

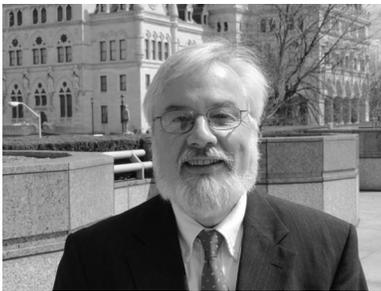


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Governor Dannel P. Malloy | Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D. | Deputy Commissioner Joseph Drexler

August 2012

Message from Commissioner Macy



Terrence W. Macy, Ph. D.
Commissioner

As this is my first opportunity to reach out through Direct to Families, let me begin by thanking each of you for all you do in partnership with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to support individuals with intellectual disability. On the day Governor Malloy announced my appointment, I stated that “This administration will be about putting the people we support and their families first and foremost in everything we do and how we do it. Since that day, I have been working hard to make that concept a reality. It has been incorporated into the department’s Five Year Plan with the theme People and Families First.”

April 2012 marked my first year as Commissioner and what a tumultuous year it was. We began with significant budget and labor issues, lived through two huge storms that wracked the state and only relatively recently have we begun to fill vital leadership positions. Throughout the early months and in spite of many challenges, I was able to get out across the state to conduct a series of Listening Tours. Those many meetings with numerous stakeholders provided the material that would become the DDS Five Year Plan and set the stage for how the department would conduct its business going forward. A draft Five Year plan was developed and widely circulated for months of comment. Submitted in February 2012 to the Legislature, it has become our blueprint for change. The final version can be found on our website at www.ct.gov/dds. It contains 25 goals, many of which address the need to make changes in our support systems. Implementation of the plan will involve our many stakeholders. The development of a new Mission and Vision statement was accomplished with the help of over 60 stakeholders in a day long retreat. Members of that group included self advocates, family members, public and private staff, representatives from other state agencies and members of various partnerships throughout the state. The draft is available in this publication for your review and feedback and can also be found on our website under Mission on the front page.

Just as we are committed to using stakeholders in all of our major policy work, we are also working hard to be as transparent as possible as we post all of the work being done on our Five Year plan goals on our website under Five Year Plan, Updates. Another major project that is underway is a study of how to adjust our payment system for day and residential services by our private providers. There is an article in this issue which describes the work being done on this issue. I have personally been involved in this rate setting issue for many years as I worked on this project with DDS staff as a private provider. I was also part of a committee that developed the Level of Need tool you will read about. All of these changes, including the reimbursement rates to providers and the Level of Need, are driven by the Medicaid system that funds many of our services. As the article that follows points out, the changes are required so that families have choice of providers for their services.

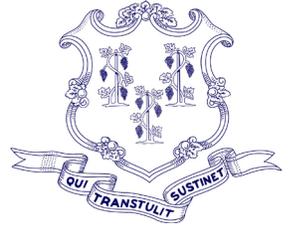
I am very happy to report that we are finally making substantial progress in filling critical staff vacancies that occurred with the retirement of many senior management staff. Some months ago I appointed Joseph Drexler, Esq. as my Deputy Commissioner.

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DDS



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East Hartford, CT 06108-3223
860.263.2500

South Region

104 South Turnpike Road
Wallingford, CT
203.294.5049

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203.586.2000

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55 West Main Street
Waterbury, CT 06702
203.805.7400

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(860) 418-6044
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DDS Helplines

**Only for families who do not have a case manager.*

North Region

Help Line 1-877-437-4577

South Region

Help Line 1-877-437-4567

West Region

Help Line 1-877-491-2720

DDS Appoints New North and South Regional Directors

Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D. is pleased to announce the appointment of Thomas A. Dailey, LCSW as the new DDS South Regional Director and Jordan A. Scheff as the DDS North Regional Director.

"I am extremely pleased with the selection process of the new Regional Directors," said Commissioner Macy. "We had stakeholder groups in the regions interview the prospective candidates and advise on the appointments. It is important for our individuals and their families to be a part of this process. We value their input and appreciate their time. Both Thomas and Jordan bring years of experience in the field and will truly be an asset to the department, individuals, families, employees and the private provider community."

Mr. Dailey started his career in 1983 as a human services direct care worker in Massachusetts. In 2001, Mr. Dailey became the Connecticut DDS South Region Assistant Regional Director (ARD) for Public Residential and Day Services. Since then he has worked in that position in both the North and South Regions, as well as ARD of Individual and Family Supports and Private Administration. Most recently, he was the North Region Interim Regional Director.

Before his appointment as the North Region Director, Mr. Scheff, was the Executive Director of MARCH, Inc. of Manchester, Connecticut, a private non-profit agency since 2003. He began his career in 1991 as a Vocational Director overseeing day programs for Shelton Inc., in Belchertown, Massachusetts.

Abuse and Neglect Not Tolerated by DDS

Message from Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.

A recent discovery of physical abuse at a group home in Connecticut has left many of us outraged and wondering how this could have happened with the many protections that our service system has in place. I am sure that this kind of incident represents your worst fears as parents of individuals with intellectual disability.

I want to take the opportunity to assure families that this was a very unique case, and that the vast majority of staff, public and private, is dedicated to those they support. DDS has and will continue to communicate to staff and the public that we have a zero tolerance policy for any form of abuse or neglect. There are reporting systems in place that lead to investigatory processes and if an employee is terminated for substantiated abuse or neglect, he or she is referred for placement on the DDS Abuse and Neglect Registry, prohibited from working in our field and may face criminal charges as well.

It is deceiving to think abuse and neglect don't exist. Studies over the years have shown that it occurs in every type of setting including but not limited to institutions, medical facilities, group and family homes and day services. While we don't believe it is a pervasive problem, no setting is exempt from these intolerable acts. It is therefore critical that we are ever vigilant to find and report any suspected acts and that thorough investigations are completed to determine the facts.

Since this awful act was discovered, DDS staff has had many discussions about what else we can do as a service system to better educate everyone and assure a clear message regarding our intolerance for abuse and the consequences of such behavior. DDS is in the process of soliciting input from public and private providers, our self advocates and families to identify better ways to educate all parties about our intolerance of abuse and neglect and our registry.

We are also reexamining our existing laws to determine if they provide the needed remedies in the event we find more cases like the one seen recently in Connecticut. I have already consulted with the Governor Malloy's office and other state agencies about developing new laws should we find that necessary.

Lastly, please know that as I was learning of this terrible incident my first thoughts were the enormous impact it would have on families who fear that such crimes could be inflicted on their loved ones. Again, DDS will do everything to communicate our intolerance of and prevent of abuse and neglect.

Please visit the DDS website at: www.ct.gov/dds to report abuse and neglect.

DDS Communications' Goal is to Collect 14,000 Family Email Addresses

During the past two years, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Office of Communications has been working with DDS Case Managers to obtain as many email addresses of DDS families and individuals as possible. To date, DDS has acquired more than 1,700 addresses, however our goal is to collect 14,000 if possible. DDS understands that not everyone has a computer or access to a computer, but, maybe a relative does and is willing to accept emails from the department and pass the information along.

In the future, DDS will begin to communicate more and more through emails to families and individuals. The agency's intention is not to abuse the email addresses, but use it to communicate important information and in an emergency. The email updates will not take the place of regular contact with Case Managers or Regional Help Lines for matters directly related to your loved ones.

If you would like to continue to receive updated information from DDS, please contact your Case Manager or call your **Help Line** (see page two) and give them your email address or a relative's email address. As time goes on, this will be the only way DDS will be able to afford communicating with the thousands of families who receive supports and services from the department.

www.ct.gov/dds

Legislative Update

The 2012 regular legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly ended on Wednesday May 9, 2012. DDS Legislative Affairs staff is in the process of compiling a comprehensive summary of many bills that were being tracked for their potential impact on DDS consumers, families and guardians, DDS employees and DDS providers. This information will be made available on the DDS website under the "Legislative Affairs" at www.ct.gov/dds

In the meantime, we would like to provide you with brief highlights of some of the legislation that we were tracking this session that may be of interest to you.

DDS submitted three agency bills this session:

Public Act 12-44. S.B. No. 205 AN ACT CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR THE BIRTH-TO-THREE PROGRAM amends sections of the statutes concerning health insurance coverage for birth-to-three programs and allows the state to establish a new baseline of state and local expenditures for early intervention services by counting the insurance revenue towards federal maintenance of effort requirements in the next federal fiscal year pursuant to federal regulations. This bill passed the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor.

H.B. No. 5105 AN ACT CONCERNING THE JOB EXPANSION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM AND INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING CERTAIN SERVICES FROM THE DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES allows employers that hire individuals receiving employment services through the Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Developmental Services to qualify for the job expansion tax credit program (an incentive for employers to hire individuals with intellectual and mental health disabilities). This bill made it through the Commerce and Public Health Committees but died in the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee. The bill was then passed as part of the June 12, 2012 Special Session in **H.B. No. 6001 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS OF THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2012. H.B. No. 5367 AN ACT CONCERNING COMPETENCY TO STAND TRIAL** allows a court to receive notice if a defendant was released from commitment to the Commissioner of Developmental Services prior to the expiration of the statute of limitations for the crime with which the defendant was charged. This bill passed the House but died in the Senate. The bill was then passed as part of the June 12, 2012 Special Session in **H.B. No. 6001 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS OF THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2012.**

Other significant legislation of interest:

Public Act 12-104. H.B. No. 5557 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2013 makes midterm budget adjustments for fiscal year 2013 which begins on July 1, 2012. The budget continues to fund Department of Developmental Services' operational needs while requiring continued efforts to streamline and reduce costs where possible. This bill passed the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor. The Legislature reconvened on June 12, 2012 for a special session to pass budget implementer bills.

Public Act 12-33. H.B. 5312, AN ACT CREATING A PROCESS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN WITH THE STATE. This bill was of significant interest to many DDS families during the session. Among other provisions related to certain family child care providers, this bill allows personal care attendants (PCAs) to collectively bargain with the state through an employee organization (union) over reimbursement rates, benefits, payment procedures, contract grievance arbitration, training professional development and other requirements and opportunities. PCAs provide home and community based personal care services to the elderly and persons with disabilities through Medicaid waivers that allow services to be provided in their own homes. The bill specifically applies to the individual and family supports waiver and the comprehensive waiver programs administered by DDS. This bill passed the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor.

Public Act 12-136. H.B. No. 5437 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFINITIONS OF MENTAL RETARDATION AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY. This bill updates the statutory definition of "mental retardation" and "intellectual disability" to mean (1) a significant limitation in intellectual functioning and (2) deficits in adaptive behavior that

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Transitioning to a New Funding System

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has begun the transition to a new funding system for the individuals it supports. The new system will change the way individuals are allocated funding to purchase residential and day services. It is based on three guiding principles:

1. All individuals receive funding based on their level of need.
2. All individuals will have the freedom to choose who they want to provide their supports.
3. All individuals will pay only for the supports they use.

As the current practice, individuals will be allocated funding for either day supports, residential supports or both. Individuals will be able to choose a qualified provider to provide these supports or self-hire a staff through an individual budget. These will not change. The change will be in the way the funding is determined and the amount a provider can charge an individual for their supports.

In 2007, DDS implemented a standardized tool called the CT Level of Need Assessment and Screening Tool (LON) to assess each individual's level of need for supports and services. Case Managers complete a LON in conjunction with people who know the individual well; family, friends and providers. Key areas assessed by the tool are: health and medical; personal care activities; daily living activities; behavior; safety; support for waking hours, overnight support, comprehension and understanding, communication; transportation; social life, recreation, community activities; unpaid caregiver support. A web-based data application generates a composite LON score.

In January 2012, DDS began the implementation of new day support rates based on the person's Level of Need. A work group consisting of both DDS and private agency staff developed the rates and a plan to transition the current funding to the new rate system over a seven and a half year period. This lengthy period will allow providers time to adjust to the new system. Individuals who receive their supports from a qualified provider will receive the same amount of supports they receive under the current system. The funding providers receive may change. It will be the task of the provider to adjust expenses to match the new funding system. Persons who have individualized budgets will be asked to adjust their budgets to match the new funding system.

The new residential funding system is currently in development. A work group consisting of parents, self-advocates, DDS and private staff has started meeting to develop rates for the Community Living Arrangement (CLA) Program, Continuous Residential Support (CRS) program, and Individualized Home Supports (IHS). The new residential funding rate system is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2013 and will also transition over seven and half years.

For those families who direct hire for their day services, the case manager will be working with you on developing the individual budget.

For the latest information about the new funding system, please visit the DDS website at: www.ct.gov/dds. Click on the left side of the home page, Provider Gateway and click on Rate Transition.

Legislative Update *continued from page four*

originated during the developmental period before age 18. The revised definition does not change eligibility for services provided through the Department of Developmental Services. This bill passed the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor.

DDS Legislative E-Mail Updates: If you would like to receive DDS Legislative E-Mail Updates during the next legislative session or at other times throughout the year, please e-mail Rod.OConnor@ct.gov to sign up. Legislative updates will contain information on pending legislation, committee meetings, public hearings and legislative sessions of interest to DDS and its stakeholders.
www.ct.gov/dds

Employment First Website



The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has completely refurbished the Employment and Day Services information on the agency's website at www.ct.gov/dds. The launching of the new web pages was one of the many activities that DDS was able to complete through funding received from a Connect-Ability Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. The Connect-Ability funds were used to hire consultants from the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) University of Massachusetts to assist with this and other projects. In addition to the new website, the collaboration between ICI and DDS produced a comprehensive employment guide for families and a cache of employment resources for providers, employees and individuals who receive supports from DDS.

In 2011, DDS adopted a new Employment First Policy which states: "In order for individuals with an intellectual disability to achieve full citizenship, employment opportunities in fully integrated work settings are the first priority. This shall be the first option explored in the service planning for working age adults. This process will begin during the child's school aged years and may even begin prior to school."

The Employment First Initiative was developed to assist families and individuals in finding integrated competitive employment rather than segregated employment, facility based employment or day programs. Employment is a means to higher wages and provides opportunities for people to be part of their local community. Work gives all people a greater sense of competence and self worth and with support, individuals have the opportunity to maintain jobs, work for real wages and build relationships with non-disabled co-workers.

"Employment is the first goal of our five year plan," said DDS Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D. "We are striving to increase the number of individuals who are gainfully employed, including self-employment and double the number of people who are competitively employed. The Employment First Initiative is the roadmap to reach our goal."

DDS has seen a downward trend since 2005 for individuals working in competitive employment. Of the most recent high school graduates with intellectual disability, only 10% obtained employment making at least minimum wage. The goal is to turn the curve on this trend. The department has already begun to work with the high school graduates from last year and will continue each year requiring real employment outcomes for the graduates. For more information about the Employment First Initiative and Employment and Day Services, please visit the DDS website at www.ct.gov/dds.

DDS Website Wealth of Information ... www.ct.gov/dds

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) website currently has more than 4,000 pages of information and during the past year, the website had more than 1.9 million hits. It is a wealth of information ranging from contact information for all the DDS offices to policies and procedures that effect individuals and their families who receive supports and services from the agency.

If you need to know how to request a PAR, find a provider or call your helpline, it can be found on the website. During the next year, the agency will be updating the website to be more "family" friendly. Our goal is to help you navigate through the DDS system and provide you with the tools you need to gather information and make the right choices for your loved one.

In addition to the main website, don't forget to visit the Consumer Corner website at: www.dds.ct.gov/consumercorner

www.ct.gov/dds

DDS Launches New Consumer Website

*Welcome to
Consumer Corner!*



In 2011, Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D. launched the new Consumer Corner website at the department's headquarters in Hartford. The website at www.dds.ct.gov/consumer-corner was developed specifically for individuals with intellectual disability and their families served by DDS.

The DDS Office of Communications collaborated with the California Department of Developmental Services to create the "consumer friendly" site. It focuses on the needs of individuals from transportation to employment, visiting the doctor to a household budget and most importantly emergency and safety information. It offers links to national organizations and state and federal government websites.

The website was designed and developed with the assistance of the Connecticut Bureau of Enterprise Technology (BEST) Portal Maintenance Group. The creation of the website used available resources at no additional cost to the state.

Commissioner Message *continued from page one*

Mr. Drexler has a significant history working in many leadership roles at DDS as well as experience working in the private provider community.

We've also just recently named our Regional Director team. Regional Directors are primary administrators for each of the three DDS regions. (see page two)

In addition, two DDS Employees were recently promoted to key positions in the agency. Robin Wood was appointed Director of Family Support Strategies and Advocacy and Siobhan Morgan as Director of Waiver Services. I am extremely pleased with these appointments which will enhance the advocacy and leadership of the department. Ms. Wood will play a special role advocating with and for the people we support and their families while helping to implement the Five Year Plan and make the systems changes needed for the future. In her new roll, Ms. Morgan is uniquely qualified to help us demystify Medicaid regulations and help us refine our resources to provide services that reflect our people and families first mission.

We have also interviewed for a new Director of the Autism Division. This position will lead the agency's work around a new Autism Waiver and work collaboratively with other state departments and community based service systems that support children and adults on the autism spectrum.

With the change in Regional Directors, some new Assistant Regional Directors and the positions noted above, we will be seeing more leadership changes in our agency than has been experienced in many years.

Again, I thank you for your continued partnership with DDS and look forward to hearing from many of you as stakeholders in the process of implementing the department's Five Year Plan and specifically the new mission and vision.

Direct to Families

Department of Developmental Services
460 Capitol Ave
Hartford, CT 06106

People and Families First

DDS Develops New Mission and Vision for the Department

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) recently released a new “draft” mission and vision for the agency for public input;

Mission

The mission of the Department of Developmental Services is to partner with the individuals we support and their families, to support lifelong planning and to join with others to create and promote meaningful opportunities for individuals to fully participate as valued members of their communities.

Vision

All citizens supported by the Department of Developmental Services are valued contributors to their communities as family members, friends, neighbors, students, employees, volunteers, members of civic and religious associations, voters and advocates. These individuals:

- 1. Live, learn, work and enjoy community life in places where they can use their personal strengths, talents and passions.*
- 2. Have safe, meaningful and empowering relationships.*
- 3. Have families who feel supported from the earliest years and throughout their lifetimes.*
- 4. Have lifelong opportunities and the assistance to learn things that matter to them.*
- 5. Make informed choices and take responsibility for their lives and experience the dignity of risk.*
- 6. Earn money to facilitate personal choices.*
- 7. Know their rights and responsibilities and pursue opportunities to live the life they choose.*

Comments received by September 15, 2012 to dds.co@ct.gov or by U.S. mail to DDS - Mission/Vision, 460 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT, 06106 will be considered. Once the agency has finalized its new statement, a comprehensive strategy will be developed for the implementation. The new mission is expected to be a value statement that offers useful measures for determining how well the department is providing support.

www.ct.gov/dds