



EPIC Advisory Council Meeting Agenda

<https://gwu-edu.zoom.us/j/94836338948?pwd=MVQrcmNxc2syR0JYQkx3b2NmWTJTQT09>

Meeting ID: 948 3633 8948

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March 26, 2024

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

- Welcome and Introductions
- Quick Recap/Reminder Purpose and Goals of EPIC
- Review and Prioritize Previously Identified Professional Development Needs
 - Compassion fatigue/Burnout - Managing Secondary Trauma Stress
 - Therapeutic/Working Alliance (possibly infused with metacognition)
 - Cultural Considerations re: Poverty
 - Financial health conversations *particularly around ABLE accounts, individuals with high support needs*
 - Overview of SSA Benefits
 - For Waiver Case Managers
 - For Parents/Families
 - Waiver services (overview)/benefits
 - For Families
 - Plain Language Needs

Attendees:

GWU: DJ Ralston, Adrienne Robinson, Nichole Tichy, Sandi
Christi Altizer - DARS, Manager, Abingdon and Wytheville Offices
Allison Enix - DARS Placement Counselor
Ingrid Gagnon - DARS, EPIC Coordinator
John - Stewart - DARS, EPIC Project Manager
Cindy Matney - DARS , Southwest District Manager
Shannon Mutter - Regional Mgr, Mt. Rogers
David Cofer - Transition Specialist for Bristol City Schools
Curtis Hawkins - Supported Employment Coordinator, Mt Rogers Community Services Board
Denise Leftwich - Occupational Enterprises, EN and WISA provider
Amanda Compton - Occupational Enterprises, EN and WISA provider
Beth Carico - Director of Workforce Development, People Inc. (WIOA Contractor)
Melissa Armstead - DARS, No Wrong Door (trainer)

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Sarah Arnold - DARS, No Wrong Door Project Specialist

Adam Page - Director of Developmental Services Highland Community Services

Crystal Cureton - Grayson County DSS

Notes:

Reminder of the Purpose of EPIC

- Building a sustainable model for employment in CIE for individuals with significant disabilities including opportunities to grow and advance in employment
 - Individuals currently working in Subminimum Wage
 - Individuals who were recently working or previously employed in subminimum wage who are no longer working
 - Students who are at risk of entering non-integrated settings, defined as students who spend at least a portion of the day in a self-contained classroom.

During the last meeting we discussed a wide range of training needs to help address the barriers that individuals with the disabilities face from the identified populations

- Transportation
 - “District 3 (Mountain Lynx) is a governmental cooperative that offers public transportation in addition to senior services (meals on wheels, etc). There are coverages in Marion, Abingdon, Wytheville, and Galax but the other areas are extremely limited” → Crystal Cureton
 - They also provide public guardianship, seniors and people with disabilities, etc.
 - <https://district-three.org/index.php/public-transit/>

Other training identified included -

- Compassion fatigue/Burnout - Managing Secondary Trauma Stress
 - Noted from Crystal and Curtis as a high need especially as a turnover (dealing with burnout)
 - Noted from Adam that this would be really relevant to direct service staff
- Therapeutic/Working Alliance (possibly infused with metacognition)
- Cultural Considerations re: Poverty
 - Financial health conversations *particularly around ABLE accounts, individuals with high support needs*
 - Curtis Hawkins noticed that this was a high need
 - Occupational Enterprises Inc can assist with ABLE accounts
- Overview of SSA Benefits

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- (Adam, Highland Community Services noted that this was a need for support coordinators)
- DARS noted that this is also really important for the ESOs and the job coaches and the families and the need to report and how to report those wages.
- For Waiver Case Managers
- For Parents/Families
- Waiver services (overview)/benefits
 - For Families
 - Plain Language Needs
- Partner Benefits (Document)
 - What everyone does, what their eligibility criteria are, how to apply, how working impacts available benefits
 - Once a year community academies to update/capture this information
 - No Wrong Door and VA Easy Access <https://easyaccess.virginia.gov/>
 - Virtual training on how to use this as a resource (potential option)
- Review of type of training that is priority (DJ reviewed that half of the council prioritize burnout, compassion fatigue/secondary trauma stress and other half prioritize SSI/SSDI or something related to financial independence
- Reviewed whether virtual or in person works best. Council voted for in-person but DJ suggested that the meetings move to every other month due to in-person demand
- May 14th-possible for next meeting combined with NWD training (Sarah Arnold)
 - Meeting has been scheduled for 9am.
 - Consensus has moved to start at 10am. An hour of business and an hour of training (10-12p.m.)
 - Abingdon is the designated spot for the meeting in May

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