



COLLABORATIVE WORK GROUP ON SERVICES TO
ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

**REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
JANUARY, 2013**

INTRODUCTION

In January, 2012, a group of individuals and agency representatives with a shared concern about the service delivery system for adults with developmental disabilities in Idaho came together to provide a forum for collaboratively addressing those concerns.

***VISION:** By 2016, adults with developmental disabilities living in Idaho enjoy the same opportunities, freedoms, and rights as their neighbors. They have access to a sustainable service system that provides quality, individualized supports to meet their lifelong and changing needs, interests and choices.*

Given the new reality of Idaho's state budget and changes at the federal level, the group felt that it was critical that stakeholders work together to create a sustainable adult service delivery system that is based on quality, continuity of services, choice and affordability. By being proactive in identifying critical issues and providing a common vision, the group aims to assist policymakers in making important decisions about the future of this service system in Idaho.

At their initial meeting, the group articulated a number of key questions that are paramount in moving Idaho's adult service system into this new reality.

Key Questions:

1. What do we want the system to accomplish, both for the person who is served and for the taxpaying citizens of Idaho?
2. Who is eligible for services and how is that determined?
3. How are the supports and services identified to ensure they meet the person's needs?
4. How is freedom of choice honored in the system?
5. What is the role of families and other community members?
6. How are individuals offered the opportunity to learn to advocate for themselves?



7. How can the system accommodate the changing needs of individuals as they age?
8. Who provides oversight of the system and how is that carried out?
9. How do we ensure the provision of quality services through best practice education provided to direct support staff?
10. How does the system support the individual in a crisis?
11. How does the system protect the rights of individuals with disabilities?
12. How do we make the system sustainable within the new realities in Idaho?

The group agreed that now is the time to be proactive. Although some issues might be more urgent and require immediate intervention, others are longer term and deserve more deliberation. All will benefit from thorough discussion, analysis, and planning by the people who are charged with delivering the services and those who are the recipients. That is the purpose of the work group – to engage the stakeholders impacted by these changes and to provide a forum for them to advise and guide future policy changes.

Although much of the group’s work will examine how states provide Medicaid services to people with developmental disabilities, it is recognized that other systems, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, also provide services and supports. These other formal systems as well as natural supports will be included in the scope of the group’s study.

WORK TO DATE

Collaboratively Led

From the beginning, the group recognized that although there would be differences of opinion, it would be important to hear everyone’s voice and determine where we could agree and where we could not. This consensus-based decision-making and shared responsibility has created an environment of trust and commitment. But there was also acknowledgement that the group needed a lead agency or organization to coordinate the work. The Council on Developmental Disabilities, charged in law with system monitoring, is facilitating the effort, providing funding support and technical assistance as needed. A Steering Committee guides the work. The full workgroup has endorsed this structure as necessary to help the group achieve its goals.



Issue Identification and Research

The group identified several issues that would need research in terms of best practice and approaches used in other states that may inform Idaho's system changes. These issues included:

- Eligibility – Who is eligible for what services? How is this determination made?
- Assessment Tools and Processes – What tools are used to determine a person's services needs? Who conducts these assessments? What is the process used?
- Individual Budgets – what process and tools are used to determine the amount of resources allocated to a recipient for their services? How is the budget aligned with the person's plan for services? What process is used if this is found to be inadequate?
- Array of Services/Payment Authority – What services are available to an eligible recipient? How are these paid for? What Medicaid waiver authorities are used? What other funding streams are used to pay for services?
- Quality Assurance – How is oversight provided? How is freedom of choice regarding services and providers made available to eligible participants? How is that balanced with individual safety? With cost effectiveness?

With these elements in mind, the group identified 9 states (in addition to Idaho) that they felt would be valuable to research regarding their Medicaid and other services to adults with developmental disabilities. Those states are:

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Michigan
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- Wyoming



The individuals charged with researching these states have conducted preliminary research through various means and are continuing to do so. As information is gathered it is shared with the larger group to generate further questions and the need for additional data. Summaries of the findings from these states will be combined with specific recommendations for policymakers later in 2013 and 2014. If the research identifies other states or experts that should be consulted, the group will pursue that information as well.

Employment Supports

An important element of supports for people with developmental disabilities living successfully in their communities is the opportunity to work. Historically, this has meant trying to find jobs, usually low-paying, service-sector work, and plugging people into them. But best practice has found that taking the time to discover a person's talents, abilities, and interests and then building a job around those, results in better outcomes and greater satisfaction for both the person and the employer. And this process also works well for those who might consider self employment as an option.

The **Idaho Employment First Consortium**, a project of the Council on Developmental Disabilities in partnership with others, is looking at what needs to be done in Idaho to make employment in an integrated setting at a competitive wage, the first choice for anyone with a disability. The IEFC is also conducting research on practices used in other states to implement this Employment First model and is sharing that data with the Collaborative Work Group. This is key since the CWG is looking at supports across the spectrum. It is important that any recommendation regarding policy or service system changes acknowledge the interconnectedness of these supports.

Next steps

Work group members are continuing their research on other states and on specific system elements. The information gathered will be available to the public as posted on the CWG's webpage at <http://www.icdd.idaho.gov/projects/Adult%20Services/ASR.html>.

During the spring of 2013, focus groups of service providers, recipients and others will be held in at least 3 areas of Idaho. The intent is to find out, from those using and providing the services, what is working and what needs changing.

The Collaborative Work Group will also be identifying individuals nationally who may be able to provide technical assistance to Idaho as it modifies its services.



As Medicaid moves into managed care, the CWG will be engaged in conversations with the Department of Health and Welfare and others to ensure that the needs of people with developmental disabilities are met in that new service delivery model. The group will also be examining models of managed care that have been considered and implemented in other states to inform our recommendations for Idaho. Since implementation of Medicaid managed care also requires the input of consumers and others, the CWG intends to provide a vehicle for stakeholder input into ensuring that accessible, appropriate long-term services are part of any managed care networks designed to serve Idahoans with developmental disabilities.

We look forward to working together to ensure that future services and supports for Idahoans with disabilities are not only efficient and effective but reflect the values of the workgroup. These are:



For more information about the Collaborative Work Group, contact Marilyn Sword, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, 1-208-334-2178 or -1-800-544-2433; email: marilyn.sword@icdd.idaho.gov. Information will also be posted on the CWG webpage at <http://www.icdd.idaho.gov/projects/Adult%20Services/ASR.html>.

Or contact any of the CWG members listed on the following page.



Collaborative Work Group on Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

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Names in red = Steering Committee Member