On 11/4/14 I met with Jim Jackson, Director for Disability Rights NM regarding Contract 0202 – Disability Coalition and the review went well. As you both know this contract is used for many things such as events, meetings, coordination with other agencies and the cost for working with the Disability Coalition on issues involving people with disabilities. Jim believes that since last year’s session was a short session they didn’t get as many things passed as he would have liked. He talked about how the Disability Coalition is working hard to push HSD to be more responsive to the issues involving Centennial Care. He also stated that the federal agency CNM is not pushing HSD to fix things or push HSD to take care of people with disabilities better. Going up against HSD is costing the coalition member some money so some agencies are contributing to ensure that they have enough to put up a good fight. He brought up that they also use our contract funding for the pre-legislative event during DRAD and also for the Day at the Legislature.

One activity that worked well this fiscal year that they didn’t do last year was they filmed a training presentation at UNM that they plan on placing on their website and also on UNM’s. Last year they did a series of training events that educated people on Medicaid and he felt as though people really benefitted from these trainings. He’s unsure if they will do any other trainings this year but they will be contracting other agencies to see if they can pull something together.

I asked about why other state agencies are not part of the Disability Coalition and he stated that the mission of the Coalition is to make other state agencies more accountable, ie … they are the problem ….. so they only have advocacy agencies as members. They plan on inviting PRO to be a part of the coalition as well. Plus they want to be able to present to other state agencies that serve people with disabilities the consumer perspective more effectively, so they want the group to be deliberately advocacy based agencies only.

I thanked Jim for always submitting his quarterly reports and narratives on time. He stated that all audits that were conducted were good. He had suggestions during our meeting about how our agency can better serve and I noted these ideas in an email to you both yesterday.

Overall, it seems that Jim and his staff are doing a great job at ensuring that the money that we provide through this contract is helping to ensure that people with disabilities are getting their voices heard either at the legislature or helping make changes at their local level in their communities .

- Reviewed by Ana Callahan Segura