



News from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

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Coming December 19 – “Year in Review”

A quick look through 2012 via the pages of Pipeline

Administration News

1. Preparing for the 2013-14 Budget, and Other Updates

Now that Ohio state agencies' budget proposals have been submitted for consideration for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013, preparation work begins for what may lie ahead regarding proposals and initiatives that affect the lives of Ohioans with disabilities and their families. A seminar sponsored by The Arc of Ohio on November 29, in Worthington, featured several such insights by representatives of the Office of Health Transformation, DODD, the Department of Job and Family Services, Department of Education, and other related agencies.

Topics addressed included the 2013-14 budget, the *Employment First* initiative; Ohio Transitions Developmental Disabilities (TDD) Waiver; Medicaid State Plan services; Special Education and Autism Scholarships; and, the [Self Empowered Life Funding \(SELF\) Waiver](#).

DODD Director John Martin provided a status report on several subjects, including waivers; Ohio's Developmental Centers; the future of Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICFs); and, a look at what we might expect in the upcoming budget. Regarding the budget he explained,



“As we put together the next budget as partners within the Office of Health Transformation, for the first time ever state agencies that use Medicaid funds are aligning all of our spending categories to include the same ‘line items.’ This is immensely helpful ... as we are operating, then, as a single Medicaid entity. As Medicaid funding does not stay flat, we can better forecast overall growth and needs.”

< Director John Martin emphasizes a point during the presentation on the topic of National Programmatic Trends. “We continue to study the national data to see how we fit into the big picture.”

Director Martin’s overview of progress regarding Ohio’s reduction in the number of individuals residing in state-operated Developmental Centers included information supporting the overall philosophy of transitioning individuals into appropriate community-based settings. “We look at each individual and see if they could be better-served and more successful in a smaller setting, and then what kind of supports they might need.” He added,

“We have reduced the total population within Ohio’s ten Developmental Centers by 14% over the past two years – slightly better than the national average for states operating such centers, which is tracking at about 12%. We feel good about this direction, and about how this process has been managed - with the health and safety of these individuals in mind - as well as the funding involved.”

Monty Kerr, Deputy Director for DODD’s Division of Policy and Strategic Direction, addressed the group regarding the state’s *Employment First* efforts, and discussed the subject from the perspective of what the initiative can mean for families, including how they can work toward community-based employment for family members with disabilities. He stated,

“In looking at the statewide employment picture for individuals with developmental disabilities, we will be gathering and reviewing more data, and actually measuring success. Measuring, not just that a person is working – but where they’re working, how and why they are successful, and then, how can we spread that success around.”

Kerr also emphasized the importance of providing incentives for employers, as well as for County Boards, to focus on the goal of community-based employment as the priority option for adults. He observed,

“Increasing the supported employment rate from \$25 to \$42 is one of the incentives we believe will move this initiative forward. It makes for some challenges, as well, and so we are working on making the funds and the philosophy realistic partners in achieving this outcome.”

The seminar’s sessions on Medicaid State Plan Services, including how Managed Care may affect Ohioans with developmental disabilities, and the Ohio Department of Education’s Special Education and Autism Scholarships each sought to clarify these somewhat complex options. In addition, [JEVS Human Services](#) representative, Rick Zwelling, discussed how the Self Empowered Life funding (SELF) waiver differs from other waivers in the way supports and services are paid, and why families will find this new waiver especially exciting when it comes to self-direction.

The SELF waiver creates unprecedented opportunities for those enrolled to choose and pay for services. DODD has contracted with JEVS to serve as the fiscal intermediary for this waiver.

An evening session on the Transitions (TDD) waiver wrapped up a full day of information and discussion as Ohio's DD community prepares for the next budget year.

Legislation Updates, Autism

The House Health & Aging Committee held first hearings last Wednesday on bills pertaining to health insurance coverage for autism. Representative Cheryl Grossman and Representative Louis Terhar have sponsored a bill that would amend the scope of mental health parity to include *pervasive developmental disorders*, including those on the autism spectrum. Work will start on the bill this year, and sponsors have indicated that they would re-introduce it next year if it is not enacted by the end of the current General Assembly timeframe. The House panel also will review a bill sponsored by Representative Nancy Garland and Representative Ted Celeste that would prohibit health insurers from excluding coverage for specified services for individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder [HB 376](#).

In addition, the Senate Health, Human Services & Aging Committee held a first hearing last week on a companion bill, [SB 381](#), sponsored by Senator Bill Seitz.

For more information: www.ohio.gov/legislation



Part One of a Two-Part Series

2. Ohio's Tele-psychiatry Project ... Providing Care & Support

Originally launched in February 2012 as "Ohio's Tele-medicine Project" a closer look at specific needed services has prompted the project to be more accurately named "Ohio's Tele-psychiatry Project."

DODD and Wright State University, in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) have developed *Ohio's Tele-psychiatry Project*. The goal of the project is to provide access to high-quality psychiatric care and community mental health services for people affected by co-occurring mental illness/developmental disabilities (MI/DD) who reside in remote areas across the state.

Begun in February 2012, the project is currently serving approximately 40 individuals residing in 13 Ohio counties, where there are few if any such services available by qualified practitioners. In a letter introducing the project to Superintendents of Ohio County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, DODD Director John Martin stated,

"The lack of appropriate care severely impacts the quality of life for people in these areas while also inflating the cost of care due to increased staffing needs, unnecessary hospitalizations, forced institutionalization, and expenses to transport the person out of the local area for treatment. Through this collaborative effort Ohio hopes to provide treatment and ongoing local support to as many as 120 under-served individuals by the end of FY2013."

The project also was developed to encourage collaborative relationships between local County Boards of DD and local Boards of Mental Health that could bridge the gap in services to people with complex issues, and help prepare the agencies to see the 'whole person.' These interdisciplinary teams then can offer a more comprehensive approach to treatment.

Tele-psychiatry – The Basics

Psychiatric services involved in this targeted project are directed by Julie Gentile M.D., at Wright State University's Consumer Advocacy Model (CAM) Program. In assessing an individual to be served through *Ohio's Tele-psychiatry Project*, the intake process involves an in-person initial meeting with Dr. Gentile or one of the other CAM Psychiatrists who specialize in serving this unique population. Follow-up sessions are via encrypted video-conferencing, which abides by all Patient Privacy Act guidelines, and other simple technology-based connections. Describing the overall approach, Dr. Gentile explains that tele-psychiatry uses communication networks to deliver health care services and medical education from one geographical location to another. This approach can overcome issues including an uneven distribution or shortage of human resources in under-served areas, or lack of infrastructure for delivery of needed services.

It has been noted at the outset of the project, that challenges involved in providing needed care for individuals include the fact that in rural communities, 50% of mental health care is provided by primary care physicians – not MH specialists – and patients may need to travel long distances for specific services, or forgo such services altogether.

In explaining how the project works to benefit individuals, Dr. Gentile highlights the importance of better-educating primary care physicians who do not have targeted training in this area. She states, "It has been shown that since many patients prefer to go to a primary care physician's clinic (their 'regular doctor') rather than to a MH clinic (perceived decreased stigma) the patient would benefit from the physicians' additional access to training. Individuals requiring treatment options for mental health issues are particularly well-suited for a tele-medicine system, as there is little need for hands-on procedures and interventions."

Tele-psychiatry and Positive Outcomes

Success has been shown in treating individuals exhibiting depression, dementia, schizophrenia, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), panic disorder, substance abuse, and similar issues.

Other positive outcomes are realized due to factors such as the 'distancing effects' of not being face-to-face, that actually can improve disclosure and honesty due to an increased sense of security or privacy. Research shows that tele-psychiatry currently is being utilized in many settings, including clinics, hospital emergency departments, patients' homes, nursing homes, schools, and in military combat zones.

Tele-psychiatry in Ohio

Current research indicates that tele-psychiatry is a highly successful real-time 'tele-medicine' application. Benefits include improved access to care, cost-effectiveness, enhanced educational opportunities (physician), and better quality of care. For example, video-conferencing does not appear to compromise the important alliance between the physician and the individual, and in fact, the more impersonal environment allows some patients to feel less embarrassed and more able to express difficult feelings.

All but the largest Ohio counties are eligible to recommend individuals for participation in *Ohio's Tele-psychiatry Project*, and those currently not eligible for the initial project may be considered later, or in future expansions. Criteria for children and adults referred includes that they have co-occurring mental illness/developmental disabilities; are enrolled in the Medicaid system; and, that the person or parent/guardian consents and agrees to participate. The receiving county must have high-speed broadband internet capability.

County Boards of DD participating in the project have several responsibilities in working with individuals receiving such services, including identifying a specific County Board staff person to

coordinate services – usually a Service and Support Administrator (SSA); arranging the initial intake visit in-person with one of the psychiatrists at CAM; and providing access to a computer and webcam or basic tele-conferencing equipment. According to Pam Berry, DODD Senior Policy Advisor, and coordinator of the funding grant through the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, “None of the equipment is difficult to operate or complicated – it’s really a pretty simple set-up in the field.” She adds,

“Every effort has been made to streamline the referral process and begin services to the person as quickly as possible. We recognize that there are people in these rural communities who have been struggling for a very long time, and have an immediate need for attention. I strongly encourage those eligible counties to make referrals, as feedback from participating counties and individuals has been overwhelmingly positive.”

Key Benefits Explored

Probably the most exciting outcomes in *Ohio’s Tele-psychiatry Project*, employing technology to link under-served individuals to needed services in remote areas of the state, will be told by the individuals themselves, their families, and by the participating physicians. That’s what we’ll explore in Part Two of this two-part series. ...

... coming soon in *Pipeline*

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3. OACB Convention Spotlights Strengths, Innovation

At the 29th Annual Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB) convention Dec. 5-7, the agenda is focused on ideas and information that would help attendees find ways to evolve, find new efficiencies, and continuously improve. The event, hosted at the Hilton at Easton (Columbus) garners plenty of interest from across the state and showcases many people and programs of interest to Ohio’s developmental disabilities community.

For example, at today’s opening session, DODD Director John Martin highlighted several points in his presentation, focusing on examples of transformational change, and data-driven decision making. Continuing a theme noted often throughout 2012, Director Martin emphasized the Department’s emphasis on the sustainability of programs that benefit Ohioans with developmental disabilities and their families, as well as exploring different service models to help support the needs of families most efficiently and effectively. Building on that, his observations included this comment on the fiscal outlook for 2013 ...

“Budget negotiations are going well ... we’re being listened to, and being understood ... as we move forward exploring new ways to provide sustainable services in a collaborative environment.”

Director Martin added that one of the strong messages the national developmental disabilities community is hearing for 2013 is that states can expect a more aggressive approach toward enforcing the assurances set forth by the Olmstead Act – and what the U.S. Department of Justice expects in the delivery of services in the least restrictive environment. He noted, “We are moving in the right direction, and will continue to find ways to maintain that momentum.”

A Few Brief Highlights

Among the many OACB annual award presentations this year was ‘Legislator of the Year,’ in recognition of exemplary legislative leadership on behalf of people with developmental

disabilities -- presented to Representative Barbara Sears, of Ohio's 46th District, which includes the western portion of Lucas County. Introduced by Lucas County Board Superintendent John Trunk, he had this to say:



“Barbara Sears is a person who sees the forest AND the trees. She asks great questions and listens. And, as a State Representative, she looks out for the fiscal well-being of our DD system at the local level as well.”

< Representative Barbara Sears, OACB Legislator of the year

The mix of informative, motivational, and interactive OACB conference sessions (see program [here](#)) this year are presented by County Board staff, DODD staff, and other professionals from around the state and nation, as well as by a growing number of self advocates -- underscoring the growing strength of the advocacy movement in Ohio. (*More at www.oacbdd.org*)



Health & Safety

4. Safety Tips for Safe and Happy Holidays

Many residential service providers and families caring for individuals with developmental disabilities have shared with DODD over the years that the holiday season offers one of the best opportunities to involve those individuals in special activities such as decorating, baking, singing carols, and attending unique religious programs. Along with all of these wonderful activities to share with each other should be an extra measure of care and safety. As TAC Enterprises Nurse, Victoria A. Chase, notes in Clark County's *TAC Journal* ... “During the holiday season, our enthusiasm sometimes causes us to forget to keep ourselves safe.” She shares a few reminders:

- Never use lighted candles near an inside evergreen tree (‘live’ or not!), or near wrapping paper, or where candles can be blown or knocked over.
- Before lighting a fireplace, check to see if the flue is open, and keep a screen in front while the fire is burning and/or sparking. Never burn wrapping paper - it ignites quickly and burns intensely.
- Use only lights that have been tested for safety. Check old lights and cords for cracks, frays or bare wires – if you find any, discard! Do not overload extension cords. Turn off lights when you leave your house and before going to bed.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree, and keep “bubbling” lights away from children -- they are a temptation.
- Practice an escape plan in case of an emergency. Even if you may have done so before the holidays, decorations and trees may change the path to doors and windows.

Minimize Risk!

A helpful chronological listing of seasonal and other Health & Safety Alerts, covering areas in which DODD has identified a risk to people, and what can be done to avoid or minimize that risk, is at [Health & Safety Alerts](#).

More at <http://dodd.ohio.gov/healthandsafety/Pages/Health-and-Safety-Alerts.aspx>.



5. New DD Awareness Month Theme Announced for 2013

Public Images Network, and parent organization Ohio Public Images, a not-for-profit corporation, were established in 1983 to promote positive awareness of people with developmental disabilities.

Each year Ohio Public Images (OPI) creates a theme for the March celebration of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This year the theme is, "Look Beyond."

Posters and other materials standardize artwork and a selection of complementary tags, such as:



... and See Me!

County Boards and others in Ohio's DD system may wish to customize the basic artwork with their own information, so the artwork is made available online at www.publicimagesnetwork.org (free) as are sample news releases and promotional materials for the Month's events.

Speaking of March Events! ... In 2013, DODD, Ohio Public Images, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Ohio SIBS, The Arc of Ohio, and other stakeholders will initiate a new partnership in which the annual *Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Kickoff* and statewide *Legislative Advocacy Day* activities will be hosted together. The 2013 *Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy Event* will be on March 5, 2013 at the Ohio Statehouse, combining the two efforts previously held separately.

**Attendance at the 2013 DD Awareness and Advocacy Day is open to all.
Participants wishing to meet with their legislators must register in advance. Details soon!**

The Ohio Statehouse venue will host the *Awareness* program in the Atrium, and registration for individuals meeting with legislators – *Advocacy* efforts – will be headquartered nearby in the Statehouse, allowing for a flow between venues.

SAVE THE DATE! TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2013.

**The Annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness & Advocacy Event at the Ohio Statehouse.
More information as the date draws nearer.**

OPI Executive Director Lon Mitchell remarks, "Self advocates are the focus of this event program, sharing their challenges and successes, and strengthening their self advocacy efforts. The camaraderie exhibited by presenters, speakers, and the individuals and families who attend this event is always energizing -- it gets March off to a great start."

Contact: Sherry Steinman at DODD; sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov; phone (614) 644-0262.

***PostScripts***

🌀 OPI Call for Entries, Media & Awareness Awards, Deadline Jan. 4, 2013

Ohio Public Images, Inc. (OPI), an information and advocacy organization encouraging positive perceptions of people with developmental disabilities, has announced the 'Call for Entries' for its annual *Media and Awareness Awards* for the period *December 1, 2011 through November 30, 2012*. Entries

eligible for consideration in this competition must have been published, broadcast, scheduled, produced, or occurred during that timeframe. *Call for Entries:* www.publicimagesnetwork.org/awardsluncheon.htm.

There are more than 20 categories for award nominations, including a specific category for outstanding efforts by Ohio employers.

Employer efforts could include: Those that foster a positive environment for individuals with disabilities in the workplace; Unique or exceptional efforts to train and hire individuals with developmental disabilities for specific employment opportunities; and, employers that have partnered successfully with agencies in the community to serve people with developmental disabilities and provide successful employment outcomes. There also are other new categories. Entry deadline is January 4, 2013.

☞ DODD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, other Possible Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs)

To report abuse/neglect and other MUI's call toll-free: **1-866-313-6733**. Please note that MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of DD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict -- or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances it is important to remember the hotline number is there to be used for reporting concerns in these situations.

Pipeline Feedback ... from You to the State

Pipeline is an electronic publication of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), distributed at least twice monthly to update and inform readers of timely, relevant information affecting stakeholders in the developmental disabilities community. Share questions or comments about *Pipeline* at feedback@list.dodd.ohio.gov or sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov. *DODD values subscriber confidentiality and does not intentionally share subscriber addresses with others. However, in the event of a public records request, the DODD will comply with all applicable Public Records Laws.*

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Department of
Developmental Disabilities

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