

Aging & Disability Resources: Draft 2024-2027 Area Plan

Pierce County Human Services

Public Hearing

Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023

10:00 to 11:00 am

Hybrid Via Zoom link or In-Person

Attendance

- ADR Advisory Board members = 8
- Community members / guests = 1
- HS/ADR staff = 10

Meeting Summary

Sara Thompson, ADR Advisory Board Vice Chair opened the Public Hearing and introduced ADR staff to lead the public hearing presentation on the draft 2024-2027 Area Plan. The public hearing presentation included an overview / summary of the draft Area Plan and the proposed 2024 budget, and was followed by the opportunity for discussion, questions and public comment / testimony. The following questions and comments were addressed:

Questions

- **How long is it taking for clients to receive (Medicaid-funded in-home care) services and is there data available to track that?**
 - Individuals must apply to and be assessed eligible for Medicaid-funded in-home care services by the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services / Home & Community Services (DSHS/HCS). Eligible clients must then have paid caregiver services authorized and in place prior to be transferring to ADR Case Management for ongoing care management services.

Due to both DSHS/HCS staffing shortages and shortages of paid in-home caregivers, there has been a significant backlog of applicants waiting to be assessed and subsequent delays in getting in-home caregiving services in place. As the result, it can take several months for clients to actually begin receiving in-home care services after initial assessment and eligibility determination. ADR can request that data from DSHS/HCS and share at a future Advisory Board meeting.

- **Is the high school program to train students to become certified home care aides still in place?**
 - Yes, the high school program is still a key initiative in the DSHS/HCS efforts to increase the pool of qualified paid in-home caregivers. Additionally, DSHS/HCS is in the process of implementing a new Regional Workforce Navigator program to assist persons interested in becoming individual in-home caregivers to get through the State's contracting, training and Home Care Aide certification process.

Comments / Discussion

- **Many families are still caring for developmentally disabled (DD) adult children at home. It is appreciated that ADR's Area Plan prioritizes and includes funding for information and education to support family caregivers, outside of what's available through the State's DD service system.**
- **It was noted there are no State regulations that set a timeline requirement for how quickly DSHS/HCS must put paid in-home caregiving services in place. It was suggested that the ADR Advisory Board may consider this as an advocacy issue in the future.**

There were no additional comments, discussion or testimony submitted by public hearing participants concerning the draft 2024-2027 Area Plan.

Written Comments

Written comments on the draft Area Plan were accepted from the date of publication on August 31, 2023, through Sept. 22, 2023. No written comments were received.