



Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: April 27, 2026

Attendance: Jeff Coy, Theresa Rickard, Will Manley, Carl Lampton, Jennifer Savard, Nancy Kisonak at Benchmark offices; Judith Jackson, Levi Gardner, Lisa Stamatis, Mike Curtis, Mark Sokolis, online participation. No one was absent.

Today's agenda and acceptance of previous minutes:

1. *Minutes for the 1/8/2026 meeting were accepted before today's meeting.*
2. *How is Benchmark doing with communication?*
3. *How does the experience of working with Vermont's Designated Agencies compare to Benchmark's experience in other states?*
4. *Are Vermont's Designated Agencies consistent in their operations across the state? How is the response time?*
5. *Family Engagement Forum*
6. *Brain Injury Program Advisory Committee representation.*

Minutes

1. *1/8/26 minutes had been accepted via email.*
2. *Theresa opened the discussion about how the communication is going between Benchmark and families. Are we delivering information, and using language that is helpful and understood? She would like to know what is going well, and what things we could do differently to meet this need. Levi expressed needing more communication from Case Managers. He wants to know if there could be more communication done through email or texts. Theresa posed doing a Newsletter once and awhile to communicate what is happening, and anything that may have changed. Judith suggested a "What's new with Benchmark?" She also thinks that adding some profiles of employees in this will help connect families with faces. This will help in getting to know people in the company. Lisa expressed the concern in getting updates for consumers and families. She advocates for families to be aware of any changes and funding issues that may be happening. Nancy noted that she is hearing issues with Case Managers not getting back to families with answers. Theresa addressed that this is valuable when needing to build the trust with clients, families, and agencies. Will identified that we need to remember that Conflict Free Case Management and Payment Reform are happening at the same time, which is making things more stressful on the Agencies.*
3. *Judith asked Carl if there were things that worked better in other States that we could do here. He responded that it was very similar, but that question is tough when States have different rules and regulations. South Dakota is very similar, and it also took a while for things to iron out. This team has also been supporting VT in this transition. Lisa inquired if VT was intending to go back to Residential care. She was assured by the team that this was not the direction that VT was going in. It is actually in the opposite direction. Nancy posed the question as to why VT is trying to invent the wheel, and why is this such a level of challenge in VT?*
4. *Agenda item #4 was not significantly discussed.*
5. *Theresa explained the plan to develop Family Engagement Forums. There was discussion about making these accessible by having them at times convenient to various participants.*
6. *Jeff noted that the Advisory Committee needs representation from the Brain Injury Program.*

7. *Mike wanted to know the process of how he can switch to a new Case Manager if wanted, and how he would switch organizations if he wanted.*
8. *Mark expressed the need for more resources for transportation in VT. Theresa assured him that we were advocating for this.*

Quality Action Items Summary:

- Name the documents reviewed today (were they accessible/are they understood?): *Advisory Committee Agenda – based on conversation, the agenda was understood.*
- Quality management action taken from member's feedback after the last meeting: Program management and operations: *An Agenda was created previous to this meeting.*
- Quality evaluations including feedback on the quality and responsiveness of services offered in the geographic area: *Some basic information 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, grievance 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 for today was sent out for input on 4/17/2026.*
- Previous meeting minutes shared with members on this date: *1/15/2026.*

Date the final meeting minutes distributed and posted: *6/22/26*

Respectfully submitted,


