



Department of
**Intellectual &
Developmental Disabilities**

2018

**STATEWIDE PLANNING & POLICY
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS**



Statewide Planning and Policy Council

Recommendations 2018

For all recommendations made in this report, the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) Statewide Planning and Policy Council (SPPC) would like to encourage that the efforts applied to resolution be directed by a continued effort to ensure diversity, inclusion, and equity. Please ensure these issues are considered and, if necessary and appropriate, applied to all recommendations past, present, and future. The SPPC wishes to thank DIDD Commissioner Debra K. Payne and DIDD for its leadership, accessibility, and continued involvement with council activities across the state.

- 1. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues the Tennessee Employment First Leadership Initiative (TEFLI) to help service providers create their own road maps for provider transformation, which will result in increased employment opportunities for people supported.

DIDD Response: The Department continues to recognize the value of helping providers continue to enhance their services, with the primary goal of increasing employment opportunities for the people they serve. To achieve this, TEFLI was designed to pair experienced providers within the DIDD network with other providers that will benefit from mentorship, strategic planning, and ongoing guidance. As of January 2019, leaders from three providers have been identified and trained to serve as TEFLI mentors and have been paired with three participating providers across the state, who each were selected throughout a rigorous application process. Each team has held introductory phone conferences, are presently coordinating site visits, and shortly thereafter will develop action plans that outline how the providers can successfully achieve Provider Transformation. Over the next year, all participating providers will have created action plans and begun implementing them, with key data points being collected along the way. In fall 2019, applications will be released for the next cohort of TEFLI providers. It is anticipated that some of the participating providers will acquire the skills and experiences necessary to serve as TEFLI mentors in the future. TEFLI represents successful state leadership of a process

originally coming from the federal level and has thus attracted the attention of the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and other states participating in ODEP's Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP).

We have received much positive feedback from both the mentors and the participating providers about the value this program is already bringing to the DIDD network. We look forward to continuing this work and providing a framework to ensure provider transformation efforts are sustainable for years to come.

- 2. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues the work of the Enabling Technology Initiative to provide options to promote independence in the lives of people supported.

DIDD Response: The Department is committed to the continued expansion and exploration of Enabling Technology options. Our eight current provider projects continue to reveal the transformative possibilities of person-centered technologies at home and in the community. We are seeing personal growth, increased independence and new ways that Enabling Technology can impact people's lives. The Department is already examining new applications of Enabling Technologies as a means to allow people to remain in their own homes when a family caregiver becomes ill or deceased as well as how these technologies can be deployed to prevent falls.

- 3. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues to administratively support and endorse the Family Support Council, which fulfills a need for people with I/DD who may not be eligible for the ECF CHOICES or CHOICES programs.

DIDD Response: DIDD believes the Family Support Program is an important program that helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities remain in their family homes. Furthermore, it understands the flexibility provided through the program structure is extremely important to local councils and families. It will continue to work to support and advocate for this program.

- 4. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues to administratively support and endorse the TN Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

DIDD Response: The Department believes that the Tennessee Council on Autism Spectrum Disorder plays an important role in assisting the state to develop a long-term plan of care for people with autism. The council is positioned to provide DIDD and other state agencies important feedback on current services, identify any service gaps, and provide advice on how to best collaborate with people and their families to ensure a streamlined approach to supporting them from birth into adulthood. The department looks forward to continuing to administratively support the council and to reviewing future recommendations from the council.

5. SPPC Recommendation: DIDD performs a re-evaluation of the DSP training requirements including, but not limited to, the following ideas:

- Minimize the current required training modules to include only those required by federal and state standards, which promote interactive, face-to-face training and mentoring with less emphasis on computer-related training and more emphasis on mentoring and developing relationships.
- Eliminate redundancy and reduce frequency of required trainings within the DIDD service delivery system and continue to encourage the same with other state and federal agencies.

DIDD Response: DIDD agrees that blended training is best for learners as it helps adult learners better engage with the material. However, web-based training has greatly improved agency training compliance overall. DIDD currently examines agency compliance outside the QA survey schedule and reaches out to agencies that appear to be having difficulty. DIDD is currently re-evaluating DSP training requirements and is planning to post a new Request for Proposal (RFP) incorporating a learning management system capable of offering a catalog of coursework consistent with HCBS, federal and state requirements, as well as, Employment First, Enabling Technology and CHOICES requirements.

Classroom training, as well as the current mentoring tool on the DIDD website, used with the Relias tracker functionality (skill- or check-sheets) currently offers agencies the opportunity to follow up on retention of concepts taught. Web-based training is cost and time effective and ensures that all staff are getting consistent information statewide. Mentoring after completing initial training is the missing piece. Using a blended approach consisting of web-based learning

incorporating the mentoring tool and/or skill check-sheets (tracked in the electronic learning management (ELM) system) is ideal.

DIDD will convene a small group of stakeholders to include providers, self-advocates and DIDD trainers to re-evaluate training requirements with a focus on streamlining the requirements and providing a combination of web-based and face-to-face interactive classes.

- 6. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues to administratively support the planning and policy council World Café efforts directed toward improving recruitment, retention, and advocacy of DSPs.

DIDD Response: The DIDD East Tennessee Regional Office (ETRO) is dedicated to providing person-centered quality services through an engaged, committed, competent, supported, and tenured workforce. The ETRO will continue discussions regarding ideas to improve recruitment, retention, and advocacy of direct support professionals (DSPs). Via on-going participation with the East Policy and Planning Committee's World Café, the ETRO will host future events building upon information obtained from the September 2018 World Café Event.

Additionally, the ETRO will utilize the information from the World Café events to assist in developing a person-centered competency based mentoring program for all levels of the organization through our Council on Quality Leadership (CQL) re-accreditation plan.

Should any other regional councils be interested in holding a World Café, the regional office will work with the council to provide support of those efforts.

- 7. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD adopts the use of the wording used in the document by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL), "Hey, Don't Be Getting My "Rights" All Wrong..." when assessing the rights of a person supported.

DIDD Response: DIDD is currently working on creating rights booklets and other educational materials to assist people supported in learning about their rights. As a part of the development of those materials, we will review CQL's "Hey, Don't

Be Getting My Rights All Wrong” and work with CQL on how those can be utilized by the department.

It is important to note that DIDD does not have a formal rights assessment, as the department instead made the decision to add a rights section into the revised Individual Support Plan (ISP) template.

- 8. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD restates #7 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Simplified Version) by including, “We’re all equal before the law and have access to all rights as established by the United States Constitution, which includes all amendments” when assessing the rights of people supported.

DIDD Response: The Accreditation, Policy and Legal Divisions of DIDD will review this language and determine how it may be used to help people exercise their rights.

- 9. SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues to administratively support the planning and policy council’s effort directed toward the modification individualizing residential support resource manual.

DIDD Response: In 2018 the West Policy and Planning Council (WPPC) agreed to rework a prior DIDD handbook publication titled the Residential Services Resource Manual, which provided information on residential services for providers. The Council decided to rename the handbook “The Person-Centered Residential Resources Manual” to address the title with updated language. The entire manual has been re-written using person-centered language. The work will continue into 2019 to include Quality Indicators, Human Rights, Financial/Budget Issues to include a chart with “who pays for what,” Conflict Management, HCBS Settings Rules, Personal Outcome Measures, and note what Quality Assurance looks for when surveying an agency. DIDD will continue to work with the council to complete this resource manual, which when completed will be a valuable tool for people within the DIDD service delivery system.

- 10.SPPC Recommendation:** DIDD continues to provide behavioral and mental health opportunities for collaboration at the local level to prevent unnecessary and lengthy hospitalizations, wherein the dignity of people supported is compromised.

DIDD Response: DIDD understands there is much work that still needs to be done to prevent unnecessary and lengthy hospitalizations. The department will continue to partner with TennCare, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS), providers, and local crisis response systems to identify gaps in crisis prevention services and understand the barriers on a local level. It encourages all stakeholders to attend the Clinical Consultation Network meetings, which occur on a bi-weekly basis and are open for all to attend. These network meetings include case reviews and tips for preventing and stabilizing crises, and helping persons supported improve their mental health. They are important because they allow for dissemination of information that can make agencies more effective in crisis intervention and create local partnerships across systems. DIDD encourages greater participation in CCN, as participation can be possible via phone or online.

In addition, we will continue our work with the managed care organizations on their existing support systems.

11.SPPC Recommendation: DIDD develops focus around young adults transitioning out of high school and how to get information to those families who may need to understand that services in the adult world are not mandated. Services are available, based on criteria, but they must be applied for.

DIDD Response: DIDD is committed to educating transitioning youth through its various methods of outreach. DIDD attends many school and district transition fairs for families and teachers every year, and includes outreach through STEP and individual schools when requested. At these meetings, DIDD has printed materials and other information about various resources including, but not limited to, employment, Post-Secondary Programs, Employment and Community First CHOICES, the Family Support Program, Pathfinders information and various other programs. Further, through one-on-one interaction with families through these events and other opportunities, DIDD educates the public about the availability of services, basic eligibility information, and how to apply to receive these services.

Any feedback the councils have on how we may be able to improve our materials, or our outreach efforts is welcomed, as we value stakeholder input in ensuring that our communications strategies are accurate, effective and understandable.

12.SPPC Recommendation: DIDD develops focus around dissemination or access of information for individuals or families currently not receiving services but may need for themselves or family members.

DIDD Response: As mentioned above, DIDD prides itself on its in-person outreach efforts to those all over Tennessee who may be seeking services or are unsure of what resources may be available in their community. It welcomes input from the council on improving those efforts and working together to develop resources and dissemination strategies to ensure all families are able to count on DIDD for information that can assist them in determining the best choices available for them or their loved one.