



October 19, 2015

Submitted to: RA-odpfuturesplan@pa.gov

Pennsylvania Association of County Administrators of Mental Health and Developmental Services (PACA MH/DS) appreciates the Office of Developmental Programs (ODPs) continued outreach to consumers, families and other stakeholders in the development of the Futures Planning process. Although the objectives are presented as standalone issues, the issues are much more complex, when placed in context of an administrative and service delivery system. PACA MH/DS previously submitted discussion points to assist in moving the community intellectual disability service system forward, based on the county right of first opportunity for managed care. We appreciate this opportunity to provide additional information.

Objective #1. Each person's budget is based upon assess needs, and the individual will know and be able to control the services within their budget.

Currently the state contracts for the administration of the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) for individuals enrolled in a waiver. The assessment is administered and results are placed in the consumer's HCSIS record. Consumers and families are not provided with any outcomes or results of the assessment after completion. Consequently, consumers and families do not know what information is available through the assessment process, or whether it is of use in their individual planning process. Additionally the SIS evaluates practical supports requirements, but does not identify or assess natural supports an individual on either a regular or occasional basis.

PACA MH/DS recommends:

- Share SIS results with consumers, families and counties.
- Provide education to consumers and families in the utility of the SIS including: creating a foundation for individual planning; potential to identify systemic needs for improved services; and ability to identify a resource allocation for consumer directed services.
- Create a means to identify and assess natural supports available to individuals.

Objective #7. Develop design options for a pilot program for managed care of developmental disability serves.

PACA MH/DS strongly supports a county approach to managed care in order to be responsive to the local system and individual needs. Local administration of services and supports is essential to being responsive to individual needs. Counties believe that an engagement of this magnitude

may not benefit from a pilot approach and ask that consideration be given to a “phased in” model similar to that of Health Choices.

PACA MH/DS has worked with the ODP in reviewing the SIS. Our members are willing to pilot a managed care approach using the SIS to establish an individual budget and identify individual need for services.

PACA MH/DS recognizes that the term managed care has a variety of meanings and approaches. To effect change, a common understanding is needed by all stakeholders in moving to a managed care approach, which may be facilitated by PACA MH/DS. Our previous submissions to the Futures Planning can be found at: www.mhdspa.org by clicking on the Policy & Legislation Link.

Objective #8. Pennsylvania will be an Employment First state. Employment is the first priority for people with disabilities.

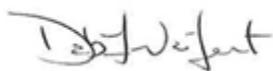
Employment First is a declaration of philosophy and policy. PACA MH/DS’ Intellectual Disability Committee has a priority of employment and adopts the philosophy. In examining employment policy and services, we recognize the need for collaboration with ODP, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and educational system to meet this objective. Our recommendations focus on critical issues to address in moving Employment First statewide:

- Promote family expectations for their school-age children to work.
- Collaborate with the educational system to prioritize work habits, skills and exploration before transition age.
- Increase collaboration with the OVR to create meaningful and fulfilling work opportunities.
- Create provider training to redirect vocational workshop resources to create customized and supported employment.
- Create a new service or support for individuals for non-work hours.

PACA MH/DS is willing to work with ODP and OVR. We support the transition of vocational workshops to competitive employment, outreach to families and schools on employment awareness and opportunities, as well as assist in creating a new service for individuals during non-work hours.

PACA MH/DS looks forward to working collaboratively with ODP in creating a viable and responsive community service system. Please do not hesitate to contact me (email: dneifert@pacounties.org or phone: (717) 526-1010 extension 3119) if I can be of assistance or to continue discussions on system improvements.

Sincerely,



Deb L. Neifert
Deputy Director