

Goals FY 2009 - 2011 Objectives FY 2010

I. Protect and advocate for persons with disabilities who are victims of abuse, neglect, and rights violations, including:

- A. Respond to incidents of abuse or neglect through technical assistance, follow-up, monitoring, investigation and/or litigation.
- B. Improve and expand systems for reporting, investigation and responding to abuse in state-licensed facilities including expanding the use of HCSIS (Pennsylvania's incident reporting system) to additional service systems.
- C. Work to ensure protective services for persons aged 18-59 through the creation of an Adult Protective Services System in Pennsylvania.
- D. Advocate for services for persons with disabilities who are victims of crimes including medical care, victim services, assistance in reporting crimes to police, and information about civil suits and form a collaborative charter with victim services organizations.
- E. Advocate for the decrease in the use of chemical, mechanical, and/or physical restraints and seclusion.
- F. Advocate for the passage and implementation of regulations that protect persons with disabilities living in personal care homes and assisted living facilities.
- G. Identify and respond to systemic incidents of abuse, neglect, and rights violations in licensed facilities, including contesting any challenges to DRN's authority to access facilities, residents, or records.
- H. Identify and develop advocacy strategies to increase availability of legal representation for people with disabilities involved in guardianship proceedings.

II. Eliminate the unnecessary institutionalization of persons with disabilities, including:

- A. Assure that DPW fully implements its Money Follows the Person Grant and similar initiatives.
- B. Advocate for community alternatives for persons institutionalized or at risk of institutionalization, including:

1. persons living in state mental hospitals;
2. persons currently living in state mental retardation centers, including all residents of any facility that is closing;
3. adolescents or children currently living in Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities, living in facilities out of state or other institutional settings;
4. persons currently living in large personal care homes of ten or more people;
5. persons currently living in Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities;
6. infants and children who are medically fragile and in need of in-home and family supports;
7. persons with intellectual disabilities, mental illness or autism at risk of incarceration.

C. Promote and expand affordable, integrated, accessible housing, including:

1. increasing, over four years, the number of accessible public housing units in Pittsburgh to 7% of the total units;
2. expanding the availability of accessible Section 8 housing to 5% of the total units and to assist persons with disabilities in locating accessible Section 8 housing;
3. working to expand the stock of accessible, affordable housing including supportive housing;
4. working to expand homeownership by persons with disabilities, and programs which support people with disabilities to be homeowners;
5. providing assistance to persons who experience housing-related discrimination.
6. ensuring that allotted housing funds are used for the intended target population.

D. Limit the growth of Medicaid and other funding for congregate care, including:

1. limiting the use of current Home and Community Based Waivers for congregate care;
2. advocating for the closure of state-operated mental retardation centers and large, private ICF/MRs;
3. limiting the unnecessary placement of persons in nursing homes and continue advocating for the decrease of nursing home beds across the state.

E. Ensure appropriate service planning continues at state hospitals through monitoring and assuring implementation of the Service Area Planning including the Community Service Planning process.

III. Promote an array of quality consumer-controlled and/or consumer-driven services to enable adults and children with disabilities to live and thrive in their own homes, schools, workplaces, and communities, including:

A. Advocate for consumer control and direction in the delivery of services, including the development of participant-directed services in all Department of Public Welfare and Department of Aging Home and Community-Based waivers.

B. Advocate for additional home, school, and community-based options for children and adolescents who have behavioral health needs and/or developmental disabilities, including:

1. increasing availability of evidence-based practices and services to support children and their families in their homes;
2. increasing availability and coordination of positive behavioral supports in neighborhood schools provided through the behavioral health and education systems;
3. increasing availability of home-like, community-based residential options for children who cannot live with their families;
4. increasing services and supports for persons under age 22 to assist them to transition to the adult service system.

C. End waiting lists for community services for people with intellectual disabilities who are unserved or underserved, including:

1. advocating services for persons currently on the mental retardation waiting list;
 2. working with legislature to develop a plan to end the mental retardation waiting list;
 3. advocating for services for previously unserved adults with autism.
- D. Expand access to quality education, early intervention, and special education services in the most inclusive settings possible, including:
1. providing information and technical assistance and/or individual representation in selected cases to families seeking a free appropriate public education for their children with disabilities in inclusive settings;
 2. supporting coalitions in their efforts to improve the delivery of educational services;
 3. advocating for legislative or statewide policy improvements;
 4. assuring appropriate educational services in the least restrictive environment, including additional students in inclusive settings through *Gaskin* and other advocacy.
- E. Assure access to Medicaid services, including:
1. advocating for assistive technology;
 2. providing outreach and/or training about assistive technology rights and issues;
 3. assuring that persons with disabilities are not terminated from services or having services inappropriately reduced;
 4. providing advice and technical assistance, through intake, training, and other means, to individuals or family members who are having difficulty obtaining or are being denied medical assistance services, including EPSDT services.
- F. Advocate to assure that people with disabilities have equal access to unbiased, comprehensive and coordinated health care.
- G. Reach unserved and underserved communities, including:

1. training individuals in institutions on self-advocacy and individual rights;
 2. identifying communities as underserved and targeting them for outreach;
 3. providing training and outreach to people with disabilities and other interested persons.
- H. Improve treatment for inmates with mental illness in Pennsylvania's state prisons and local jails, including focus on persons in restrictive housing units (i.e., isolation) due to disciplinary violations.
- I. Advocate for improved re-entry services for persons released from incarceration.
- J. Provide advice and technical assistance on issues related to substituted-decision-making.
- K. Provide advice and advocacy to ensure appropriate implementation of Act 62, the Autism Insurance Statute.
- L. Advocate for removal of barriers that exist in OMHSAS, ODP and DOH that prevent access to coordinated and effective co-occurring treatment for persons dually diagnosed MH/MR and MH/SA.

IV. Eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability, including:

- A. Assure access to government and public services and public accommodations, including:
1. assuring effective communication for mental health and mental retardation services, children and youth services, administrative hearings and/or education services for persons who are deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing, and physical health care;
 2. assuring that state and local governments install and maintain curb ramps;
 3. providing assistance to persons who experience discrimination by government programs and services or public accommodations.

4. advocating for law enforcement personnel to receive training to interact with persons with mental illness and other disabilities in an appropriate manner.
- B. Promote and expand employment of persons with disabilities, including:
1. training attorneys on the employment rights of persons with disabilities;
 2. providing assistance for individuals with disabilities in employment discrimination matters;
 3. advocating for supports for persons with disabilities to participate fully in the workplace.
- C. Assure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunity to vote, including:
1. advocating for increased accessibility of polling places and voting procedures for people with disabilities;
 2. exploring best practices for accessible voting including for people with print disabilities;
 3. working to assure that the right to vote of persons with Intellectual disabilities is protected;
 4. working to support people with disabilities to register to vote and to ensure compliance by entities required by law to offer voter registration;
 5. supporting coalitions in their efforts to improve access to the vote and to address barriers and impediment to people with disabilities voting.
- D. Promote accessible transportation, including:
1. requiring transportation facilities to be accessible;
 2. providing assistance to persons seeking accessible transportation;
 3. advocating improved quality of services provided by the Persons with Disabilities Rural Shared Ride Program;

4. advocating increased transportation options such as taxi services.
5. advocating for increased transportation services to rural areas.