

December 18, 2016

To DDS:

I am the mother of a 25 year old young man, Oliver, who has Autism and Intellectual Disability. He has been on the DDS waiting list for many years but I am told, and have been told there are no placements other than those for the homeless (or other emergencies). The birth of a child with multiple disabilities causes enormous strain on families. Oliver needed an enormous amount of attention and services as he grew to where he is now. I am now in my sixties and my husband, who is Oliver's stepfather, is in his seventies. Oliver still requires considerable attention and desperately needs a life of his own. He cannot do this without DDS support.

DDS MUST create a plan that will eliminate all DDS waiting lists and reallocate funds from institutions, overtime and waste to create a sustainable properly funded system of community based supports.

Oliver should not be forced to live with aging parents until they die and then get an emergency placement with all the upheaval that would entail. Oliver and young adults in similar situations need a transition to adult life that is well-informed. Short of providing a planned transition at the appropriate time in his life, Oliver will be left out in the cold, with a likely decline in his capabilities as he would be alone, afraid, too anxious to communicate and dependent on a failed system.

We need to act now to prevent the decline of so many young adults with disabilities who need supports at the proper time in their lives, to live capably and to their potential and NOT be a burden to society.

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