



State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals
Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

OCDD Quarterly Update to DD Council March 2010

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) and LA PLUS: Since OCDD's implementation of the SIS/LAPLUS needs-based assessments for waiver participants October 2008, more than 3,100 assessments of New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) participants have been conducted and approved. Support coordinators use the assessments as one of the tools in the development of participants' support and service plans. OCDD central and regional office staff review every SIS/LAPLUS assessment for completeness and accuracy. Requests for additional service hours are reviewed and considered on an individual basis to ensure that adequate services are planned and provided to every participant. State and regional office staff continues to demonstrate competency and reliability in the assessment and review protocols. Statewide regional staff directly assists support coordination agencies' SIS/LAPLUS assessment specialists. These procedures and assistance are part of OCDD's assurances in the planning and delivery of appropriate and adequate services to all OCDD Waiver participants.

Waivers: The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) is conducting a quality review of the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) to evaluate the overall performance of the waiver program during the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2011 in anticipation of the NOW's upcoming renewal. The OCDD, in collaboration with the Bureau of Health Services Financing submitted a comprehensive report, detailing the state's quality management strategy to CMS on September 30, 2009. From November 30, 2009 through December 4, 2009, CMS conducted an onsite audit of the NOW related to the following three waiver assurances: (1) level of care, (2) qualified providers, and (3) financial accountability. CMS submitted in January 2010, a report draft of the findings. Louisiana has until April 30, 2010 to provide a response to the report draft, after which CMS will issue the official report June 2010.

Children's Choice Waiver Initiative

OCDD has developed a workgroup composed of waiver managers, the DD Council director and DD Council members, and parents who receive Children's Choice (CC) Waiver to discuss and make recommendations for revisions for improvement to the Waiver. The committee is considering several OCDD improvement initiatives to this Waiver including:

- enabling family support service to be a self-directed option so parents can manage, hire and train their direct service workers (DSW);
- enabling self-directed workers who are hired from school's special education system to use school-acquired required training to substitute for part of the mandated DSW Registry training;

- adding a new service for assistive technology and/specialized medical equipment and supplies to the Children's Choice Waiver as is in the service definitions of the newly implemented Residential Options Waiver;
- including a new alternative therapy services which are proven as being effective for treating children with development disabilities (DD) such as art therapy, music therapy, horse therapy and aqua therapy;
- exploring the possibility of adding the "LoJack SafetyNet" or similar monitoring system for children with DD who wander.

All recommendations will be considered and researched. Any change to the CC Waiver will be subject to approval from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Post approval, an amendment to the CC Waiver Application would be required by the Center. Additionally, an amendment to the present Louisiana Rule for CC Waiver would be required. All together, the approvals and amendments processes would take at minimum, six months. The workgroup also discussed systemic issues within the CC service delivery process, including the OCDD regional waiver units. These issues are being addressed immediately for resolution and improvement.

Employment Initiatives Update

To date, two webinars on Community Based Employment (a four-part series) have been completed. The third webinar will be held on April 8-9. These webinars are provided by the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) of the Institute on Community Inclusion. The webinar audience is composed vocational providers, support coordinators and those interested supported employment. OCDD is awaiting final approval of a contract with the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant to write a strategic plan for employment for individuals with disabilities. SELN will conduct technical assistance for the Employment First Policy and guidance with the Strategic Plan for Employment within the next few months as OCDD is interested in becoming an Employment First State. OCDD will work with the Louisiana Medicaid Infrastructure Grant and the Advancing Employment. Connecting People organizations to provide community based employment training to support coordinators and vocational providers. OCDD is also working on an informational training to increase support coordinators' knowledge of available services

National Core Indicators Project: For the third consecutive year, OCDD is participating in the National Core Indicators Project (more about the NCI Project at <http://www.hsri.org/nci>). The NCI and Louisiana's participation in the project includes the collection of consumer outcome indicators relative to how well the public system aids adults with developmental disabilities to work, participate in their communities, have friends, and sustain relationships, and exercise choice and self-determination. Other indicators in this domain probe individuals' satisfaction of their provided services and supports. To collect this information, this year, between March 1, 2010 and June 30, 2010, an independent, OCDD's professional contractor will interview 325 adults receiving developmental disability services chosen from a statewide random sample of OCDD participants. Additionally, the contractor will send surveys to more than 5,000

families of adults and children receiving services. The survey results will be aggregated, reviewed, and used to develop strategies to improve services.

Complete report available at

<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/page.asp?ID=77&Detail=8933>.

Annual Mortality Review Report: The OCDD's Mortality Review Committee reviewed all deaths of persons receiving OCDD waiver services during Fiscal Year 2008-2009. The Committee compared deaths of participants by waiver, gender, region, and age group and reviewed leading causes of deaths in order to make recommendations to improve the health, safety, and well-being of OCDD participants. Those recommendations by the Committee included the following:

1. Improvement in the level of coordination to maintain continuity of care for individuals with complex medical conditions;
2. Improvement in the capacity of provider agency staff to recognize, respond to and document health issues of individuals with medical conditions through additional training and management of certain services; and
3. Improve communication and coordination of care provided by home health agencies.

For the complete report, see

<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/page.asp?ID=77&Detail=8933>

Direct Support Provider Initiative

The Direct Support Provider Initiative Advisory Group met on 3/26/10. The Direct Support Worker Survey was discussed. In the meeting, Michelle Bares, an employee of Pinecrest Supports and Services Center, discussed her extensive research on direct support worker initiatives. The committee recommended that waiver providers begin completing cost reports for their programs and submit to OCDD in order for the Office obtain an actual cost of service per unit per recipient. Paul Rhorer will recommend this to the OCDD Executive Management Committee. Paul Rhorer, Randy Davidson, and Michelle Bares will meet again 4/01/10 to update and discuss the distribution of the Direct Support Worker Survey. The Direct Support Provider Initiative Advisory Group Committee will meet again the first week in May 2010.

Regional Office and Human Services District /Authority Quality Partnership:

Effective at the beginning of the Fiscal Year 2009-2010, OCDD regional offices Human Services Districts, and Authorities began submitting additional quarterly data on outcome indicators designed to measure performance on an expanded range of regional functions. Validation visits to each OCDD region, District, and Authority will be conducted at least annually by OCDD executive, program and quality staff for the review of data to assess reliability and outcomes of required performance indicators. For those performance targets not met, quality, improvement strategies are developed and implemented, and follow-up reviews conducted. Technical assistance for the quality performance is provided to the OCDD regional offices, Districts and Authorities as requested and needed. Following the validation visit made to all offices, preliminary reports are developed. After review and follow-up by the offices and OCDD managers,

aggregated data and a summary is made available quarterly as the *Human Services Accountability and Implementation Plan (AIP)* Report.

2010 Session Legislative Bills

SB 216 – Update of the Nursing Home Resident’s Bill of Rights.

SB 239 – Update Louisiana law on HIV/AIDS.

SB 401 – Amends the Rural Hospital Preservation Act to provide for maximization of federal funds.

HB 1219 – Clarifies regulation requirements for prepaid entities participating in Medicaid.

HB 596 – Authorizes DHH to implement a Medicaid non-emergent ER co-pay.

HB 462 – Prioritizes placement of incarcerated individuals into the State Feliciana Forensic Hospital.

Other bills of interest DHH and OCDD to be closely monitoring are as follows:

HB 776 & SB 360 – Extends until January 1, 2012, the facility need review approval for licensed intermediate care facilities that are located in certain areas.

HB 959 – Imposes a moratorium on implementation of the resource allocation models administered by DHH, and provides for new implementation recommendations based on national best practices.

SB 204 – Removes provisions, which allow an employer to waive the existence of certain criminal offenses when hiring any licensed ambulance personnel or non-licensed persons.

HB 1185 – Creates the Home and Community-Based Long-Term Care Act.

SB 539 – Requires the DHH Secretary to license and enroll in the Medicaid program certain providers who operate intermediate care facilities for people with developmental disabilities, particularly The Milne Home for Women.

HB 865 – Requires that the DHH continue disability waiver benefits for family of military on active duty who have temporarily relocated to another state due to military assignment and intend to return to Louisiana.