**Benefits Planning Cross-Advisory Body Workgroup**

**Meeting Minutes- DRAFT**

February 27, 2024

This meeting was held via teleconference within the meaning of Government Code Section 11123.5.

**Workgroup Members:** Leeza Coleman (Virtual),Stephanie Crist (Virtual), Jennifer Fischer, (Virtual), Michael Luna (Virtual), Jessica Popjevalo (Virtual), Naomi Ramirez (Virtual), Candis Welch (Virtual), and Taylor Winchell (Virtual with Attendant)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting began at 2:01 p.m. and a quorum was established.

1. **Approval of January 2024 Meeting Minutes**

It was moved/seconded (Fischer/Coleman) to approve the January meeting minutes. Motion was approved by a 6-0-1 vote. (Yes – 6, Coleman, Fischer, Luna, Popjevalo, Ramirez, and Winchell); (No – 0); (Abstain – 1, Welch).

1. **Breakout Rooms to Review Benefits Planning Report**

Executive Officer asked the members to go into breakout rooms to review the topics in the report: health care, long-term services and supports, and benefits planning for the next 45 minutes. The Executive Officer provided an overview of changes made since the last meeting:

* More data and footnotes in report.
* Made changes to the framing of benefits planning issues.
* Aging Disability Resource Connections were added because creation of a no wrong door system.
* Discussed the data from the Working Disabled program and information from other states.
* Long-Term Services and Supports needs more work and discussion for policy recommendations.

After breakout rooms ended, Members returned and provided an update on the discussions.

Health care:

* Discussed the inclusion of outreach plan.
* Changes to some of the language in that section.

Benefits Planning:

* Refine key challenges to make language clearer.
* Change organization of the section to start with data before challenges.
* Update some language and include updated data.
* Clarification needed in terms of the Ticket to Work and WIPAs.
* Need to separate a section to clarify benefits planning needs.

Long-Term Services and Supports:

* Discussed how this disincentivizes employment for those who need long-term services and supports.
* Discussed the income eligibility and asset limits in more detail.
* Begin with personal stories of the need for long-term services and supports and benefits cliff.

1. **Discussion of Data Needs for Benefits Planning Report**

The Executive Officer asked members what data is still needed. Members discussed the following:

* Personal Stories throughout sections
* Data on how many benefits planners are employed in California or those employed in agencies, such as DOR, versus how many people are accessing or need to access the services. Discussion on whether that information is available. Discussed asking those organizations for information and whether share salaries.
* Discussed how to find information from people with disabilities; survey may not be the best way.
* Share focus group work done in another state.
* Ask departments if they have data on how many people with disabilities are served.
* Discussed how to frame benefits planning in bad budget years.
* Benefits planning needs to be linked to evidence-based practices.

1. **Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

* Benefits Planning needs to be reviewed again.
* Long-term services and supports needs to be reviewed.
* Discussed panel on long-term services and supports

1. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.