Attendance

Workgroup Members in Attendance

- Gloria Wong
- Brian Zotti
- Katie Hynes
- Marie Poulsen
- Chloe Medina
- Dustlyne Beavers
- Brian Zotti
- Kaitlynn Truong

Facilitators and Workgroup Chairs/Leads in Attendance

- Yvette Baptiste (Co-Chair)
- Edith Arias (Equity Lead)
- Catherine Blakemore (Facilitator)

Public in Attendance.

Over 120 public attendees attended the meeting via Zoom video conference.

Welcome & Introductions (slides 1-4)

Catherine Blakemore, the facilitator for Workgroup 2, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, then handed it over to co-chair Yvette Baptiste. Yvette welcomed everyone and wished them happy holidays. She expressed appreciation for everyone's participation, especially given the different circumstances this season. Yvette reviewed the meeting agenda and facilitated introductions, inviting each participant to share their favorite thing about the holiday season. She reflected on the season's themes of hope, resilience, and joy, encouraging everyone to embrace these values, stay vibrant both inside and out, and enjoy moments with family while avoiding burnout.

Review our Process for Creating "Big" Ideas and Recommendations and our Progress (slides 5-7)

Yvette presented an overview of the priorities and universal goals, highlighting that this meeting would focus on Universal Goal 3. She also explained the process for generating big ideas and drafting recommendations. Catherine provided an update on the timeline, noting that the committee's work will be completed by February. She mentioned that today's discussion will cover the final set of recommendations, building on the brainstorming session held for Universal Goal 2.

Review Priority 2/Universal Goal 2 Draft Recommendations 4,5,6, and 7 (slides 8-22)

The workgroup discussed the support needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) during important life changes. The group emphasized how important it is to provide the right support during transitions such as getting older, becoming parents, or planning for the end of life.

The group agreed that people with I/DD often don't know about resources or services that are available, and they need more proactive support. Key points discussed included:

- Support for individuals with I/DD who are getting older:
  - The group talked about how important it is to provide services that help older adults with I/DD stay independent. These services can include using smart home technology to help keep people safe.
  - There are gaps in services available to older adults, especially in community-based resources. The group suggested doing a review to identify where more services are needed.
- Support for parents with I/DD:
  - Many parents with I/DD face challenges when raising children, especially if their children also have disabilities. The workgroup suggested that regional centers should be more proactive in reaching out to families who may need support.
  - The group also discussed the need for parenting support groups, where parents can connect and share experiences with others in similar situations. They also emphasized the need to make sure parents know about the resources available to them.
- End-of-life planning:
  - The group discussed the importance of planning for the future. This includes making decisions about finances, managing accounts like CalABLE, and preparing for end-of-life care. They agreed that these topics should be included in person-centered planning (PCP) to help individuals and families navigate these difficult transitions.
- Training for Service Coordinators:
  - Service coordinators (SCs) play a key role in connecting individuals with services. The group agreed that SCs need better training on sensitive issues like sexuality, parenthood, and end-of-life planning.

Some SCs may not have the knowledge to properly address these topics, especially as their caseloads increase.
- Access to services in multiple languages and cultures:
  - The workgroup emphasized the importance of offering services in different languages and making sure they are culturally appropriate. Not everyone speaks English, and the group wants to ensure that people from all backgrounds have access to the support they need.

This discussion helped the group understand the different areas where support for people with I/DD can be improved, especially during life transitions.

Review Priority 3/Universal Goal 3 and Develop Problem Statement (slides 23-24):

During the meeting, the workgroup reviewed Universal Goal 3 and discussed the current state of services, with a particular focus on who might be getting left behind in the system. Catherine invited everyone to share their thoughts on the existing barriers and where improvements are needed.

One member highlighted that the goal should go beyond just meeting people's basic needs—it should also aim to enrich their lives. The idea was to make services more meaningful and fulfilling, so individuals don't just get by, but truly thrive. Another member shared concerns about how people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) often get bounced around between organizations, which creates frustration and confusion. She explained that the complicated system, filled with paperwork and bureaucracy, often causes individuals to give up on trying to access services. This leaves many with a lower quality of life, even though they could flourish with the right support. She also pointed out a challenge faced by regional centers: service coordinators are expected to both advocate for individuals and decide whether they get the services they need, which some feel creates a "conflict of interest." Catherine acknowledged this concern and mentioned that it's already being addressed by another workgroup.

Yvette then shared her thoughts on the importance of ensuring that individuals feel a true sense of belonging and have access to resources that allow them to live joyful, purposeful lives. Drawing from her experience with the "Help Me Grow" program, she explained how five different agencies had to work together to help people access services. She called these "referral pathways" and stressed the need for simple, clear systems that connect people to the right resources without unnecessary delays or confusion.

One member suggested being creative by looking at volunteer programs like Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in the child welfare system. She

described how CASA volunteers provide "warm referrals"—they go with individuals to the services they need, ensuring no one is left stranded.

Another member raised a key issue: transportation. She pointed out that while regional centers might offer gift cards or food bank lists, there's no system in place to help people physically get to those services. She also noted that language and cultural barriers make it even harder for some people to access support.

Yvette added that challenges like immigration status and financial struggles can create additional obstacles. She emphasized the need to build trust with individuals and ensure everyone, no matter their background, can access the resources they need.

The group agreed that these barriers—like complicated referrals, lack of transportation, and cultural challenges—must be tackled to ensure that individuals with I/DD can access the support they need and live fulfilling, enriched lives.

Discuss Priority 3/Universal Goal 3 "Big" Ideas (slides 25-28)

During the workgroup discussion, the group focused on key challenges related to meeting the basic needs of people with disabilities. Yvette suggested creating community resource guides to address basic needs like food, housing, and transportation. Catherine clarified that these would include services outside of regional centers, such as food banks and affordable housing. The group agreed to include more examples and barriers, like transportation, in this discussion.

The group noted that many people with disabilities struggle to access these basic needs due to gaps in available information and resources. Catherine proposed conducting a gap analysis to better understand the barriers, such as poverty and limited access to housing in rural areas.

A workgroup member shared that adults with disabilities often rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for income, but many still struggle to maintain housing due to a lack of affordable options, especially in rural areas. In some cases, individuals are hours away from subsidized housing, which isolates them from their communities.

Accessing basic needs like clothing and groceries can also be difficult, especially when shopping online makes things more expensive.

The workgroup agreed that DDS could provide helpful data on income and housing challenges. Catherine suggested that the state might need to supplement SSI to better support people in meeting their basic needs.

As previously mentioned, transportation was a key issue. A workgroup member explained that rural areas lack reliable transportation options like ridesharing. The main solution is mileage reimbursement, but the rates are low, and the number of miles reimbursed is limited. The group agreed to recommend raising reimbursement rates and mileage limits to improve access to services. They also noted the lack of paratransit options in rural areas, which makes transportation even more difficult.

Yvette highlighted the financial struggles of parents who cannot work due to caregiving responsibilities. Catherine acknowledged that these financial burdens limit access to basic needs and should be addressed.

The group then discussed that sometimes services aren't provided because they are considered to be repetitive. A workgroup member explained that individuals often need a personal helper to accompany them to community activities, such as art classes. The group agreed that this support should be individualized. They also agree that community members, like camp counselors, should not be expected to take on this role.

Yvette emphasized that inclusion means helping communities understand how to support individuals with disabilities. It doesn't have to be as difficult as it seems. The goal is for individuals to feel accepted and included in their communities.

A workgroup member shared information about discount passes for disabled individuals at state and federal parks, which can help with community participation. The group acknowledged that improving access to community activities is crucial.

Overall, the workgroup discussed ways to improve access to basic needs, transportation, and community inclusion. They agreed to continue refining these ideas and gather more feedback to better address these challenges.

Next Steps and Upcoming Meetings (slides 29-30)

Catherine walked through the next steps for the January 16th meeting. She also shared the dates of upcoming meetings and the next public stakeholder committee meeting.

Public Comment

At the end of the meeting, Catherine invited the public to provide comments during a 30-minute public comment period. A summary of public comments is included in the Public Comment summary document which is available with other meeting documents here: https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/master-plan-for-developmental-services/

Meeting Materials:

- Discussion PowerPoint and other meeting documents on the [Master Plan web page](https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/master-plan-for-developmental-services/): https://www.chhs.ca.gov/home/master-plan-for-developmental-services/