

APPROPRIATIONS - FINANCE & CLAIMS

SUBCOMMITTEE: HUMAN SERVICES

AGENCY I

FEBRUARY 20, 1979 - CAPITOL ANNEX

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 a.m. by the Chairman Steve Waldron with the following members present:

Chairman Steve Waldron
Senator Gary Aklestad
Representative Bill Hand
Representative Robert Marks
Senator Pete Story

Senator Pat Regan - Excused

Others present were: Keith Colbo, Director of SRS; Ben Johns, Deputy Director of Administration; Richard D. Hulme, Chief Budget Officer; Arthur A. Zody, State DD Council; Linda Gamble, OBPP; Ron Weiss, OBPP; Tim Kaye, Citizen Advocate; Aage Hansen, Association for Developmentally Disabled; Mike Morris, Missoula CDC; and Curt Nichols, LFA. See attached list for additional names.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Curt Nichols, LFA, gave an overview of this budget. The council is responsible for writing the state plan and funding innovative programs including recreation and advocacy. Both budgets have recommendations for deleting all general fund money and funding only with federal funds. The LFA felt the initial plan has been written and they would not require the same level of funding as in the past. There has been some talk that the federal money might be increased; however, the fiscal analyst is not aware of extra money at this time.

Ron Weiss, Executive Budget Officer, recommended \$150,000 in federal funds. They also do not recommend general fund money; a local match will have to be found. He felt perhaps the department could address what they would do if additional grant money became available.

Keith Colbo, Director of SRS, explained that the DD Council is attached administratively only to SRS. He introduced Arthur Zody, Chairman of the DD Council.

Mr. Art Zody spoke on behalf of the council. They work in partnership with the division to carry out the federal mandate. The council was developed in 1971 and consists of twenty-two members which are required by state law. The members include

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four legislators, a doctor, a special education specialist, a psychologist, department directors and members from the five regions. Mr. Zody explained that the council is an advocate for the needs of the developmentally disabled. Mr. Zody further explained that the federal government has just amended the DD bill and new regulations will expand the area of treatment. The amendment will also increase the allotment to states to \$250,000. However, Congress may not allot that much. The council is still not sure how much they will receive.

Mr. Zody expressed concern at the reduction in travel within the budgets. The Executive budget has cut \$18,500 from their requested travel. Mr. Zody told the subcommittee that they need this money. It is used to pay meals, lodging and travel when the council meets. The council members are voluntary and they feel their expenses should be paid. The council meets every other month for two days. The travel money is also used for the DD Congress. The congress is a group of approximately 68 persons who have an interest in DD clients. Providers, region council members and others attend the meeting. Their travel is paid because Mr. Zody and the council feel their input is necessary. He asked for the restoration of the \$18,500 in the budget.

Beth Richter, Executive Director of the DD Advisory Council, spoke about the program. They have 2.3 FTEs. They share one FTE with the Mental Health Council. They have an executive director which has been on contract up to now, a part-time secretary which was contracted, a full-time secretary and a planner which is contracted.

The subcommittee questioned "honaria". These are funds to pay the council members when they meet. The members receive \$25.00 per day. The law states that the council meet in Helena; however they have been getting permission to travel to other areas.

Representative Marks expressed concern over the DDMAP. (DD Montana Advocacy Program) Mr. Zody explained that the federal law mandated an advocacy program outside of any government. The council is not responsible for their program. DDMAP did receive a grant from the council in the amount of \$15,000 to supplement their federal grant. Representative Marks felt they were not using the money wisely.

In closing Mr. Zody told the subcommittee that they would now have to find someone to match funds.

Chairman Waldron questioned Mr. Colbo on a new deinstitutionalization

tionalization Plan. Mr. Colbo responded by telling the chairman their new plan is done and a copy was distributed. The plan will provide for 105 people to be deinstitutionalized, forty-five from the waiting list, 45 from Boulder and 15 from Warm Springs.

The hearing was opened for public testimony.

Aage Hansen, Association for Developmentally Disabled, spoke in support of the Council as they are starting work on preventative programs in mental retardation. Mr. Hansen felt this is long overdue and should be supported. Prevention can help reduce the number of individuals who will need aid in the future.

Tim Kaye submitted a copy of a letter to the Attorney General's Office which implied that the Cascade House in Great Falls was not meeting standards. He also read a statement. Both are attached. Mr. Kaye feels there is a massive break-down of services to the disabled. He feels that administration is using up most of the money leaving little for direct services. He felt money should be freed from the bureaucracy and be applied to direct services. He also felt an advocacy should be set up to review and monitor these programs. He told the subcommittee that there is no independent organization to look at the facts. He did not feel SRS should be investigating its own problems.

Mr. Colbo felt it was unfortunate that allegations are made without anyone from Cascade Home being present. He told the subcommittee that the "allegations" were going through the proper channels in the County Attorney's Office and the Attorney General's Office. The SRS is not investigating this problem. SRS is cooperating and will cooperate with the investigation; but they do not know its status at this time. Mr. Colbo explained that the department tries to seek out the best providers. The providers are directly responsible for the services. The provider also has a board of directors overseeing them and they are responsible to see the services are delivered. The boards are often times the one who finds the improprieties. The community also aids in monitoring the homes.

Representative Marks expressed concern that the state is taking patients out of institutions and may be placing them into group homes that are not qualified. Mr. Colbo did acknowledge that they did not have a formal method to monitor direct services.

Mr. Aage Hansen told the subcommittee that the JCAH standards

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have been considered for group homes. This is a program that reviews the services and the delivery of the system and would be the independent party they need. Mr. Colbo said this is being considered, but would cause cost problems for many homes.

Mr. Zody felt they were asking the program to cut administrators and then turning around and asking for more supervision.

Mike Morris, Missoula CDC, thought that through stiffer contracts the division had taken care of some of the problems.

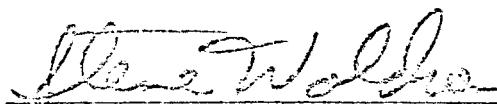
The hearing was closed to public testimony.

Mr. Colbo gave a brief overview of some of the considerations before the subcommittee. Some of these included: 1) The MIMS system for AFDC and Medicaid. This system would help decrease the error rate; 2) The Social Services Reporting System, MSS. This would be a managerial tool for the division; 3) Technical aspects such as the up-grading of eligibility technicians, and the chance of more money coming in for the Advisory Council; 4) Programmatic aspects including: foster parents vs. group homes; Day Care funding, including the switch from IV-A funding; five FTEs for eligibility determination technicians for reduction in error rate; ten FTEs for audit support in Administration and Support; cuts in programs such as Adult Dental Care and others. These matters will be addressed again at the work sessions for each bureau.

Mr. Colbo also pointed out that the SRS Division lost 32 FTEs during the hiring freeze. This agency cut more staff proportionately than any other staff. They also cut twenty million dollars from the original budget even before it was finalized. This general fund money savings was accomplished by shifting money from the best utilization of federal funds and the cutting of some programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Steve Waldron, Chairman
Approved

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