



2027 Action Plan Public Comment

❖ Kathleen D. Funderburk

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed plan for 2026. I have carefully considered its contents and would like to offer some constructive feedback aimed at further strengthening its impact and inclusivity.

A critical area that warrants enhanced focus, particularly given the demographics, is the provision of comprehensive, long-term support systems for aging individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and their families. As primary caregivers age or are no longer able to provide direct support, there is a pressing need for clear, actionable guidance on ensuring continuity of care and sustained independence. The plan would greatly benefit from explicitly detailing available resources, housing options, legal frameworks, and financial planning strategies designed to facilitate supported independent living within the community. Proactively addressing these succession planning challenges will empower families to make informed decisions and establish secure, sustainable futures for their loved ones, thereby providing invaluable peace of mind across their lifespan.

Furthermore, I believe the plan could be significantly enriched by emphasizing and expanding opportunities for social and community integration. While vocational programs are essential, many individuals with ID/DD continue to face limited avenues for meaningful engagement beyond the workplace. Integrating provisions for a wider spectrum of social, recreational, cultural, and volunteer activities would be transformative. Such initiatives are vital for fostering personal growth, developing essential social skills, combating isolation, and enhancing overall well-being and quality of life. A more robust framework for community participation would contribute to a more holistic, inclusive, and fulfilling experience for individuals with ID/DD.

I appreciate your dedication to this important work and welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further.

Plain Language Version: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on LaDDC's proposed 2027 Action Plan. I suggest strengthening the plan in two areas.

First, the plan should help people with ID/DD and their families prepare for aging caregivers. Families need clear information about long-term services, community housing, legal help, financial planning, and supported independent living. This will help ensure continued care, independence, and peace of mind.

Second, the plan should offer more ways for people with ID/DD to take part in community life beyond employment. Social, recreational, cultural, and volunteer activities can build relationships and skills, reduce loneliness, and improve quality of life.

Thank you for considering these recommendations.

❖ **Dr. Michelle Ned**

The following areas of misunderstandings often seen by individuals with disabilities and their caretakers is the introduction of integrated behavioral health which focus on the actual physical and behavioral aspects of the individual, and strategies to treat both. Additionally, the idea of gender and cultural identity, and how they describe the individual versus just the disability.

Plain Language Version: People with disabilities and their caregivers may need more information about whole-person health care. This type of care supports both the body and the mind. They may also need help understanding gender and culture. These are important parts of who a person is. A person should be seen as a whole person, not only by their disability.