



State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals
Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

OCDD QUARTERLY UPDATE

DECEMBER 15, 2009

EarlySteps: As of December 1, 2009, there were 4,466 children active in the EarlySteps program. The U.S. Department of Education Team completed the EarlySteps verification visit in October 2009, and gave positive feedback to EarlySteps staff regarding the findings and EarlySteps improvements since the 2003 visit. A Letter of Results of the visit is expected to be received February 2010. By the end of 2009, all EarlySteps providers will be able to access six web-based training modules. As the rate increase for support coordination is still pending approval from the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services, the State Interagency Coordinating Council at its November 2009 meeting voted to write a letter to Medicaid to express concern about the fourteen-month delay of the rate increase implementation.

OCDD Complaint System: OCDD has updated its Complaint System to include more specific details to enable additional quality improvement strategies. The electronic database tool is nearing completion with plans to test the proposed revised policy and new database in January and February 2010 and statewide implementation by April 2010.

Rebalancing Initiative Grant - Money Follows the Person Demonstration: The Demonstration's *My Place Louisiana* staff continues their work to assist children to move from nursing facilities to home and community living services. Twelve children currently reside in nursing facilities. As of December 15, 2009, three of these children's legally authorized representatives had signed the "My Place Informed Consent to Transition." *My Place* and regional staff will assist the linked support coordinators to put in place plans and services to support children who will move from the nursing facilities back to their families' homes. For those individuals who have already moved, there has been positive feedback. For example, a young man who transitioned from a nursing home in August into permanent supportive housing is reporting he thoroughly enjoys his new home and community environment. He has been able to attend Friday night high school

football games, dine out, and is visited regularly by family and friends, in addition to *My Place* staff for follow-up visits. The newly approved Residential Option Waiver will be attractive to families with older children currently residing in nursing facilities and will become available to them as soon as the MFP Protocol is approved. Recently OCDD, Medicaid, and OAAS staff attended the Center for Medicaid and Medicare's "*Money Follows the Person* Project Directors Meeting" in Annapolis.

Provider Relations: Provider Relations/Liaison staff teamed with Program Integrity to present at the *Day of Sharing Conference* hosted in November 2009, by the *Louisiana Alliance of Independent Providers*. The presentation topic was "Documentation," a much needed information session designed to assist provider agencies. The Advisory Group met this quarter with the goal in mind to develop a standardized documentation form for the waiver programs; the finalization of this form expected by February, 2010. Direct Support Worker and Direct Support Provider committees did not meet this quarter, but will do so in January 2010.

Support Coordination Monitoring System: With the help of consultants through Louisiana's System Transformation Grant, OCDD and OAAS are jointly developing a support coordination monitoring process tool. OCDD will pilot the tool in January and February 2010 with statewide implementation anticipated thereafter. The tool is designed to assure that: support coordination agencies are meeting licensing, contractual, and Medicaid enrollment requirements in addition to assurances that waiver participants receive services that identify and correct potential risks for safety and health, and that they receive services to assist them achieving personal goals.

Residential Options Waiver (ROW) received final approval from CMS October 1, 2009. OCDD and DHH Medicaid continue to define systemic processes required to fully operationalize the Waiver. Medicaid did not include the newly funded ROW opportunities for FY 09/10 as part of mandatory budget cuts. While OCDD prepares for future ROW implementation, the current focus will be on two targeted groups having alternate funding; that is, Group 5, will convert existing private ICF/DD beds (up to 8 beds) into ROW shared living homes (up to 6 beds) for ICF/DD residents who choose HCBS services; and Group 4 will allow children in nursing facilities to move into newly established ROW shared-living homes (having up to 3 beds) through the use of the

Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration Grant. Updates and current information related to the ROW is located on the OCDD Internet at <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/publications.asp?ID=191&Detail=1952>, which includes the *Summary of the ROW Array of Services Dated 12/1/09*. The *ROW Licensing & Certification Requirements for Residential, Professional, Support and Other Services* will be posted online as it become available in addition to other information to be distributed as part of training to regions, providers and support coordinators.

Supports Waiver: The first in the series of Community-Based Supported Employment Webinars, held December 2009, resulted in positive feedback. OCDD shall continue to provide information and technical assistance in the area of community based supported employment with the next webinar to be held February 2010.

Children's Choice Waiver - The "*Notice of Intent for Children's Choice Waiver – Family Training Service*:" was published November 20, 2009 in the *Louisiana Register Vol. 35, No.11* with a public hearing date of late December 2009. This proposed Rule continues the provisions of the September 20, 2009 Emergency Rule (*Louisiana Register Vol. 35, No.09* serving to clarify the description of family training services and identify components that qualify for Medicaid payment. Payment for the cost of travel, meals, and overnight lodging to attend training events or conferences will no longer be available. However, registration and training fees associated with approved formal instruction in areas relevant to the participant's needs as identified in the plan of care will be covered.

New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) is in the process of conducting a quality review of the New Opportunities Waiver to evaluate the overall performance of the NOW program during the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2011 in anticipation of the NOW's 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 on-site audit of the NOW related to the following three waiver assurances: 1.) Level of Care, 2.) Qualified Providers, and 3.) Financial Accountability. Based on the state's submitted evidence,

CMS is expected to submit a report draft of the findings to the state January 2010 with a final report to follow in June 2010.

Regional Office and Human Services District /Authority Quality Partnership: On September 4, 2009, the OCDD issued operational instructions for the *Quality Partnership: Reporting and Verification of Performance Measures and Quality Management Initiatives for Developmental Disabilities*. Training for implementation occurred on October 13 and 16 for regional offices, Human Services Authorities and Districts. The first reports with performance indicator data were received on October 30 for the first quarter of fiscal year 2009-2010. The first validation visits of the Capital Area Human Services District and Region 4 by OCDD central office were conducted on December 11 and December 16, 2009.

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) and LAPLUS: As of October 2008, all new NOW waiver participants and those continuing with services are being assessed with the SIS and LA PLUS. This assessment data is used in the planning process to ensure the delivery of appropriate and adequate services to waiver participants. Both OCDD central office and regional office staff continue to review carefully all assessments for accuracy. SIS/LaPlus program staff continue to give final approvals of all assessments before the planning process begins.

Since the beginning of the new process, 209 support coordinators have been certified to conduct the SIS/LAPLUS assessments and 1,959 assessments have received final approvals. OCDD continues to train support coordinators for SIS/LAPLUS certifications. A SIS/LA PLUS refresher training was held November 2009 to reinforce assessment protocol and administration practices for all certified assessors. Assessments continue to be monitored for accuracy and reliability. The backlog of the processing of assessments has been effectively addressed at mid December 2009 as compliance by OCDD approaches the 100% mark.

Resource Allocation: The office received approval from Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on July 1, 2009 to begin using the SIS and the new planning guidelines for support for allocating Individual and Family Support hours. The office began implementing the new process for new recipients in the NOW and for current NOW recipients with plans due after August 27, 2009. So far 350 people have been

through the new process. Out of the 350 people, 75 have been reviewed at the state office level. So far we have been able to approve additional hours to meet needs and there have not been any formal appeals of the level of supports allocated. We do not yet have all of the data on savings generated but we will have our initial numbers in mid January, however our preliminary review of the difference in plan costs have showed substantial savings over the previous year costs. All indications are that the people that have been through the process are receiving the services they need to live successfully in the community and that the new plans are providing increased opportunities for independence and for meeting personal outcomes.