



AADD ALASKA

July 2021

From your AADD President, Amanda Faulkner

Let's stay vigilant!

As COVID cases increase across Alaska it is critical that providers remain vigilant and informed. Each provider assumes an additional level of responsibility to follow CDC and DHSS guidelines to protect the individuals we support while balancing service demands, workforce shortages and unforeseen challenges secondary to a statewide cyber-attack on DHSS. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/guidance.aspx>. In addition, each person, family, and guardian must also absorb the same additional responsibilities to keep Direct Support Professionals (DSP's) safe.

The past 21 months have been extremely stressful but the threat of COVID and strain variations are looming and in constant fluctuation as cases increase with seasonal activities and social events. AADD leadership continues to recognize the workforce that kept people safe through the height of the COVID pandemic. Let's avoid another statewide mandate to "stay home" by remaining vigilant with universal precautions. Practicing good hygiene, handwashing, wearing masks and staying home when you're sick are our best defense and offense.

The topic of increasing COVID cases can stir anxiety, fear, and a wave of emotional uncertainty. Ground your organization with CDC facts and provide responsive guidance to the individuals we serve and our workforce. AADD is here to support, inform and bring our collective voices together. If you would like additional information on COVID and/or CDC guidance please reach out to AADD leadership.

10% FMAP Increase Plan

SDS submitted their plan to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on July 12th. CMS has 30 days to respond. The state's plan includes 89% of the funds dedicated to transitioning folks from institutions (API, out of state) to community services. It would include acuity rates for these services for coordinators and providers and fund current needs not billable. The remaining 11% would go towards workforce training toward professionalization of the workforce. We do not know what CMS will approve.

SDS UPDATE

Appendix K— Extension of flexibilities under Appendix K is complicated by 10% FMAP proposal. SDS is working with CMS. The simple form of the Support Plan is extended to December 1, 2021.

Family Habilitation—SDS anticipates meeting internally on this issue in August in preparation for further stakeholder engagement and dialogue.

DHSS Re-Organization—No formal re-organization of the Department has been released.

DHSS Website—No update. It is under investigation.

ISW rate—The 2.1% increase to Medicaid rates has adjusted the ISW rate. As of July 1, 2021, the ISW rate is \$18,864. If plans cross the July 1 date there must be two plans. One prior to July 1 reflecting the old cost and a second plan from July 1 forward that includes the increased amount.

The current numbers:

- ⇒ 185 active Care Coordinators
- ⇒ 777 on DDDR (waitlist)
- ⇒ 350 active ISW waiver
- ⇒ 577 offered ISW
- ⇒ 2050 IDD waivers (fully activated and in process)

Shared Vision: The Next Chapter

Approximately 20 members of the DD Systems Collaborative met recently to talk about how to coordinate Vision-related work now that the Trust's contract with Champney Consulting has concluded. Discussion centered around the creation of a Shared Vision Council that meets 3-4 times a year for information-sharing and collaboration.

The Shared Vision model embraced a grassroots approach by intentionally having shared "ownership" of the movement, instead of a single organization taking the lead. Now that formal project coordination has ended, the steering committee is considering how to embed the Vision leadership within an organization to ensure sustainability.

AADD has committed to bringing the group back together for further discussion while Peer Power Alaska will seek funding for Kim Champney to help draft a charter for the new Council.

Care Coordination Study

AADD will be releasing an RFP, once funding is formalized, for a study to objectively compare the numbers of Certified Care Coordinators and the number of waivers and their duties from the inception of Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM) to the current numbers and duties. It will compare the average hours required for each of the 5 waivers (IDD, ISW, CCMC, ALI and APD) to the rates of reimbursement. Thank you to the Mental Health Trust for the funding. Stay tuned for more information on this important subject.

DSP Hire Mobile App Launch Date Set

DSP Hire is a marketplace for direct support positions across Alaska. A mobile app is in the final testing phase and will be launched on August 16.

The app will provide users access to the website and will include the option for notifications and messaging for applicants

Stay tuned for a launch webinar to learn more about how to maximize this resource with this new feature.

DSP Week is September 12—18, 2021

ANCOR/Relias have many popular ways to customize celebrations for DSP Week at <https://www.promoplace.com/98519/stores/ANCOR2021>.

Place orders **by August 20** to ensure receipt by the start of DSP Recognition Week. Also, be sure to browse the toolkit at <https://www.ancor.org/2021-direct-support-professional-recognition-week> for celebration ideas, sample social media posts, and more!

I am so sorry to report that David Hingsburger, whom you saw on a video clip with Ben Drew's keynote in one of the Open Future Learning vignettes, passed away suddenly July 18th. "Over the years we have learned so much from his insights, wisdom and wonderful humor." Our field lost a true friend, advocate and spokesperson.

Mark your Calendar: October 19-20, 2021

AADD will host their Fall AADD Face2Face meeting as a hybrid opportunity, both meeting in person at the BP Center and via zoom. Joe Macbeth is our Keynote presenter. He is the President and CEO of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP). He is a dynamic speaker. NADSP has pioneered training badges for DSPs and has supported our Alaskan Alliance for DSPs.



Barb Rath, the Executive Director of the Arc of Anchorage has been awarded the Rising Star Award from the national Arc. It will be presented at the National Conference in late September.

CALENDAR

August 3, 2021 Care Coordination—10:30 to 11:30
August 12, 2021 Monthly AADD meeting—11 to 12
August 19, 2021 Compliance Group—8:30 to 9:30
August 19, 2021 CFO meeting—10 to 11
August 26, 2021 Hot Topics to be announced—11 to 12
August 9—23, 2021 Lizette is out of the office
Fall face2face—October 19—20, 2021—BP Center/hybrid

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