



Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council



SELF-DETERMINATION ♦ INDEPENDENCE ♦ PRODUCTIVITY ♦ INTEGRATION ♦ INCLUSION

October 27, 2014

Kathy Kliebert
Secretary
Department of Health and Hospitals

Via Email

Dear Kathy:

The Council's October quarterly meeting included a discussion of inclusive child care opportunities, or the lack thereof. Concerns were expressed about Pediatric Day Health Care services and the extremely high rate paid for this segregated model. While the Council acknowledges the mechanisms DHH has put in place to impede the growth in the number of these centers and tighten eligibility criteria, these measures alone will not achieve our mutually desired outcomes unless parents have options for their children to be served in inclusive settings.

The Council recommends that funding for Pediatric Day Health Care services be available to cover the added cost of serving children with complex needs in inclusive child care settings. While it may not be practical or cost effective for child care centers to serve only one child with complex needs, providing centers access to the pediatric day health care funding may enable the hiring of a nurse and/or additional staff to adequately meet the needs of two or more children with complex needs in an inclusive environment.

For Louisiana communities to fully include and embrace people with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of that disability, inclusive practices must begin where our youngest citizens grow and learn to accept all of their peers, regardless of their differences.

Your consideration of this recommendation will be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sandee Winchell

Sandee Winchell
Executive Director

c: Ruth Kennedy
Lou Ann Owen
Mark Thomas
Kay Marcel