

Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Statewide Planning and Policy Council
Annual Report to the Governor
For Calendar Year 2012

In 2011, when the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) became a new state department, the Tennessee Code was updated to reflect that change and also to create statewide and regional planning and policy councils to allow for public collaboration on issues affecting the department and the people interested in DIDD services. Tennessee Code 33-5-601 created the Statewide Planning and Policy Council (SPPC) for DIDD to assist in planning a comprehensive array of high quality prevention, early intervention, treatment, and habilitation services and supports and to advise the department on policy, budget requests, and developing and evaluating services and supports. Section 33-5-602 (c) states that the council, in conjunction with the commissioner, shall report annually to the governor. The following constitutes the first annual report, covering calendar year 2012, of the council.

The Statewide Planning and Policy Council met in Nashville four times during 2012: February 22, May 16, August 15 and November 14. A quorum was present for each meeting and official minutes were recorded, posted on the state website, and distributed.

The Department also created East, Middle and West regional planning and policy councils (EPPC, MPPC and WPPC), as well as the developmental disabilities planning and policy council (DDPPC). Each of these councils consists of a chairperson, plus eight additional members. They have each met four times during 2012, approximately three to five weeks prior to the statewide planning and policy council. The chairpersons of each have attended the SPPC meetings and provided reports, highlighting recommendations or other significant issues that rose in their meetings.

The agenda for all meetings typically included a section devoted to updates provided by the commissioner and/or members of his senior management team. These updates were extremely helpful to all the council members and the members want to express appreciation to the DIDD Commissioner and staff for the time devoted to preparing and delivering them.

The department also provided excellent management resources to help in the development of each meeting's agendas, conduct research and follow up on topics, arrange for DIDD staff updates and overall support. Additionally, the department devoted administrative support to assist with meeting set up and minutes. Once again, all members of the various councils want to acknowledge and give thanks for this vital support.

A great deal of time was spent during the meetings of all five councils during this first year on providing some education for the members about the very complex system of service delivery for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities within the

state of Tennessee. The membership of each council, by design, is diverse, representing all stakeholders in the system including people supported, family members, service providers, and advocates. This diversity enriched discussions, but also necessitated establishing some common points of reference and education.

Educational presentations included:

- an overview of the department's organizational structure
- the commissioner's top to bottom departmental review
- efforts toward accreditation
- a basic understanding of the budget and the budget process
- protection from harm issues
- a new employment initiative
- health promotion efforts
- the Self Determination waiver renewal
- revisions to the current provider manual and efforts to rewrite the manual

Specific recommendations made by the Statewide Planning and Policy Council during calendar year 2012 to the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities included:

1. Make preventative vision, dental, and hearing services accessible for waiver participants through TennCare or the waiver.
2. Revisit the annual and three year caps on dental services to determine if they are still at appropriate levels.
3. Remove the annual cap of 243 days per year for day service. Day services would have a monthly cap that equals the total number of weekdays in each of the twelve months that could be used. In addition, the day services hours would not be limited to Monday through Friday, but could be utilized on weekends as well to best meet the needs of the individual.
4. Improve the coordination between state departments, particularly with schools in order to bridge the gap of services especially for children who age out of the education system.
5. Improve coordination for services among individuals with autism.
6. Create a web-based system that is more efficient and supportive of those who have to navigate the system.
7. Reduce the waiting list for waiver and family support services.

8. Permit providers of day services to be paid for the services provided (as relevant for individual employment for the sake of continuity of service).
9. Implement reoccurring appropriations for the Family Support Program.
10. Create a registry of Autism for the DIDD website so that individuals with DD can sign up so needs can be easily assessed.
11. Streamline transportation across the State of Tennessee for adults served by DIDD.
12. Reinstate the policy to contact the Administrator on Duty (AOD); all restraints should be considered a reportable incident no matter the length of restraint or if previously approved; and that administrative leave should only be required if employees are accused of sexual or physical abuse.
13. Establish a definition for “developmental disabilities” and once that definition is established, research the approximate number of Tennesseans that will meet these criteria.
14. Always use person-centered language when referring to those with a disability.
15. Explore the use of various technologies, such as sensory devices, alarms, and video monitoring, in residential settings which will support a less restrictive environment.
16. Develop a waiver-funded residential model that provides less than 24-hour supervision, e.g. semi-independent living.
17. Allocate a five percent (5%) rate increase for all providers in the DIDD 2013-2014 budget.

We are looking forward to continuing our work next year. Clearly, a solid foundation has been laid. Members have a basic understanding of the department’s mission, organizational structure, budget, constraints and strategic planning initiatives.

Sincerely,

Mike McElhinney, Chairperson
Statewide Planning and Policy Council

James M. Henry, Commissioner
Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities