



OREGON SUPPORT SERVICES ASSOCIATION

CONCERNS ABOUT SYSTEMIC CHANGES

SPRING 2014

oregonsupportservices.org

ABOUT US

Membership

Community Pathways Inc.
Creative Supports Inc.
Eastern Oregon Support
Services Brokerage
Full Access
Inclusion Inc.
Independence Northwest
Integrated Services Network
Mentor Oregon - Metro
Mentor Oregon - Mid-Valley
Resource Connections of
Oregon
Self-Determination Resources Inc.
Southern Oregon Regional
Brokerage
UCP Connections

Representation

OSSA represents 7,500 adult Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout the state.

VISION

We envision a world in which all people live the life they choose in a community where they are valued, respected, and honored. In this world, individual strengths are celebrated; high quality supports are ample and readily available; labels are absent; and self determination is universal. This vision is realized from neighbor to legislator.

GOALS

- We will advocate for funding and policies that promote our vision.
- We will actively work against the erosion of self-directed services in Oregon.
- We will support our customers to be heard and involved on all levels.
- We will ensure support services will be customer-driven and result in the highest level of customer satisfaction.
- We will support each other to ensure and promote the highest quality of services.

We are nationally recognized for our development of support services. Due to a difficult transition process, that reputation is in jeopardy. Brokerages stand as fully-engaged partners to ensure Oregon prioritizes community-based, self-determined, sustainable supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

- Margaret Theisen, OSSA President

Oregon's pursuit of increased federal match dollars via the Affordable Care Act's Community First Choice Option (aka "The K Plan") has created considerable upheaval in disability support systems statewide. From the beginning, Brokerages have endorsed the expanded supports and additional funding promised by the K Plan. We have also sounded notes of caution, advocating at every step for a thoughtful and careful implementation that doesn't compromise Oregon's core values.

ACCELERATED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FUNCTIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

ODDS (Oregon Office on Developmental Disabilities Services) was tasked with identifying a Functional Needs Assessment to be used in determining overall service levels. ODDS had many stops and starts and did not develop a final assessment tool until early November 2013.

Brokerages were originally promised a full calendar year to implement the assessment with our 7,500 customers (by October 31st, 2014.) Through pressure from CMS, the timeline has been reduced to June 30th, 2014. Brokerages will work in a concerted best effort with the state, which has promised to deploy state employees to assist with the assessments and subsequent service adjustments.

This assessment is slated to be a placeholder until a "final tool" is settled on and implemented in January 2015, per a budget note. Currently, there is work to determine what final tool will be utilized.

OUR ASK:

We request that the Department maintain the current tool we're all working hard to implement stay in place until at least June 30th, 2015. We believe pressing to get one tool in place, then switching gears, will have an ill effect on our customer base, their families, and the professionals taxed with implementation. This will offer stability and give ample time for training on the new tool.

CHOICE AND CAPACITY

ODDS has interpreted current changes to require expanded choice in case management. However, implementation has created the opposite effect.

Currently, due to a lack of funded brokerage capacity, CDDPs have been instructed by the state to offer K Plan services to all newly-eligible individuals. Individuals don't actually have choice of case management in this design; they must be served by their local CDDP. If a person wants to receive brokerage services, they are placed on growing waitlists and are served by the CDDP until a spot opens at one of the local brokerages. Receiving one service while waiting for another doesn't fulfill Oregon's promise of choice in case management.

OUR ASK:

Our currently approved waiver states that brokerages will serve nearly 10,000 customers by the end of the biennium. We request ODDS appropriately fund capacity to meet the demand for brokerage services statewide. We stand immediately ready to expand our capacity.



NATURAL SUPPORTS

We are concerned that the concept of Natural Supports is being interpreted too broadly, creating an environment where naturally-occurring care changes into paid care with little analysis or understanding of potential consequences.

A change to this interpretation will have very real impact on our customers, families, and the budget. Some family caregivers are making serious decisions (like quitting their day jobs) because they can generate much more income by keeping family members at home and being paid to provide care. What happens if Oregon can no longer afford these services at a future date? Are there cases where this may create a dependency on public funds and counteract the Oregon vision which includes customer independence?

OUR ASK:

We request reassessment of the term Natural Supports through partnership and discovery with CMS. Brokerage representatives should be present for these discussions.

COST ANALYSIS AND OVERSIGHT

While we have received assurances from the Department that funding is readily available, we are still concerned about the ramifications of determining exponentially increasing funding levels via an untested assessment tool on a rushed timeline.

- o February 2013 plans at a metro brokerage averaged \$11,000/yr; today they exceed an average of \$30,000/yr.
- o Plans historically capped at \$14,500 in brokerages. We now have plans over \$160,000.

OUR ASK:

We request a thorough public fiscal analysis of the K Plan, the waiver, and this implementation. As a state, Oregon has entered into social contracts with people with I/DD and we must be sure we make good on those contracts by not promising services one year and then, through reinterpretation, take those services away the following year. Our history with this population demands nothing less.