

Maryland's Community Pathways

Review and Recommendations

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NASDDDS

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Background and Context

- ▶ Maryland gained CMS approval for Community Pathways renewal (effective date March 2013)
- ▶ Renewal included a merger of New Directions into Community Pathways waiver
- ▶ CMS provided an 18 month period of transition



Background and Context, continued

- ▶ Maryland sought a review of the newly renewed waiver to determine potential areas for improvement to align with goals
- ▶ NASDDDS entered into a contract to undertake this review
 - Listening sessions with stakeholders
 - Systematic review of the waiver, considering national best practices and evolving policy expectations for greater choice and opportunities for community engagement



Guiding Principles of the Review

- ▶ Maryland has current and historical strengths that form a foundation for improvements
- ▶ The waiver is a financing tool that should be reflective of the state's priorities for its system
- ▶ Individuals and families must have a strong voice in the process (and any subsequent decisions)
- ▶ Any recommendation must enhance Maryland's ability to comport with the newly finalized Federal HCBS regulation, defining requirements for community settings eligible for HCBS as well as person-centered planning and other aspects of community-based service delivery.



A Note about Quality

IMPORTANTLY,

- ▶ NASD DDS listened to stakeholders and reviewed the waiver with a focus on broad systems quality, and provided recommendations that emphasize optimal individual outcomes.
- ▶ In reviewing the waiver, NASD DDS also reviewed the specific waiver assurances and the metrics necessary to meet minimum federal standards – (but notes this is not the full picture of quality within a system)



Listening Sessions

- ▶ NASDDDS conducted 15 listening sessions around the state with self-advocates, families, providers and many other interested stakeholders
- ▶ The information obtained through that effort drove many of NASDDDS recommendations to DDA



Listening Sessions: Themes

- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Complexity
- ▶ Responsiveness
- ▶ DDA System/Staff Capacity
- ▶ Trust



Recommendations

- ▶ NASDDDS provided recommendations to DDA on the specifics of the waiver itself, but also provided recommendations regarding systemic and administrative issues that impact the successful operation of the waiver



Recommendations, continued

- ▶ DDA Business Practices
 - Improved clarity in organizational structure and decision making
 - Increase consistency and accuracy across all DDA offices – Central and Regional
 - Simplify administrative processes
 - Increase transparency of criteria and timelines for approvals
 - Active ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders – building trust and successful customer service



Recommendations, continued

▶ Access to Medicaid Services

Most individuals DDA serves are Medicaid eligible

- Increase staff and stakeholder knowledge about Medicaid services for which individuals are eligible
- Work collaboratively with Medicaid to develop strong, person-centered processes that foster seamless service access



Recommendations, continued

- ▶ Role of Resource Coordination
- ▶ DDA has a targeted project looking at specifics of TCM in the state, but some waiver-related recommendations were included in this report (which will be explored in greater detail in forthcoming TCM review)
 - Increase focus on people served
 - Ensure strong RC skills and knowledge with strong expectations, training and ongoing coaching
 - Reduce administrative burden



Recommendations, continued

- ▶ **Administrative and Process Issues**
 - Map major administrative processes to identify bottle necks, redundancy, etc.
 - Use information provided by stakeholders to inform solutions
 - Develop increased opportunities for input and information sharing through various means (e.g., meetings, newsletters, regular DDA web postings)
 - Publish standard processes and timelines for consistent implementation



Recommendations, continued

- ▶ Waiver Specific Recommendations
 - Provided detailed and specific recommendations on all sections of the waiver.
 - Focus on:
 - Opportunities for community integration for all individuals served
 - Person-centered practices and service delivery
 - Removing structural disincentives to helping people achieve good lives
 - Individual outcomes
 - Consistency in operations and decision-making



Recommendations, continued

▶ Waiver Specific Recommendations

◦ A few specifics:

- Review full array services to enhance opportunities for individuals to live in their own homes, enabling services to change without having to move (e.g., modernize residential habilitation service, remove existing barriers to CSLA or similar services utilization, review transportation opportunities, etc.)
- Retool services to focus on outcomes, clarifying service expectations and enabling individually tailored approaches to service
- Review and adopt SELN recommendations to improve employment; make community learning service more usable
- Ensure payment rates reinforce, not discourage, desired outcomes



Overarching Recommendations

- ▶ Build on many Maryland strengths
- ▶ Continue on from the listening sessions to build trust, relationships and establish strong communication
- ▶ Partner with individuals and families to improve 'customer service'



Next Steps

- ▶ DDA will review the recommendations
- ▶ NASDDDS will provide detailed recommendations regarding TCM in coming month

