



Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: January 8, 2026

Attendance:

Benchmark: Jeff Coy, Theresa Rickard, Will Manley, Carl Lampton, Jennifer Savard

Members: Nancy Kisonak, Judith Jackson, Levi Gardner, Lisa Stamatis, Nicole Villemaire

Absent: Mike Curtis, Mark Sokolis

Review of today's agenda and acceptance of previous minutes:

Done. This is the initial meeting.

Minutes

A request was made to members of the group to connect with Jeff if accommodations or assistance were needed to participate in this group.

Jeff talked about what Benchmark will ask of the Committee regarding policies and procedures and requirements from the Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) of the Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) at the State of Vermont.

We discussed what we will do as a group, and how we will operate. We need to develop internal Committee processes.

A question came up about how a person needing services may transfer between CMOs. Theresa explained the steps.

We discussed the fact that Benchmark must develop policies that meet the requirements of DAIL policies.

We talked about how the Committee will evaluate the types and amount of grievances we have, and what we will be doing to fix them.

A member mentioned that "DAIL should have been more transparent in the process of building the Conflict Free system." Many parents have been upset with DAIL, and with designated agencies, too.

We need to promote better communication between people receiving services and their families, and DAIL and Benchmark.

Nicole suggested we need a roadmap to understand the new processes.

Judith shared that we don't want to be creating a bigger monster. The intention is to be better, but it is not looking that way.

We want to create a system of how to bring things to the State. We will decide as a group what to bring to the table.

There was a consensus that we use consistent language across all organizations and make sure all are informed of what these are.

Jeff asked for help in recruiting someone from the Brain Injury Program as a Committee member.

It was noted that Nicole and Jeff missed the conflict that Nicole has, as she sits on the Howard Center Local Standing Committee. Nicole will decide to drop off there or continue with Benchmark right away.

Quality Action Items Summary:

- Name the documents reviewed today (were they accessible/are they understood?):
None presented.
- Quality management action taken from members' feedback after the last meeting: Program management and operations:
This is the initial meeting.
- Quality evaluations including feedback on the quality and responsiveness of services offered in the geographic area:
Some baseline input was shared about the system changes in general.
- Policies that pertain to or significantly influence services for the DS and/or BIP populations:
None presented today.
- Frequency, type, and resolution of complaints, grievances, and appeals about case management services for the DS and BIP populations:
No data offered today.
- Date the agenda for this meeting went out to members:
The agenda was built the day of the meeting.
- Previous meeting minutes shared with members on this date:
None available.

Date the final meeting minutes distributed and posted: 2/2/2026

Respectfully submitted,


