

From: Nancy Clarke [<mailto:neclarke08@gmail.com>]  
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To: ddsct.co  
Subject: Five Year Plan

Testimony: DDS Five Year Plan: 2017-2022

My name is Nancy Clarke. I live with my husband and our 23 year old son. Our 19 year old daughter is currently away at college. Our son has autism and is intellectually disabled. He has a Level of Need (LON) of 7 and is on the "Waiting List" for a residential placement as a Priority 1. I have just read DDS's Five Year Plan for 2017-2022 and I must say, I find it extraordinarily disappointing and depressing. In this 30 page Five Year Plan, this is how the the waiting list was addressed:

"Residential Waiting List Definitions Implementation – In calendar year 2016, DDS completed a project establishing recommendations for clear, streamlined categories and definitions for the DDS residential waiting list. After consistent feedback from multiple stakeholders to reconsider how this information is presented, the project team has created a commonsense approach to categorizing and defining the needs represented by the traditional residential waiting list. The implementation of these recommendations will require a renewed effort, particularly as changes are rolled out to regional staff and external stakeholders."

That's it.

In other words, other than reworking definitions and categories, there continues to be no ACTUAL PLAN to address almost 2,000 ACTUAL people who are on this list, not to mention the other, new waiting lists that are being created and added to every day.

I know that shutting down Southbury Training School is not the only way to cut costs at DDS, but when I read that 2016 Staff costs alone equalled \$82 million to support 300 individuals I am beyond outraged. I am outraged because this system which chooses to acquiesce to spend enormous amounts of money on an outdated, inefficient, and I would argue, not a Least Restrictive setting for its consumers, is the same system which, by virtue of its complete inaction, is saying that it is okay for families like mine to care for our family members at home, and who have a HIGHER Level of Need (LON) than the average LON of those 300 individuals at Southbury. Oh, and the system is also saying we must do this until the day my husband and I both die. And on that day, that is the day our son will transition to an emergency placement, as he tries to understand what happened to his parents and who these new strangers are.

I do not understand how this is referred to as a "Plan". It amounts to cruel inaction.

Please do not forget the people who are waiting for services of all kinds!