A Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to 2016: A new year supporting and empowering people with developmental disabilities to live, learn, work and play in the community. I hope you will enjoy this new format of my newsletter. I will be publishing this every other month, and I hope you take a moment to read through it to learn important information and updates.

We have been busy at CCBDD with our Vision 2024 planning process. Since receiving news last July from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that county boards of DD in Ohio must phase out of their role as direct service providers by 2024, we have decided to use 2016 as a year to plan for our future.

Given the significance of this CMS Rule, I believe it is important to plan carefully and thoroughly for the future, with the intent of minimizing disruption to those we support and our staff. This thoughtful planning process will allow us to consider all options, seek input from you and other stakeholders, and have ample time for additional information to become available before we make any major decisions.

Please see inside for some additional information on Vision 2024 and the anticipated changes coming as a result of the CMS Rule.

More on Phasing Out of the Provision of Direct Services

This CMS Rule was created in order to eliminate the perceived conflict of interest that exists when a single agency, such as a county board of DD, is both a provider of services AND a coordinator of services, often referred to as support administration or case management.

In order to ensure compliance with this ruling, the Ohio Department of DD (DODD) has issued benchmarks that must be met. Although county boards of DD have until 2024 to completely phase out of providing direct services, DODD is requiring that annual progress be made to reduce the number of individuals served. As illustrated below, by 2020, county boards of DD can only provide direct services to 30% of individuals; private providers must be serving 70% of individuals. Currently, CCBDD is serving 58% (adult activities and employment) and 36% (transportation). Each county board of DD must also submit an annual benchmark plan to DODD, outlining how it will achieve this gradual reduction in direct services.
Ways CCBDD is Addressing This Extraordinary Change

We are using 2016 as a year to plan, focusing on the four main areas of our Vision 2024 initiative:

- **Community Engagement:** Assuring safe and accessible places and activities in the community
- **Provider Development:** Supporting provider agencies while enhancing quality and increasing capacity
- **Employment:** Preparing trained and ready employees and engaging more with local businesses
- **CCBDD’s Changing Role:** Analyzing future service models and phasing out of our role in direct services

We will continue to use person-centered planning to discover how each individual wants to spend his or her time. If someone dreams of working in a community job, we need to help make that happen. If someone wants to spend more time in small, community-based activities, we will need to coordinate that.

We will continue to develop new and different opportunities for people with disabilities to take advantage of, if they so desire. The future is about expanding and offering opportunities.

We are committed to continuing to work together with you. As we develop recommendations for the future through our Vision 2024 initiative, we will need your feedback and ideas. (Draft recommendations will be available in March; final recommendations will be completed in the fall.)

Did You Know?

People with DD found a job in the community in 2015 through employment services provided by CCBDD and its contracted provider agencies.

Glossary of Common Terms

*Provider of direct services,* also known as a direct service provider, is a person or agency supporting individuals, usually through direct contact/interaction. Day services, employment services and transportation service are all forms of a direct service currently provided by CCBDD.

*Case management* is a function provided by a Service and Support Administrator (usually referred to as an SSA or SA) that includes coordinating and authorizing services, developing person-centered individual service plans (ISP), and providing individuals/family members with resources and linkages that address their needs and goals.

The *Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services* is the federal agency that administers Medicaid waivers, such as the Home and Community-Based Services waivers (like Level 1, Individual Options, and SELF).
March is DD Awareness Month.

This year’s theme, What’s Your Story, is designed to capture the interests, abilities and personalities of people with developmental disabilities. Through stories, we can educate the community on how we are all connected, sharing similar goals, hopes and dreams.

Each of us has a story to tell.

We hope you join us in celebrating this month by sharing your story, whether you are an individual with a disability, a parent or family member, a volunteer or a member of the community.

Here are just a few examples of how you can participate:

Post your story, photo, inspirational quote, link or more on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CuyahogaBDD.

Tweet about what makes you special at www.twitter.com/CuyahogaBDD and use #MYSTORY.

Tell your story through art. (A picture is worth a thousand words.)

Be inspired by Kamila and others who are sharing their story at www.CuyahogaBDD.org.

Coming Up

CCBDD Board Meetings
Feb. 25, March 24 and April 28
Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m.
CCBDD Administration Bldg.
1275 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland

Transition Expo
April 16, 2016; 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Notre Dame College, Regina Hall
1857 Green Rd., South Euclid
To register: http://tinyurl.com/2016-Expo-Attendee

Planting the Seeds for a Successful Future
April 21 & 28, May 5; 6:00-8:30 p.m.
Middleburg Heights Library
Call (216) 736-2690, for information