evaluation plan. For the website objective (Objective 1), measures of success include number of hits and other indicators of utilization. The Council should also look at where the user came from to get to the Council website, links to/from partners' websites, user interaction with the Council (e.g., comments, requests, messages), and number of registrations. With respect to information and education (Objective 2), the Council should conduct regular follow-up surveys of users to determine what they did with the information they received and the benefits derived from it. Surveys could be mandated in contracts. The Administration for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) has sample questions that could be used.

### **Contracts**

Current contracts are in alignment with Goal 3 and the objectives, but need to be more focused on Council priorities in the future. The Committee recommends establishing priorities related to audience, topic, and methods of delivery to guide future RFGAs. Current contracts are listed in Appendix 1.

### **Opportunities for Internal and External Collaboration**

The work of the Empowerment through Information Committee will leverage the work of other Council committees, as they will both use the website to share information and thus empowerment constituents.