

AT Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2021

10:00 a.m. -11:00 a.m.

Microsoft Teams Online

In attendance: Marge Wells, Rose Lucenti, Peter Jonke, Patrick Galasso(interpreter), Kristal Hier (interpreter), Phil Seiler, Tracy Roux, Caelan Manning, Allie Kelly, Emma Cobb, Andrea Wasson

Absent: Darren McIntyre, Bill Hudson, Ana Kolbach, Heather Berg

10:00-10:05 Pre-meeting (Meeting will be open for attendees to test their connection and technology)

10:05-10:15 Welcomes and Introductions

Phil said our virtual AT Council meetings may be one hour now since we are not traveling to in person meetings.

Virtual meeting invites will be sent out for 2022 soon.

VATP has revised our process to review notes and make sure we have created bullet lists for us to follow up on for items we have committed to.

The AT Advisory Council is an open meeting so we are publishing agendas to our [website](#) and meeting notes will be posted as well.

10:15-10:25 Core services RFP and contract update

The VT AT Program contracts out our services and our RFP (Request for Proposals) was due this year. We ran an RFP over the summer and have selected UVM CDCI as our provider for the upcoming contract. The standard contract is 2 years. Tracy, Ben, and Darren have been part of our

program for quite some time and are excellent stewards and we are happy to have them. The contract is routing and will go into effect 10/1/21.

10:25-10:40 MFP Supplemental Grant

Late last year the grant administrator for Adult Services Division, Money Follows the Person approached our program with an opportunity for a 5-year grant. The AT program wrote up a job description for an AT Specialist for the VATP's [No Wrong Door project](#), in order to provide services to the direct care community so that their consumers can access AT.

We have an [AT kit](#) we trained AAA staff on a few years ago. We saw it as an opportunity to serve areas of the state SE and NE. That grant has been funded and now we will work on filling a limited-service state position. This will allow us to collaborate more widely with DAIL.

Marge asked if No Wrong Door addresses late deafened. He said that this can be a focus of this position.

Peter attended the ADA symposium in Arizona. He found out about [Ubi Duo 3](#) a device that allows two-way communication for someone who is Deaf or HOH. They resemble small laptops and operate as a back-and-forth chat. Font and contrast can be changed as needed. You can link 4 devices together. They are expensive, Peter is looking into getting 4 for VCIL.

Marge went to DMV recently and they reported to her that the Ubi Duo was broken. Marge would like someone to follow up on this.

Phil said VATP is aware of Ubi Duo and that there are some apps that can support communication as well.

10:40-10:50 Program Intern, Sophie Handloff

For the fall semester we are working with a UVM student intern. She has an interest in PT and is looking into going into an OT doctorate program. She has been joining us for meetings and will be doing a project with us. Examples of projects she could choose to work on are a sensory apron for those who are blind and who would benefit from sensory AT, as well as AT that would benefit the use of one hand.

This is a great step to get assistive technology into college level education. UVM has started an OT doctorate program. We have also been in contact with the lead admin to see how our program can work with their program.

1:00-11:30 Review of the AT Act and current legislative state (optional)

The AT Act has been in existence since 1988. Our grant is 100% federal dollars with no state funding. We are reauthorized annually. Bills this year that have been passed in committee but not yet reached a full floor vote would increase grant funding for VT and across the board. AT Programs are placed within universities, state agencies or non-profits. In this way core services are provided differently. As part of WIOWA ([Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)) of 2014 that AT grant moved from the federal Department of Labor to the Agency of Community Living. This change aligned us more with the broad community we serve. The AT Act mission is to serve a wide population of Vermonters which is why No Wrong Door helps integrate us to that community.

One of our state level activities is financing. We work with [Opportunities Credit Union Independence Fund](#), to offer low interest loans for Vermonters with disability so they can

afford AT. Please email dail.atinfo@vermont.gov for a copy of our recent newsletter about the Independence Fund loan.

Sign up for our [newsletters here](#), (click link on R side of page) and

AT Reuse is another program we are required to offer. We run the [AT Exchange](#) which works like Craigslist to so Vermonters can sell or obtain gently used Durable Medical Equipment. Postings are free and can be renewed after 90 days. People list large items such as accessible vans to smaller items like shower benches and canes.

AT demonstrations and loans are another service where our AT Specialists work with clients to demo and then most times, loan the equipment. Loans and demos make up a large amount of the work VATP carries out. We can loan the AT for 30 days to see if it will work for them. Should the client decide to purchase an item once they return it, we offer vendor information and funding if available.

State Leadership activities include Public Awareness, trainings and technical assistance. If you would like to read more about these please see the section of our [website that details these activities](#).

It is another requirement to spend 5% of our grant on transition activities. This includes students from high school to the workforce and transitioning clients from levels of care to home.

11:30-11:50 Other Business/Adjourn

Marge mentioned that the VT HOH Association agendas do not address the needs of deafened Vermonters. She wants to know who the best person is to contact to support the deafened community.