

Council Supports Letter to NOW Recipients

The DD Council has always supported implementation of the Resource Allocation Model which ensures that people receiving New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) services will get the services they need. The creators of the national assessment model being used to determine an individual's level of need predict seven percent of the population due to extraordinary needs will be outliers and need additional hours. The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) recognizes there may be circumstances unique to Louisiana raising the pool of outliers to ten percent. However, in Louisiana 25 percent (over 2000) of current NOW recipients exceed their recommended amount of Individual and Family Support (IFS) hours – many without clear justification.

OCDD is asking those NOW recipients to work with their support coordinators and providers to explore all options to meet their support needs within their recommended resource allocation level. [Read letter from OCDD Assistant Secretary Julia Kenny.](#)

The Council supports providing people what they need to assure them a quality life in their own homes in the community and believes that through individualized planning and creativity this can be achieved. OCDD has indicated that plans and hours allocated will assure the health and safety of all individuals. As stated in Ms. Kenny's letter, if individuals disagree with the changes and amount of IFS hours, they have the right to appeal and all individuals are being explained these rights. It is hoped however that each person will act responsibly and consider the impact on others – particularly those waiting to receive a waiver slot.

In the past five years (since 2006) Louisiana has more than doubled the number of individuals with developmental disabilities receiving a Home and Community Based Supports Waiver (from 5,341 to 11,561). Providing for this many more people to receive needed supports in the community in the midst of an economic downturn was due in part to ensuring that existing and new NOW recipients receive services based on their true support *needs*.

The Council encourages NOW recipients to work with their providers, support coordinators and regional offices/districts/authorities to develop a plan that will help them achieve a high quality of life. That may mean making changes, but change can be a good thing and offer new opportunities for greater independence through employment and friendships through shared and/or natural supports.

For more information on the Resource Allocation Model: <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/135>



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