



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of the Secretary

**STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING INFANTS**

Friday, October 27, 2023
12:00-2:30 p.m.

Ochsner Main Campus – 1514 Jefferson Hwy – New Orleans – 70121
Benson Cancer Center – 4th Floor

Meeting Minutes

- I. **Meeting Called to Order** at 12:15: *Theresa Nicholls, Recording Secretary*
Reviewed communication standards and established break time.
- II. **Roll Call:** *Theresa Nicholls, Recording Secretary*
 - i. Council members present: Dr. John Carter, Dr. Cynthia Voelker, Dr. Paul Remedios, Theresa Nicholls, Dr. Ashley Argrave-Smith, Susannah Boudreaux, Jana Broussard, Marbely Barahona, Jill Hudson, Debbie Cowan, Caitlyn Robinson, Dr. Natalie Delgado via designee Jay Isch
 - ii. Council Members Absent: Meleah Miller, Dr. Ellis Arjmand, Dr. Natalie Delgado
 - iii. EHDI Program Present: Danielle Mercer, Dana Hubbard, Terri Ibieta
 - iv. Stakeholders Present: Tara Soria (BFH Title V), Rana Ottallah and Dinia Cabrera (Hands and Voices), Ivette Perez (PPEP), Claire Hess (Ochsner Audiologist), Sherry Crosby (LAD)
 - v. Interpreters present: Sylvie Sullivan, Lissa Gill, Jennifer Guerrieri
- III. **Review and Acceptance of Agenda/Minutes** – *Jill Hudson, Chair*
 - i. 10/27/23 Agenda
 - o 1st motion to accept by Ashley Argrave Smith, 2nd by Susannah Boudreaux. Approved by unanimous vote.
 - i. 4/28/23 Minutes
 - o 1st motion by Ashley Argrave Smith, 2nd by Jill Hudson. Approved by unanimous vote.
- IV. **2024 Council Meeting Dates & Times** – *Jill Hudson, Chair*
 - i. Meeting Times
 - o 1st motion for noon meeting time by Susannah Boudreaux, 2nd by Ashley Argrave Smith. Approved by unanimous vote.
 - ii. Meeting Dates

- o 1st motion for dates as proposed by Susannah Boudreaux, 2nd by Ashley Argrave Smith. Approved by unanimous vote.

V. Officer Nominations and Elections – *Dana Hubbard, Program Manager*

- i. Jill Hudson, nominated to remain as Chair, Dr. Natalie Delgado as Vice Chair, and Theresa Nicholls as Secretary
 - o 1st motion to vote made by Jill Hudson, 2nd by Theresa Nicholls. Approved by unanimous vote.
- ii. Jay Isch asked the Advisory Council if any of their Bylaws had changed recently. The current bylaws are from 2018. Jay Isch asked if anyone had a hard copy of the bylaws at the meeting. A hard copy was given to him at that time.

VI. EHDI Program Updates – LA EHDI team

- i. Region 2 EHDI Collaborative – *Dana Hubbard*
 - o Hosting regional EHDI collaborative at Woman’s Wellness 11/3/23. Hospital staff, audiologists, professionals, parents, and community partners are invited to attend.
- ii. Unite Learning Community - *Dana Hubbard*
 - o Heel Stick (dried bloodspot) and EHDI programs were accepted into the Unite Learning Collaborative, as one of five states.
 - o The aim of the LA team is to empower LA expectant parents by improving the newborn screening education they receive prenatally.
 - o Dana Hubbard and Marbely Barahona are representing LA EHDI. Ngoc Huynh and Tiffany Allemand are representative of the Heel Stick program.
 - o A kickoff collaborative was held in early September of 2023 in Salt Lake City.
 - o Next steps include hosting family focus groups for families whose children were identified as in need of further testing following screening.
 - o Jill Hudson asked how the data from parent focus groups would be used and if the council could have any input regarding the outcomes from this group’s data. Dana Hubbard provided that the information will be de-identified, and used to improve the information expectant families receive.
 - o Jay Isch asked if a Deaf individual was on the Louisiana team. Dana Hubbard explained that the learning community guidelines specified 4 required individuals: EHDI staff member, EHDI parent, DBS staff member, DBS parent. Optional representation could have come from critical congenital heart disease (CCHD).
 - o Rana Ottallah asked a question about birthing classes. Will it be for everyone or just high-risk? Dana Hubbard said that the birthing classes provided at hospitals are open for any expectant parent.

- Rana Ottallah wants to make sure that diverse families have the same opportunities for the birthing classes and that any materials are accessible in other languages.
- Dr. Ashley Argrave asked if the classes are free or for a fee. They are free.
- iii. Birthing Facility Guidelines & Score Card Revisions – *Terri Ibieta*
 - Webinars held to share changes with hospital screening supervisors
 - LA Birthing Facilities Newborn Hearing Screening Guidelines updated
 - Newborn Hearing Screening Policies and Procedures criteria document created for birthing facilities
 - 2023 Scorecard revisions for Births in 2023 presented.
 - Dr Argrave asked if it has been successful why we are changing how we score them. Terri Ibieta explained that we are not changing any procedures, just how they are scored based on the end goal of the newborn hearing screening and follow-up processes.
 - Cindy Voelker asked about if “Screening all babies that are in NICU with ABR” applies to babies who are in NICU for just 12 hours. The answer this only applies to babies who are screened in NICU.
- iv. HRSA Language Supplement
 - With a start date back dated to May 5, 2023, LA EHDI received the notice of award in mid- September.
 - Originally, LA EHDI planned to work with the Outcomes for Developmental Data Assistance Centers for EHDI Programs (ODDACE) and share the data gained from this Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Supplemental funding. Unfortunately, ODDACE indicated their funding source was not allowing new participating states. Since ODDACE is part of the University of Colorado-Boulder, LA EHDI is working directly with the UC-B.
 - Eight evaluators have been contracted in Louisiana to help in this short-term project. Seven are certified teachers of the deaf, and one is a speech-language pathologist. They all have extensive experience working in homes, with families and their infants, toddlers and young children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
 - The UC-B provided training for the evaluators on the following measurements.
 - DAYC-2 - Developmental Assessment of Young Children 2 Ed
 - MB-CDIs – MacArthur-Bates Communicative Developmental Inventories
 - Both assessments have been adapted for students who use sign.
 - The assessment tools were identified by the ODDACE program.
 - Jana Broussard asked if the evaluators that are contracted were tested on their fluency level. Terri Ibieta responded that LA

EHDI did not test them individually, but that they are certified teachers of the deaf.

Break from 1:08pm until 1:22pm Upon returning from break, Jill Hudson reminded the council of communication norms, including limiting side conversations in the room.

- v. National CMV conference – Danielle Mercer
 - o Attended from 10/8/23-10/10/2023.
 - o Reviewed some of the major takeaways from the conference.
- vi. Diagnosing Audiologists
 - o Meeting held on August 23, 2023
 - o One issue brought up at the meeting was that there are so few Audiologists available in Northern LA for children with Medicaid and some insurance companies are not covering hearing aids.
 - o Jay Isch stated a Deaf individual should be present to talk to parents about the importance of language development at diagnosis.
 - Jay Isch stated that he didn't think there was a program.
 - Marbely explained that Hands and Voices has a Deaf Guide program, but it is different than Deaf Mentors.
 - Theresa Nicholls made a motion to table conversation about Deaf mentors and language deprivation as it was not an agenda item and not relative to the pertinent topic of audiologists obtaining funding for hearing aids. Jill Hudson agreed to tabling the discussion on Deaf mentors. No second.
 - Ashley Argrave commented that maybe the Council should discuss language deprivation at another meeting, and moved to add to the Quarter 1 2024 agenda. Seconded by Jill Hudson
 - Voted unanimously to table and add as an agenda item at the next meeting.
 - o Hearing aid coverage. Jana Broussard recommended that a group come together and do a more in-depth investigation into this problem.
 - o Dana Hubbard invited Dr. Remedios to express his thoughts as a pediatrician on the issue.
 - Dr. Remedios noted that he perceives a lack of support for EarlySteps providers.
 - o Ashley Argrave stated that there are only two dispensing audiologists in the Baton Rouge area.
 - o Jill Hudson recommended that maybe we could address educating parents on how to advocate for their child for services.
 - o Caitlyn Robinson asked about representation from Early Steps at the Council Meeting. Jill Hudson suggested that we extend an invitation to Caroline Oglesby, program director for Early Steps, for the next council meeting.
 - o Rana Ottallah informed the council that EarlySteps will fund hearing aids and the Louisiana Assistive Technology program will provide loaner hearing aids while funding is being obtained.

- o Dana Hubbard suggested that we send in specific questions or topics for the next Council meeting to laehdi@la.gov.

vii. **Community Partners**

- o Parent-Pupil Education Program (PPEP) – *Ivette Perez, Outreach Director*
 - The new director, Ivette Perez, introduced herself and spoke a little bit about her background.
 - Currently, there are five Teachers of the Deaf as part of the Parent-Pupil Education Program (PPEP) program, servicing 182 enrolled students.
 - Some family events are coming up that are being hosted by the program.
- o Louisiana Hands & Voices – *Marbely Barahona*
 - Leaders from the state’s chapter attended a conference in Michigan.
 - Rana Ottallah presented at the conference on how parents of diverse children can have the opportunity to have “more of a voice at the table” at IEP meetings by effectively supporting families that do not speak English.
 - On the first Thursday of every month, Hands and Voices has family chats/training held virtually at 8pm.

viii. **New Business**

- o No new business was brought up to the Council.

ix. **Public Comment**

- o No public comment was given.

x. **Adjourn**

- o Moment of silence for shooting victims
- o 1st motion to adjourn made by Susannah Boudreaux, 2nd by Ashley Argrave. Approved by unanimous vote, 2:25 p.m.