

# MaineCare Service Array Discussion

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*Maine Coalition for Housing and Quality Services – September 9, 2013*

## **Choice**

- More services and more accessible services needed for aging deaf persons. Eg. Nursing homes.
- Supports should be based on a person's need – not a standard, prescribed staff:Person ratio
- Persons who have high level of staff:Person need should have equal access to services
- MaineCare should be able to coordinate funding with other states when Maine Persons require out-of-state services

## **Competence**

- Persons with ASD are far more successful when they can achieve highest possible independence before age 30. This needs to be taken into consideration when managing waitlists for transition.
- There is a need for “sheltered-workshop-like” settings. As preparation for employment in the community? With regular public interface?

## **Community Participation**

- Sometimes agency/service structure interferes with Persons' options for socialization. Eg. Agency staff not allowed to accompany Person on visit to friend who is client at another agency.
- Individuals who require >3:1 staffing support need more options for day program services. Some programs will not take these clients. Others offer only very limited hours.
- Individuals on Section 29 should not have their community access services cut back when other new services are added to their plans.
- Section 21 3:1 staff:Person ratio prevents services to Persons with greater need

## **Direct Support Professionals**

- (Written notes from David Cowing [cowingdavid@gmail.com](mailto:cowingdavid@gmail.com)) There are a number of students who know students w/disabilities from school, and may have served as peer tutors, or been supportive in mainstreamed settings for graduating students w/disabilities. Could there be resources/attention given to using the community college and/or adult ed systems to train and use graduating students who are interested in jobs as Direct service Personnel?
  - Goals:
    - --Increase employment opportunities
    - -- Increase quality of Direct Service applicants
    - --Use existing structure of community college/adult ed systems
    - --Provide support to peers with disabilities who are also enrolled in community college/adult ed classes
    - --Ease process of transition from high school to adulthood
    - --Increase independent living/community integration skills for students with disabilities

- DSPs who work 1:1 with Persons or in challenging environments should be paid more
- Services need to be appropriate to Person and also appropriate to the community in which he/she lives. Eg. A person with ASD is very vulnerable to staff turnover. DSPs are more difficult to recruit in remote areas of the state. Therefore, DSPs working in remote areas may need a higher level of pay, especially if they are working with Persons with ASD.
- Staff turnover among DSPs is too high and compromises services to Persons. Staff retention needs to be addressed in funding allocations as well as in planning.

## **Person-Centered Plans**

- Service planners need to think long-term: What will this person's family look like in 10 years? 50 years?
- Families of Persons are great resources: they should be supported but not exploited
- Eliminate the "Transition Cliff." Reduced/limited services while on wait list would be preferable to current "all or nothing" approach.
- More communication/coordination needed between Maine State Housing Authority and DHHS concerning waiver funding. (How to know if services are funded long-term or just for one year.)
- Some Persons with ASD (who are sensitive to changes) decline services because of high staff turnover. "No services" is preferable to services with constantly changing staff.