



EXECUTIVE BRIEFS

An Update on CT DMR Initiatives

May 11, 2007

Issue 17

Pandemic Flu Planning

On April 12th, the department sponsored a Provider Information Session on Pandemic Flu Planning. A total of 170 DMR and private providers listened attentively to Dr. Albert L. Geetter, Section Chief – Office of Public Health Preparedness, present on Pandemic Influenza Overview and Current Planning Considerations. Dr. Geetter described the stages of a pandemic flu event and the implications each would have on society. The link to Dr. Geetter's presentation found on the DMR website is

<http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/forms/PandemicFlu.htm> .

Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP) are due into the region on May 18, 2007. All qualified vendors must submit a COOP to their primary region by this date. The COOP should be viewed as a work in process. The provider should detail the strategies necessary to continue operations based on what they currently believe would be best for their organization. As the provider investigates the various strategies and develops new ones, the COOP should be updated. It is the expectation of the Department that providers will maintain and periodically submit an updated detailed plan on how they will continue critical operations during a Pandemic Flu outbreak.

New E-learning Program Coming Soon

As you know, CT DMR has selected MC Strategies Inc. (MCS) to provide the College of Direct Support, a comprehensive on-line learning program, to direct support and other professionals who deliver services to individuals receiving services from the department. MCS has been providing the College of Direct Support on-line curriculum to state-level departments, private agencies, community service boards, micro-boards, and individuals providing services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities since June of 2003. Currently twelve states and more than 40,000 learners around the country are taking/or have completed the CDS lessons on-line. This web-based curriculum will supplement and in some cases replace classroom-based training, and will be accessible from any computer with an Internet connection. Some of the benefits of web-based learning include consistency of instruction, competency-based learning, around-the-clock availability, reduced travel costs, and more efficient use of resources.

Approximately 175 DMR staff, private providers, and self-advocates attended three information sessions held around the state on April 30, May 1 and May 2. Bill Tapp, CDS National Director, presented an overview and on-line demonstrations of the CDS program.

<http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/>

There was tremendous enthusiasm and support for the program among the participants. We will be working with department staff and private providers on implementation in the coming months. The CDS courses and lessons will be customized to CT law and regulations, and department policies and procedures prior to making it available to providers. The department would like all direct support professionals working in the public and private sectors to receive the same high quality learning opportunities. To that end, a set of standard guidelines for how the CDS courses should be used will also be developed. Providers who become system administrators will be expected to follow the guidelines and will be able to further customize the CDS courses and lessons to their agency practices.

DMR will pay an annual licensing fee of \$250,000 to make this web-based curriculum available to an unlimited number of DMR employees, employees hired directly by individuals and families, self-advocates, family members, and private provider employees. Private provider agencies will be able to make the curriculum available to their employees by registering with DMR and CDS and paying a \$2800 annual administrative fee. This fee allows the provider agency to perform their own system administration responsibilities and access all of the features of the CDS program including the learning management system. We will also be working with the Trades and interested providers who may be willing to serve as system administrators for smaller agencies who may be willing to pay a usage fee to provide access to the on-line courses for their staff. More information on how to enroll as a system administrator will be emailed to Provider Executive Directors by May 18.

For more information on the CDS System, visit their website at <http://www.collegeofdirectsupport.com/>

Please contact John Tierney, DMR Curriculum Manager, at john.Tierney@po.state.ct.us or (860) 418-6137 for more information.

Quality Service Review (QSR)

The QSR computer application is undergoing additional modifications to address issues found during further testing in DMR's new web environment. The new web environment and the application are on schedule for release in mid July. The Department will be introducing eCAMRIS, to replace the main DMR information system, first as the current platform is going out of service. When a final date is identified for the QSR application release, new training will be announced for the North and South Regions.

Over the next several weeks, the QSR review process will also be tested by DMR Quality Reviewers from the Central Office against traditional CLA licensing inspections. This will permit direct comparison of the findings between the two methodologies and final analysis for regulatory compliance. Providers will be contacted by phone to discuss the logistics and confirm that such a review would be appropriate at each selected location.

The elements of the new quality review system completed by the Regional offices will continue as

<http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/>

they have been over the last two years. Any changes to the Regional review tools regarding content will be sent to all providers prior to the beginning of the fiscal year and posted to the web.

For more information regarding the QSR CLA Licensing evaluation please contact Daniel.Micari@po.state.ct.us. For more information regarding the QSR computer application, please contact Laura.Nuss@po.state.ct.us.

Self-Advocates Focus on Employment

Representatives of CT People First and DMR met in March as a follow up to the joint meeting between NEAT (New England Advocates Together—the New England chapter of the national group Self Advocates Becoming Empowered) and the New England State DD Directors held in January 2007. Each state (CT, MA, VT, RI, NH, ME and NY) was asked to convene a meeting to discuss how the state agency and People First could work collaboratively to increase work opportunities for individuals and to reduce the reliance on sheltered workshops that are segregated and do not allow participants to make real wages.

We had a great discussion that fully supported the concept of developing real work for individuals with disabilities. The group recognized that any attempt to have fewer people in sheltered workshop settings would need to address the concerns of our consumers who appreciate the opportunities for social interaction and to see friends that is readily available in workshop settings.

The group was also sensitive to the needs of families to have full days of work or support for their adult children living at home to allow the parents to continue their own jobs. The best approach is to give individuals choices about where to work and to offer a variety of types of jobs to interest more people in employment. We also recognized that some people may prefer not to work, especially those who are of retirement age.

There are many activities the CT group will be working on over the next year. The first activities included a presentation at the May 4, 2007 Trades meeting to discuss People First's employment agenda and to extend an invitation to the Self Advocacy Employment event described below and co-sponsored by the DMR Self Advocate Coordinators, the DMR Self Determination Directors and by the members of People First of CT.

A self advocacy employment event for DMR consumers and their families and staff will be held June 1, 2007 from 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel - Meriden, CT. This event has been developed primarily for individuals with intellectual disabilities who want to enhance their self advocacy skills to get better jobs and lead more fulfilling lives. Family members, providers and others who want to assist people with disabilities to have satisfying lives and satisfying careers will also benefit from attending this event. The announcement and registration information for this event is on the DMR Website at <http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/futevent.htm>

The program will include opening remarks by Deputy Commissioner Kathryn duPree, and a keynote address by Julie Petty, Vice President of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE). This will be followed by workshop sessions on the following topics: Using Self Advocacy to Get and Keep Meaningful Work, The Truth About Benefits and Work, Successful Employment Stories, Career Coaching, Customizing Jobs for Win-Win Employment, Closing Sheltered Workshops/Creating Alternative Employment, Toastmasters & Self Advocacy, Portability and Your DMR Supports and Service Choices. The program will also include Human Rights Bingo with Pasta Dinner from 6:00-7:00 PM.

Pre-registration is required. For additional information please contact Robin Wood at 203-806-8770, or at robin.wood@po.state.ct.us.

DMR Case Management Review Team

DMR's Case Management Review Team continues to meet to make recommendations to improve case management processes. The Team has focused initial discussions on case manager tasks related to the CT Level of Need Assessment and Screening (LON) tool and resource allocation processes. The team is also coordinating a survey of case manager work process to identify specific processes to streamline, simplify, eliminate duplication, or enhance technology or clerical support.

Following are questions related to the LON that were clarified as a result of the Team's work and may be of interest to providers:

Are case managers required to schedule formal meetings with private providers to develop the LON before the Individual Plan meeting?

No. The department does not have a requirement that the case managers hold a meeting with the providers to complete the LON. Providers may fill out a draft copy of the LON to share their input with the case manager. The case manager is responsible for completing the final LON.

Will technological issues with the LON be addressed by the new LON application. For instance, will the new LON application produce a report that the case manager can send electronically to providers?

Yes. The new application will have the ability to produce reports which can be emailed.

Is the LON required for all individuals served by DMR?

Because the LON information is used for planning purposes as well as to assess individual needs, a LON will be required for all individuals served by the department. This includes individuals in private ICFs/MR and those in Long Term Care facilities (LTCs). The only exception at this time are children under age 18 who are not currently receiving services or have not requested services. They will have the first LON at age 18.

Is the LON Summary Report a form that teams are required to complete?

The LON Summary report includes potential risk areas for the individual. The checklist should be used by teams as they develop the plan, however it is optional to fill in the checklist with the strategies the plan contains to address potential risk areas.

For more information contact Terry Cote at: terry.cote@po.state.ct.us.

Upcoming Provider Events

- **Announcement Posted!**
June 1: Self-Advocacy & Employment Event at Sheraton Four Points – Meriden
- **Announcement Coming Soon!**
June 12: Health Services Conference at NEAT Marketplace – Hartford
- **Announcement Posted!**
June 14 AM: Mental Health Aspects of Mental Retardation: A Multi-Modal Approach at Keeney Center in Wethersfield
- **Announcement Posted!**
June 14 PM: Cross Systems Collaboration in Crisis Prevention and Intervention Planning to Assist Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Needs at Keeney Center in Wethersfield
- **Announcement Coming Soon!**
June 20: Supported Living Event at Hartford Marriott at Rocky Hill

Please visit the DMR Website at <http://www.dmr.state.ct.us/futevent.htm> or contact Charlan Corlies at char.corlies@po.state.ct.us for more information.