

WEST VIRGINIA
MEDICAID AGED AND DISABLED WAIVER
QUALITY ASSURANCE & IMPROVEMENT
ADVISORY COUNCIL
PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Council Purpose

The purpose of the Quality Assurance & Improvement (QAI) Advisory Council is to provide guidance and feedback in the development of an ongoing quality assurance and improvement system for the Aged/Disabled Waiver (ADW) Program. To this end, the Council will work with Waiver staff to develop and strengthen the Waiver's ability to:

1. Collect data and assess participant experiences in order to evaluate the ongoing implementation of the program, identifying strengths and opportunities for quality improvement
2. Act in a timely manner to remedy specific problems or concerns as they arise
3. Use data and quality information to engage in actions that lead to continuous improvement in the Waiver program

The Quality Assurance & Improvement Advisory Council will work with the Aged and Disabled Waiver Program to ensure that it supports the desired outcomes outlined in the seven (7) focus areas of the Quality Framework developed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). These focus areas include:

1. Participant Access – Do recipients of Waiver services have access to home and community-based services and supports in their communities?
2. Participant-Centered Service Planning and Delivery – Are Waiver services and supports planned and effectively implemented in accordance with each participant's unique needs, expressed preferences and decisions concerning his/her life in the community?
3. Provider Capacity and Capabilities – Are there sufficient providers and do they possess and demonstrate the capability to effectively serve participants?

4. Participant Safeguards – Are participants in the Waiver safe and secure in their homes and communities, taking into account their informed and expressed choices?
5. Participant Rights and Responsibilities – Do Waiver participants receive support to exercise their rights and in accepting personal responsibilities?
6. Participant Outcomes and Satisfaction – Are Waiver participants satisfied with their services and achieve desired outcomes?
7. System Performance – Does the Waiver support participants efficiently and effectively and constantly strive to improve quality?

The Advisory Role

Advisory groups are formed, as the name implies, to give advice and council. Such groups can provide invaluable information, guidance, advice, and support to organizations as they develop and administer programs and services. While advisory groups are sometimes referred to as advisory boards, they are best referred to as councils or committees to avoid confusing their role with the activities and duties of governing boards or boards of trustees.

The role of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Advisory Council is advisory in nature and therefore, it has no authority in administering the Aged and Disabled Waiver Program. Its function is to advise and assist the ADW staff in program planning, development, and evaluation consistent with its stated purpose. In this role, the Quality Assurance & Improvement Advisory Council shall:

1. Recommend program priorities and quality initiatives
2. Recommend policy changes
3. Monitor and evaluate policy changes
4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of Waiver priorities and quality initiatives
5. Serve as a liaison between the Waiver and its stakeholders

6. Establish committees and work groups consistent with its purpose and guidelines

Council Membership

The Quality Assurance & Improvement Advisory Council will consist of fifteen (15) members. Five will be current or former recipients (or their legal representatives) of ADW services, with the remaining members representing other stakeholders such as service providers, direct care workers, family members, and other advocates and allies of people with disabilities. To the extent possible, the Council will represent all regions of the state.

Appointments and Membership Terms

Original members of the Council have been appointed by the Director of Program Operations for the ADW and will serve three-year terms to coincide with the duration of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Project. These terms will expire at the end of June 2007. If vacancies occur during this period, the Director of Program Operations will appoint individuals to complete the unexpired terms.

In January 2007, the Council shall form a Membership Committee. This committee will be charged with the responsibility to develop procedures for:

1. Identifying and recruiting potential Council members
2. Nominating members for appointment
3. Appointing new members
4. Filling vacancies
5. Training and orienting new members

The Membership Committee will also be asked to develop a process to ensure that membership terms are “staggered” so that there will always be experienced members serving on the Council.

Meetings

The Quality Assurance & Improvement Advisory Council will meet four times each year in October, January, April, and July. At least one meeting each year will be held somewhere other than Charleston. Meetings will typically be scheduled for 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Council members representing current or former Waiver recipients (or their legal representatives) will be eligible for a stipend and travel reimbursement for meeting attendance.

At least one meeting each year will feature an open forum to solicit feedback from consumers and their advocates and allies on the performance of Waiver services. All meetings will be open to the public.

Staff of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Project will maintain and distribute minutes of all meetings to Council members. At a minimum, the minutes shall include:

1. Members present/absent
2. Any decisions or recommendations made by the Council
3. Responses to any questions or recommendations made at previous Council meetings
4. Specific assignments to be carried out following the meeting including what is to be done, who is in charge and date of completion
5. Items to be addressed at the next Council meeting

Meeting minutes will be distributed to all Council members no later than one month following the meeting. ADW staff will assume the responsibility for

preparing, distributing, and maintaining meeting minutes upon the completion of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Project.

Decision-Making Process

All decisions made by the Council will be made by consensus. This will ensure that all issues are thoroughly discussed, that all minority views are heard and that Council recommendations are generally agreed upon. If it becomes evident that consensus is not possible on an issue that requires action, the Council shall vote and a decision made based on a simple majority vote of those present.

At least eight Council members must be present at meetings in order to conduct business. Council members will be asked to confirm their attendance at meetings no later than two days prior to each scheduled meeting.

Responsibilities and Expectations

During the three-year period of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Project, it will be the responsibility of the Project and Waiver staff to plan and conduct all meetings. Upon the completion of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Project, Waiver staff will assume this responsibility. Staff will provide Council members with the information they need in accessible and appropriate formats.

It will be the responsibility of all Council members to:

1. Become familiar with the Aged and Disabled Waiver program and services it provides
2. Become familiar with the Waiver's Quality management system and initiatives
3. Study any problems or issues brought to the Council
4. Prepare for, attend, and fully participate in Council meetings

Failure of a member to participate in two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings may result in removal from the Council by the Director of Program Operations.

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