

Pipeline ... Extra!

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

Pipeline EXTRA is published as needed to cover hot news. Visit us at www.dodd.ohio.gov

July 29, 2013

Message from DODD Director John Martin

In Recognition of the 23rd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Friday, July 26th marked the 23rd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA is an equal opportunity law for people with disabilities which prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in community life. This principle -- that individuals with disabilities be accorded the chance to live and work in the community -- goes to the heart of the Department's core values. With the passage of House Bill 59, DODD was able to take an important stride forward to implement this belief and increase the number of individuals who have the option to receive Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in home and community based settings. It is our hope that these policy changes will, in the words of President George H.W. Bush, "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."

Home and Community Based Services not only provide care and support to individuals in an integrated community setting, but empower individuals to choose service plans that are specific to their own needs. These services are based on a person-centered care model that is focused on more individual choice than services typically received in institutional settings. Individuals with developmental disabilities have more involvement in everyday choices, not only *where* to live and work, but also *how* to live and work.

In addition, because Home and Community Based services are portable, if individuals choose to move, the services can follow them throughout the state. The Department, in conjunction with the stakeholder community, committed to rebalancing the system through the conversion of up to 600 ICF-IID funded beds to Home and Community Based waiver services. Many of the smaller ICF-IID beds located in community settings could simply "flip" to waiver services. Doing so will allow individuals to live in the community and have greater choice in their care.

In addition to converting ICF-IID beds to waivers, there is a desire to reduce the number of ICF-IID funded beds located in a single dwelling. The Department will continue its efforts to decrease the number of individuals served in state-operated Developmental Centers. Similarly,

and also part of the budgetary agreement worked out with the Department's stakeholders, up to 600 large ICF-IID beds will be downsized to settings no larger than eight-bed homes.

The budget also creates incentives for rebalancing, which include retroactive rate adjustments for facilities engaged in downsizing, and an increase in pay for direct-care workers.

Additionally, the recently-passed state operating budget builds on the Executive Order signed by Governor John Kasich which established the Employment First Taskforce and made community employment the preferred and priority outcome for working-age adults with developmental disabilities. Both the state budget and the Executive Order echo the ADA which ensures that employers covered by the act cannot discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. As President George H.W. Bush noted at the signing of the ADA, "Many of our fellow citizens with disabilities are unemployed. They want to work, and they can work."

House Bill 59 includes language that creates a presumption that all individuals with developmental disabilities can work; improves data collection; codifies the Employment First Taskforce; creates common definitions among Taskforce agencies for the terms: 'community employment', 'competitive employment', and 'integrated setting'; and establishes the Employment First line item (6 million over the biennium).

The 23 years that have passed since the enactment of the ADA have brought us closer to the day when no Ohioan will be deprived of the basic opportunity to be part of his or her community. During this time, the number of individuals served at state-operated centers has been reduced by 58 percent, census reduction at large private (16 bed or greater) ICF-IID facilities has reached 25 percent, and the momentum behind community employment continues to grow. While all of this is encouraging, much work remains. Too many individuals who can and would prefer to live and work in the community are precluded from doing so. The Department is committed to work on behalf of these individuals every day, as President Bush remarked at the signing of the ADA, to ensure that the shameful walls of exclusion come tumbling down.

END

Pipeline Extra is a publication of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and is distributed infrequently to highlight breaking news in the state's developmental disabilities community. The regular *Pipeline* publication publishes twice monthly to inform readership of relevant information affecting stakeholders. Please share your questions or comments at feedback@list.dodd.ohio.gov or contact sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov or phone (614) 644-0262. **Editor's Note:** DODD values subscriber confidentiality and does not intentionally share subscriber addresses with others. In the event of a public records request, however, the DODD would comply with all applicable Public Records Laws. Please also note the Privacy information at the DODD website, at dodd.ohio.gov/privacy/. To subscribe to *Pipeline* newsletter, send an email to: join-pipeline@list.dodd.ohio.gov and write SUBSCRIBE in the subject line. To discontinue your subscription write UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. *Pipeline* is archived at dodd.ohio.gov/publications/pipeline.htm