

Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD)

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MARCH 2017

JIM COPELAND APPOINTED NEW DDSD DIRECTOR



Earlier this month, Secretary Lynn Gallagher announced that Jim Copeland has been selected as the new Director of the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division. He will start on March 27th.

Jim has spent more than forty years providing services to people with intellectual disabilities. His career has taken him to six different states. He has worked in public facilities, private facilities and not for profit organizations. He has family experience with developmental disabilities and a family member who received services in New Mexico under the DD Waiver.

Jim joins us from Alta Mira Specialized Services where he has served as Executive Director for the past 14 years. Alta Mira provides services under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, Mi Via Waiver, the Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program, and the State General Fund Program. He has a Master's degree from Louisiana Tech University. His wife is a Professor in the Special Education Program at the University of New Mexico.

DDSD is responsible for a budget of approximately \$427 million including Federal Medicaid funds and 188 positions statewide. The Mission of DDSD is to effectively administer a system of person-centered community supports and services that promotes positive outcomes for all stakeholders with a primary focus on assisting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to exercise their right to make choices, grow and contribute to their community.

Secretary Gallagher recognizes that Jim's knowledge and expertise will help to assure the continuation of the direction of the program and services and asks everyone to please join her in welcoming Jim to DDSD.

Contributor: Marc Kolman, DDSD Deputy Director

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS TOWN HALLS

On February 1, 2017, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) in partnership with the Know Your Rights Campaign Steering Committee began conducting statewide town hall meetings for waiver participants, advocates, family members and guardians.



The purpose of the Know Your Rights town hall meetings is to engage people with disabilities and advocates to strengthen advocacy, raise awareness, and educate communities across the state that people with disabilities are entitled to rights like everyone else. Additionally, the town halls are a forum to inform waiver participants, families and guardians about the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Final Rule: HCBS Settings Requirements.

The KYR Steering Committee is made up of active participants from New Mexico Allies for Advocacy, the ARC of New Mexico, Case Management Action and Advocacy Council, New Mexico Autism Society, Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Disability Rights New Mexico, Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, Governor's Commission on Disability, Human Services Department, Parents Reaching Out, San Juan Center for Independence, Association of Developmental Disabilities Community Providers, Family Living Provider Association and the Center for Development and Disability.

The collaboration on the town halls has been amazing! The attendance of advocates, family members, guardians, providers, professionals and others has exceeded our expectations; about 223 people have participated so far in Albuquerque and Santa Fe alone.

Providers, vendors, case managers and consultants are encouraged to support individuals with disabilities, their families and guardians to participate in the town hall meetings to receive information and to share their stories.

DDSD and the Know Your Rights Campaign Steering Committee look forward to our continued partnership to renew our commitment to support individuals to make informed choices, ensure individuals are treated with respect, participate in all aspects of the community they choose, and are viewed as valued and equal citizens. Upcoming town hall meetings are listed below:

Roswell—March 7th

Roswell School Pueblo Auditorium
300 North Kentucky, 5:00-7:30

Gallup—March 14th

Educational Development Center
1000 East Aztec Avenue, 5:00-7:30

Farmington—March 29th

San Juan Center for Independence
1204 San Juan Boulevard, 5:00-7:30

Silver City—April 3rd

Hidalgo Medical Services Community Health Center
1007 North Pope Street

You can access information about the CMS Final Rule: HCBS Settings Requirements on the Access Community Together website at <http://actnewmexico.org/>.

Contributor: Jennifer Rodriguez, DDSD Community Programs Bureau Chief; Roberta Duran, DDSD Deputy Director & Wendy Corry, Corry Consulting

DDSD LAUNCHES NEW AUTISM FLEXIBLE SERVICES PROGRAM

The Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD) is excited to have launched a new **Autism Flexible Services Program** for children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who are not eligible for Medicaid and their families. This program is funded through an appropriation from the legislature that was previously used to fund the Adaptive Skills Building Program. Families can access up to \$2,500 for a variety of autism supports and services that are flexible to meet the needs of children and families across New Mexico.

Families are excited about the new program. One parent said *"...thank you all for starting this great program. It's so hard for many of the ASD families to afford outside therapies and with this help we will be able to do so much more for our kids."* Another parent pointed out *"Autism treatment is not only difficult to find, but difficult to pay for. Thank you for providing this support to so many people."*

This program was developed in collaboration with a number of organizations, including the Autism Society, Parents Reaching Out, the ARC, Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Governor's Commission of Disability, and the UNM – Autism Program. These organizations also helped us get the word out statewide regarding the new program to families with a child with autism.

We are excited that to date we have received 94 applications and have been able to approve 74. The total funding approved at this time is approximately \$113,000. Several applications are pending additional information and a few were denied. Through the application, family's propose the services that they would like to access for their child and family. Services approved include: Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA); other therapeutic services (including speech therapy, counselling and behavioral supports); recreational and social skills activities, as well as a camp for children with ASD.

Thanks to the team at DDSD who have worked hard to make this new program a reality including: Juanita Salas, Sbicca Brodeur (who recently moved to a job with DOH) and Joyce Solisz. Joyce said "I feel honored that I have the privilege of being part of helping families access services for their child with autism. Talking to these parents has given me a new appreciation of what they face raising a child with autism".

More information on the Autism Flexible Services Program is available on the UNM Autism Programs portal including the application <http://www.cdd.unm.edu/autism/portal/index.html>

Folks may be interested to learn that DDSD provides a range of other autism supports and services including: recreational respite; training (online and workshops); technical assistance to teams; diagnostic evaluations and the summer camp for children with ASD. ABA services are also now available through Medicaid and under private health plans.

Contributor: Andrew Gomm, DDSD Child & Family Supports Bureau Chief & Juanita Salas, DDSD Soc./Comm. Services Coord. Supervisor

TRADITIONAL DD WAIVER

The renewal of the Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DDW) with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is moving at full speed. The State of New Mexico is on track to submit the waiver renewal application to CMS in February 2017. Public comment to the draft application was submitted during a 60- day public input period, which included Tribal Notification. Look for the State responses to the public comment on the Human Services Department website coming soon. Thanks to all those who provided comment to help the state operate a great waiver program. DDSD will carry out requirements from the CMS Final Rule: Home and Community Based Settings Requirements also known in New Mexico as the Know Your Rights Campaign to assist people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities I/DD to live a safe and quality life, adding to our New Mexico communities.

Next steps in the DD Waiver renewal process include reissuing the DD Waiver Service Standards and revising the provider application process. Stay tuned for more information and ways to provide feedback as these projects roll out. Check the Act New Mexico website or contact DD Waiver Program Manager Christina Hill at christina.hill@state.nm.us for more information.

Contributor: Christina Hill, DDSD DD Waiver Program Manager

ACQ—Advisory Council on Quality Supports for People with Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

The **Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ)** is a group of individuals, vetted through the Governors Office, made up of parents, participants, advocacy groups and provider agencies who work with state partners including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), Mi Via, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), and the Human Services Department (HSD) to resolve issues facing the disability community. The diversity of the group and the program structure knowledge that state partners provide allow for a unique ability to address issues head on and work them out as they may affect participants. The council creates advice on policy and process for state partners and the Governor. Please find out more about the meetings and projects this council is working on by visiting <http://actnewmexico.org/partners.html>. DDSD and ACT will be updating their web sites to give you the names and contact information of ACQ members so you can give them your input.

Mission Statement: The **Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ)** advises the New Mexico Department of Health on the systems guiding the provisions of services and supports that assist people with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families to be fully included in New Mexico communities.

Vision Statement: People with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families receive the supports and services needed to live inclusively and as independently as possible within their community.

Core Values:

Community Inclusion
Everyone is Valued
Self-Determination
 Respect
 Quality of Life
 Quality of Services
 Dignity of Risk
 Support Networks

The Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ) underwent a strategic planning process-WISE Planning. This process allows equal voice for every member participating to address their own needs. Once the process has been put in place, patterns are revealed that can guide a group to shared goals and interests.

The ACQ identified three main Goals:

- 1) Insure Quality Services
- 2) Increase System Capacity
- 3) Improve Communication with Stakeholders

These are strong broad goals the ACQ might be working on for years but under each of these goals are Objectives and Action Steps. These are the "Boots on the Ground" changes that can occur, making small but significant differences when consistently met. The ACQ's process is to work on the Objectives and Action Steps and, as they are completed, identify new Objectives and Action Steps that will serve the goals. Next newsletter we will report on what the Objectives are and how we are meeting them.

Find us at <http://actnewmexico.org/partners.html> or contact a member if you have an issue you would like to address. Members submit **PARTNER forms**. This form is a documentation process for submitting requests for information or seeking clarification on policies regarding services for individuals with disabilities. You can ask a member to submit one on your behalf.

Mi Via Waiver Amendment

An amendment to the Mi Via Waiver was submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in January 2017 for review and approval. The primary purpose of the amendment is to update the estimated number of individuals to be served under the waiver and include clarifying language on related goods, transportation, and respite services. Upon approval of the amendment by CMS, the Mi Via Regulations and Standards will be revised.

Contributor: Christine Wester, DDS, Mi Via Program Manager

Transition to Employment Program

DDSD is proud to announce the new, "Transition to Employment" program!

The Transition to Employment program is designed to provide opportunities for employment to individuals who might not otherwise have access to employment supports. The program is intended to give individuals who are preparing to exit/graduate from high school or have recently exited or graduated from high school the opportunity to receive supports for community employment as adults. Individuals who are between the ages of 17 and 25 are eligible for this program. The individual must be on the Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division Central Registry. Individuals who are already receiving services through the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver or the Mi Via Waiver are not eligible for this program.

The Transition to Employment program will fund up to 10 hours per month of Follow-Along supports and/or up to \$460 for transportation supports to/from work. Please visit the www.ACTNewMexico.org website to obtain the application. For questions, please contact Carrie Roberts at Carrie.Roberts@state.nm.us or Juanita Salas at Juanita.Salas@state.nm.us.

Contributor: Carrie Roberts, DDS Community Inclusion Manager

Provider Data Summary Release

On February 23, 2017, DDSD released a Provider Data Summary in its efforts to promote informed decision making in the selection of providers of residential, employment and community supports. This summary is a list of organized data with provider specific information regarding performance in key areas. These key areas illustrate the number of Higher-Level Deficiencies (Conditions of Participation) and Internal Review Committee Actions.

Future data summaries will include abuse, neglect and exploitation data. Individuals, care takers, case managers and team members are encouraged to utilize this information to educate themselves and those they care for on key areas of system performance. The data summaries will be located on the ACT New Mexico website alongside the Provider Selection Guide. See www.ActNewMexico.org.

This initiative has been a highly collaborative effort including many internal and external stakeholders. DDSD's Data Management Unit spearheaded the initiative with significant support from Division of Health Improvement staff. An amazing amount of input and support came from within DDSD and we received input from external stakeholders provided by the Advisory Committee on Quality (ACQ) and ADDCP (Association of Developmental Disabilities Community Providers).

Contributor: Steve Schan, DDS Management Analyst & Chris Futey, DDS Bureau of Systems Improvement Bureau Chief

The Speed of Trust

The Speed of Trust

Our late Secretary, Retta Ward, saw great value in the philosophy outlined in *The Speed of Trust*, a New York Times Best Seller, Stephen M.R. Covey that asserts that trust and the speed at which trust is established with all stakeholders is an essential and critical element in successful organizations.

The DDSD Community Programs Bureau (CPB) has read this book and spent time at bureau meetings engaging in meaningful discussions around this topic. The CPB would like to share the main components of this book through a series of three newsletter articles in order to foster business and working relationships by improving communication, teamwork, accountability and relationships with stakeholders.

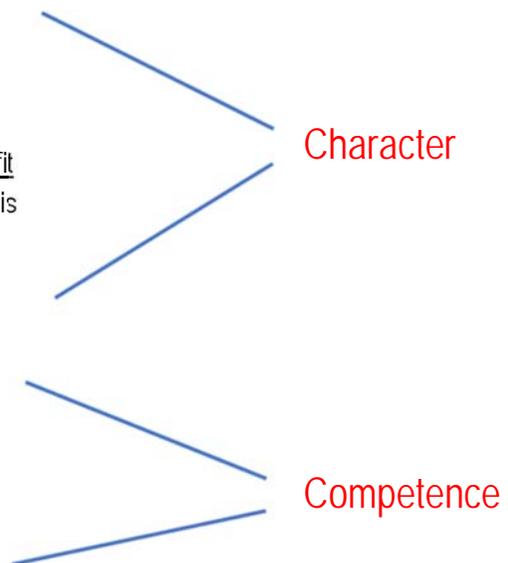
THE FOUR CORES OF CREDIBILITY

INTEGRITY – walk your talk; have the courage to act in accordance with your values and beliefs.

INTENT – motives, agendas and resulting behavior; trust grows when our motives are straightforward and based on mutual benefit. When we suspect a hidden agenda or we believe someone is not acting in our best interests, we are suspicious about everything they say and do.

CAPABILITIES – the abilities we have that inspire confidence: talents, attitudes, skills, knowledge, style.

RESULTS – this refers to our track record, performance and getting the right things done. If not, it diminishes our credibility.



Take a look at the structure of a tree.

The roots represent Integrity and Intent; together they form Character. The branches and leaf structure represent Capabilities and Results; together they form Competency. These are the 4 Cores of Credibility *The Speed of Trust* is based upon.

Once it's rooted, it's always there – in all aspects of your life.



Statewide Transition Plan Initial Approval!

DDSD is proud to announce that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has granted NM an **Initial Approval** of our Statewide Transition Plan (STP) to bring settings into compliance with the federal home and community based services settings requirements (CMS Final Rule: HCBS Settings Requirements.) Approval was granted because of the state's completion of a systemic assessment. Included in the STP are the outcomes of the systemic assessment, clearly outlined remediation strategies to rectify issues that the systemic assessment uncovered, and indication that NM is actively working on the remediation strategies.

In order to receive a **Final Approval** from CMS additional requirements need to be met.

DDSD is pleased to inform you that we are moving forward with two important activities in implementing NM's STP. These two activities include: (a) a comprehensive validation of provider self-assessment results that were completed in 2015; and (b) interviews with a sample of participants and guardians. DDSD has contracted with the Center for Development and Disability (CDD) at the University of New Mexico to implement these two activities. The information from these two validation activities will be used, among other things, to inform training and technical assistance to provider agencies as we move to come into full compliance with the settings requirements. Full compliance must be achieved by March 17, 2019.

Information on the validation and interview processes will be available soon from the CDD and will be posted on DDSD's ACT New Mexico website. DDSD wants providers, parents and guardians to be fully informed about the process before it begins. The CDD will be available to answer any questions you may have, including what will happen during the setting validation visits and interviews with consumers/guardians.

The CDD will be reaching out to providers/vendors to request any additional information necessary to begin the validation activities. DDSD thanks our providers and vendors in advance for full cooperation with the CDD and active participation in NM's STP activities.

You can access information about the CMS Final Rule: HCBS Settings Requirements on the Access Community Together website at <http://actnewmexico.org/>.

Contributor: Jennifer Rodriguez, DDSD Community Programs Bureau Chief

Inter-agency Coordination Council (ICC) & Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ)

Future ICC Meeting Dates—Contact Suzanne Pope at supope@msn.com

April 27th—Roswell, NM

May 31st & June 1st – Preschool for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Albuquerque

November 16th— Parents Reaching Out, Albuquerque

Future ACQ Meeting Dates—Contact Kathy Baker at kathy.baker@state.nm.us

April 13, 2017 – BOW 17th Floor Conference Room – Albuquerque, NM

June 8, 2017 – BOW 17th Floor Conference Room – Albuquerque, NM

August 10, 2017 – BOW 2nd Floor Executive Conference Room – Albuquerque, NM

October 12, 2017 – BOW 2nd Floor Executive Conference Room – Albuquerque, NM

December 14, 2017 – BOW 2nd Floor Executive Conference Room – Albuquerque, NM

Resources, Resources, Resources

There are some wonderful resources for individuals with disabilities & their families in New Mexico. In this edition of the DDSD Newsletter, we are offering information that you may find very helpful. The University of New Mexico, Center for Development and Disability (UNM-CDD) provides valuable information in several ways, one of which is through their Medicaid Tip Sheets. The following Tip Sheets are available through their website, <http://www.cdd.unm.edu/infonet/publicationContent/tipsheets.html>, or in person at CDD Offices at 2200 Menaul Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107.

- Centennial Care Tip Sheet
- Applying for the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver
- Allocation to the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver
- Coordination of Long Term Services (CoLTS)
- Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program:
- Medically Fragile (MF) Waiver
- Brain Injury Services Fund (BISF) Tip Sheet
- Mi Via Self-Directed Waiver
- State General Funds Program (SGF)
- EPSDT (Medicaid for Children) and Waiver Programs
- EPSDT (Medicaid for Children)
- ISD Income Supports Division Offices Tip Sheet
- Medicare Basics

These Tip Sheets are available in both English or Spanish. For more information, call 1-(505) 272-0281, or 1-800-827-6380.

Contributor: Lisa Storti, DDSD Constituent Supports Manager

The Medically Fragile Case Management Program (MFCMP)

On January 31, 2017, parents and family members of individuals who are medically fragile came together to learn, network and enjoy lunch together. The Medically Fragile Case Management Program (MFCMP), located at the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability, organized the lunch meeting. The MFCMP provides registered nurse case management services to individuals statewide who are medically fragile and on the Medically Fragile Waiver and those who are medically fragile and receive services through EPSDT.

Parents and family members discussed issues relevant to individuals who are medically fragile including their joys and challenges and also learned about the CMS Final Rule regarding settings and the Know Your Rights Campaign. Family members also visited the Information Network and Library at the Center for Development and Disability. Family members overwhelmingly agreed that this meeting was very beneficial, and they look forward to more meetings of this type in the future.

Many thanks to Dion's Pizza for providing lunch for everyone.



Contributor: Lori Steward, Medically Fragile Case Management Program Family Specialist

Outside Review

The Continual Outside Review & Evaluation (CORE) through the University of New Mexico, Continuum of Care Project, has been operational since November 2, 2015 to provide clinical review of all services for adults 18 and older who are not Jackson Class Members.

Over the past year, there have been many challenges in the administrative process functions that have contributed to the delay in processing budgets. DDSD has worked with stakeholders, providers, case managers, the Human Services Department (HSD) and the CORE team to identify solutions to streamline the process. Thanks to the collaboration from our stakeholders, new processes have been implemented with the goal of reducing Requests for Information (RFIs) and delays in budget processing. DDSD and the CORE have implemented a clinical documentation checklist that assists case managers in outlining the proper documents needed for clinical review by the CORE. The CORE has also worked to reduce and clarify the verbiage found in RFIs, to make it more clear to case managers how to properly respond to the RFI. DDSD outlined statewide procedures that will allow for imminent submissions to be completed in the minimum amount of days needed.

As was the case a year ago, anyone experiencing delays have been directed to work through their case manager. DDSD continues to work with case managers to identify where we can assist them with responding to outstanding RFIs to move budgets through the system. You are always welcome to participate in the monthly Outside Review Implementation workgroup that meets the third Tuesday of each month from 1:30-3:30 at the Albuquerque DDSD office (17th Floor) or call into 1-888-850-4523, passcode 230777. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Outside Review Program Manager, Jonathan S. "Steve" Baca at jonathans.baca@state.nm.us.

Contributor: Jonathan S. Baca, DDSD Outside Review Program Manager

March is National Disabilities Month

In 1987 President Ronald Reagan first declared March as National Disability Month, and since that time this has been an opportunity for states across America to call on Americans to provide the "encouragement and opportunities" necessary for people with developmental disabilities to reach their full potential. National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month remains an opportunity to promote respect for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and to educate others about the abilities people with I/DD possess.

In New Mexico, the ARC has declared a grassroots initiative to help raise awareness about individuals with I/DD, by asking that if you are a person with I/DD or know a person with I/DD, that you simply make plans to be out somewhere public on Saturday, March 29th. The purpose of this is to help raise awareness and generate some conversation about individuals with I/DD – encouraging a greater understanding among people without a disability. The ARC is simply asking that you make plans to go shopping, to the park, or restaurant- having fun and showing others that we are not so different after all. For more information, contact the ARC at www.arcnm.org or 1-800-358-6493.



Contributor: Lisa Storti, DDSD Constituent Supports Manager

DDSD Visits the New Mexico Commission for the Blind

On February 14th, 2017 the Metro Community Inclusion Coordinators (Anna Zollinger, Jaclyn Sanchez, Terri Ann Moore and Frank Gaona) presented a training at the Vocational Rehabilitation program at the NM Commission for the Blind in Albuquerque. The mission of the NM Commission for the Blind is to serve blind and low vision citizens of New Mexico to live productive lives in their communities. The Commission wants to serve as a knowledgeable resource to individuals and their families to assist them in navigating a process that may feel daunting. Retaining or qualifying for DD Waiver services is essential for a subset of the population they serve. The Commission has five regional offices around the state, and recently welcomed new Counselors to their team.

Our team, led by Frank Gaona, facilitated a 90 minute training on the DD Waiver Program for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. The training addressed the different waiver programs, eligibility, and had a focus on the new Employment First Policy.

The training was timely because the Vocational Rehabilitation Program assists people with vision loss in obtaining, maintaining, or advancement in employment. In addition to vision loss, a percentage of the population served also presents with intellectual disabilities. While some individuals excel on the job with natural supports, others require supported or customized employment to participate in competitive, integrated employment. Qualifying for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver is a key component to enable individuals to maintain their success.

Daphne Mitchell, Program Manager for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program said:

“Your team (Frank, Jackie, Terri Ann, and Anna) did an excellent job. They were extremely knowledgeable of the waiver and affiliate programs. My team felt their understanding of changes with the Waiver was expanded. The information and videos pertaining to customized employment were exemplary. Also, they felt that the resources for contacts in DDSD to help the individuals we support through the eligibility process will prove invaluable. ”

On behalf of DDSD- special thanks to the Community Inclusion Coordinators for making the most of this opportunity!

Contributor: Jason Cornwell, DDSD Assistant Metro Regional Director

Transition from CPR to IQR

Times are changing and so is the Community Practice Review (CPR). For the past two years, the Department of Health has been working in collaboration with the Jackson Community Monitor, Lyn Rucker, to develop a new review which will replace the CPR. This new review is called the Individual Quality Review (IQR) and will serve as a more updated and robust tool to assist in measuring the status of Jackson Class Members. The IQR will begin implementation this Spring.

During this 2017 transition year, the IQR Reviewers will be a mix of the current reviewers provided by the Community Monitor plus Division of Health Improvement (DHI) Reviewers. DHI is currently in the process of hiring 5 reviewers (healthcare surveyors) to conduct the IQR, 1 supervisor and 1 clerk. It is the Department's intent for the IQR to be housed within DHI at the end of this transitional year. The Community Monitor will work in conjunction with DOH to facilitate this transition process and provide oversight as we move forward. IQR follow-up on Findings and Recommendations will continue to be overseen by DDSD as is current practice.

The Community Monitor's website has been in place for several years and contains Jackson and CPR information, reports, and tools. Very soon, the new IQR tool titled "I Have a Good Life!" and the 2017 IQR schedule will be available on the website as well. Go to www.jacksoncommunityreview.org . Please look for upcoming stakeholder meetings to discuss the transition to the Individual Quality Review.

Contacts: Lyn Rucker, Community Monitor, (785) 258-2214 rpald@aol.com

Sally Karingada, Statewide CPR Lead, (505) 841-5823 sally.karingada@state.nm.us

Valerie Valdez, OMB Bureau Chief (575) 649-7912 valerie.valdez@state.nm.us

Contributor: Sally Karingada, DDSD Litigation Management

Parents Reaching Out (PRO)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

When a small group of New Mexico parents of children with disabilities met around a kitchen table in 1980, they had no notion that the organization that they envisioned would grow into a statewide non-profit organization serving thousands of New Mexico families. Parents Reaching Out (PRO) has continued to evolve and meet the needs of families and youth with disabilities and complex medical needs. This is accomplished every day through providing individualized assistance to families in addition to workshops and trainings.

One of the most visible and exciting projects of PRO is our annual Family Leadership Conference. Although it has grown to include over 300 participants, the conference has remained focused on helping families and young people to develop skills, gather information and make connections. This year, the 2-day conference will take place at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Albuquerque on Thursday, April 20 and Friday, April 21.

2017 keynote speakers are Keith Jones, President and CEO of SoulTouchin' Experiences and Dr. Lina Patel, Assistant Professor of Child and University Psychology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. As an African American community activist and entrepreneur with cerebral palsy and as a strong advocate for independent quality living in the community, Keith Jones has participated actively in various issues that face people with disabilities. Dr. Patel is the Director of Psychology for the Anna and John J. Sie Center for Down Syndrome, a multidisciplinary consultative clinic coordinating care for infants, children, teens and young adults with Down Syndrome.

In addition to keynote sessions, tracks are offered according to several different topics with a variety of break out workshops. Examples of workshops topics include Strength-based approaches to Caring for Children, How to Help Your Child with Executive Functioning, Employment First New Mexico and Youth, Arts and Social Justice. Tracks are offered in Spanish and a special track, Forward@14, is being offered to parents and youth, which will engage families in navigating the post-high school transition beginning at age 14.

This year, a Leadership Academy will be held the day before the conference for 40 family members with an interest in learning advocacy skills in order to impact systems and in having their voices heard by stakeholders.

Through many supporters, including the Family, Infant and Toddlers Program, parents are offered scholarships to participate in the Family Leadership conference. For more information or to register, please visit the PRO website at www.parentsreachingout.org or contact us at 505-247-0192.



Parents Reaching Out
Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family

Southwest Regional Office 1st Annual Appreciation Celebration

The Southeast Regional Office (SERO) hosted our 1st Annual Appreciation Celebration on December 6, 2016. SERO coordinated an event that provided a venue for providers as well as individuals served to celebrate their accomplishments achieved throughout the year. The event included certificates of appreciation for individuals, door prizes, silent auction and a pot luck. In addition, SERO wanted the opportunity to express our appreciation to each provider agency, case management agency and therapy agency for the amazing work they do every single day! Thank you for sharing all of your incredible successes!



SERO had tremendous community support and collected a total of 85 door prizes to give away during the event. In addition, Icon Cinema donated popcorn for all attendees and Christmas-by-Krebs donated enough Christmas ornaments for everyone.



I was really moved by yesterday's celebration. Standing there in the setting really brought on a stream of emotions. It's like I was able to see and remember how many people are truly "all in" for this program and more importantly our individuals. It was an experience unlike any."

Chris Padilla, SLP Direct
Therapy Services

Furthermore, we held a Silent Auction with over 40 items made by the artisans supported by each agency and every item was sold!

Our 1st Annual Appreciation Celebration was a huge success with over 100 people in attendance. We look forward to making the event even better next year and can't wait to see what dreams are fulfilled for the upcoming year! I want to thank the SERO staff who did an AMAZING job coordinating this event!

SERO would like to thank the following Sponsors: *Main Street Art Gallery, Calico Cow Quilt Shop, RDR, Apple Blossom Flower Shop, Hobby Lobby, Sears, Target, Dollar Tree, Krumland Auto, Epic Cinema, Bath & Body Works, Fatman's Jerky, House of Flowers, Starbucks, Westlake, Christmas-by-Krebs, Lykins Tire & Auto, Cattle Baron, NM Gas Co., Long John Silver, Johns Booring, Fast Lane, Peter Piper Pizza, Chaves County Citizens for Life, Tobosa, ENMRSH, CARC, Mis Amigos, High Desert, Aspire, Nezy Care, and Excel.*

Contributor: Michelle Lyon, DDSD SERO Regional Office Director

I wanted to thank you and your staff for the tremendously fun time that was had today. Seeing all of the agencies, and realizing there are so many of us, was quite the treat. I hope you know how much your efforts, and the efforts of those you work with, are appreciated."

Steve Kane, Tobosa

New Hires & Retirees

Carrie Roberts: She may not be new, but she is not old. Congrats to Carrie on her new position as Community Inclusion Manager.

Anna Zollinger: Welcome Anna, as Metro Community Inclusion Coordinator. Welcome!!

Yvonne Guerin: Welcome Yvonne to the wonderful world of DDSD Legal Support. Congrats on your new position with us.

Veronica Espinoza: Have you all heard the news. Veronica is in town!! Please Welcome Veronica as Litigation Management Supervisor.

Jason Cornwell: Hey Hey Jason! Good Luck on your new job at DDSD as Metro Region Assistant Manager.

Jocoba Vijoen: Welcome Jacoba our new Aspiration nurse. So Happy You Are Here With Us!!

Yolanda Herrera: Welcome Yolanda, Mortality Review nurse, thank you for joining us!!

Lisa Martinez: The new Statewide Case Management Coordinator in Santa Fe.

Theresa True: Contracts Manager in the Administrative Supports Bureau.

Lenny Lovato: Hired to the Metro Regional Office.

Retirement

Congrats to Christine Wester on her approaching retirement. We will all miss you and your tenacious spirit. The State of New Mexico is losing an amazing advocate for individuals with I/DD.

Contributor: Joe Anaya, DDSD Human Resources

Did You Know.....

History of Disability Rights

Through the efforts of many people, disability legislation was fueled by the Civil Rights Movement and includes but is not limited to:

- ◆ The Rehabilitation Act (1973)
- ◆ Education for all Handicapped Children Act (1975) replaced by IDEA
- ◆ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990)
- ◆ The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)
- ◆ Olmstead Act (1999)
- ◆ Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (2000)
- ◆ Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Settings Final Rule (2014)



Mission Statements:

The Mission of the New Mexico Department of Health is to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and assure safety net services for all people in New Mexico.

The Mission of the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division is to effectively administer a system of person-centered community supports and services that promotes positive outcomes for all stakeholders with a primary focus on assisting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to exercise their right to make choices, grow and contribute to their community.

ABOUT US:

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