

Pipeline . . . direct from the state . . .

Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*

Ted Strickland, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

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<http://www.mrdd.ohio.gov/publications/pipeline.htm>

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***After October 5, 2009, we will be the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.**

Until that time, we will continue to refer to the agency as currently legally named.

Our new acronym will be DODD (Department of Developmental Disabilities)

and will be used as seldom as possible, in favor of using the words.

(DODD is to be pronounced as the individual letters D-O-D-D, as was done with MRDD.)

Wednesday, August 19, 2009

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NEW! *Pipeline Postscripts* at the end of each issue include important news briefs and reminders.

1. Developing More Successful Employment Opportunities

"When my step-daughter entered the workforce 17 years ago at Walgreen's, she did a lot more than get a job – she entered the fuller life of the community."

– Michael Rench, Director, Rehabilitation Services Commission

An open forum titled, "*Developing Successful Employment Opportunities*," was enthusiastically attended by more than 200 people with disabilities, their families, friends, and people who serve them, on August 18th at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus. The comment above from forum speaker, Michael Rench, Director of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, was one of many that highlighted the far-reaching benefits of employment -- and the equally far-reaching consequences of unemployment -- for Ohioans with developmental disabilities.

Hosted by the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council, the forum was designed to provide a venue to share thoughts and experiences concerning issues or circumstances that may be preventing people from getting a job, as well as suggestions to improve services and otherwise positively impact Ohio's employment picture for people with disabilities.

Further on the subject of community employment, Amy McGee, Executive Assistant for Health and Human Services in Governor Ted Strickland's Office, addressed the group noting that nearly 1200 individuals responded to a recent employment survey targeting Ohioans with developmental disabilities, to gauge their level of satisfaction with available services, and pinpoint key issues. She stated,

“A report on the outcomes of that survey will be available in September, and we will couple that information with the input you provide here at this forum. Your testimony today, telling of your successes and challenges within Ohio's employment scene, will inform our efforts. Then we can move forward with all of this information to assure better outcomes for the future.”

Other speakers during the day-long forum included Beverly Johnson, Executive Director, Cerebral Palsy Assn. of Ohio; Carolyn Knight, Interim Director of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, along with Chuck Beatty, Vice-Chair; and, most importantly, several individuals with developmental disabilities and family members who had very important stories to tell. Here are some of the comments from testimony heard during the open forum:

“ As self advocates, we also need to remember to take responsibility for our job search and put forth the effort! It takes a lot of effort, but I'm proof that it can work out for you.” - Ann Christopher

“ Persevere! Network! Volunteer! I got better with each interview for a job. ” - Carmen Shelton

“Apply, Apply, Apply! Ask for actual referrals for actual jobs – not just preparation for a job. I found out after 300 applications and 20 interviews over 13 months, that some jobs are not real jobs, they're just jobs on paper.” – Dennis Frazier

“If you do volunteer to gain job experience, be sure to ask for work you can learn something from – that can improve your chances to get paid work.” - Mark Seifarth

“Sometimes services are available but they are so short-term that they cannot accurately assess a person's possibilities or abilities. It's disheartening, and it isn't fair to the individual.” - Sue Hetrick

According to forum organizers, a summary of all comments will be prepared, as well as a list of recommendations to improve gainful employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. This information also will be shared with people who can make a difference, including service providers, legislators, government officials, and employers.

Reflecting on the forum, one might remember this follow-up remark made by Michael Rench as he wrapped up his keynote comments, suggesting how we can improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities ...

“ The employment picture here in Ohio is like a mosaic. Each of us is a tile, a colorful piece of glass, or a stone, and each piece offers something to the whole picture. I think that if we can break down some barriers, and create more consistency within the system, we can open doors to real employment opportunities. Everyone – everyone has something to offer. ”

For more information about the forum contact axiscenter@aol.com, or phone (614) 263-8076.



2. Medicaid Buy-In Annual Report Issued by ODJFS

At the end of 2008, more than 2300 Ohioans with disabilities were working, accepting job promotions, earning money and establishing savings accounts without risking the loss of their Medicaid health care coverage. Descriptive statistical program data such as this is noted in the recently-released Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' (ODJFS) *Annual Report on the Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities* (MBIWD).

Ohio law established the MBIWD Advisory Council and the MBIWD program to enable people with disabilities to work and not lose their health care coverage.



The Summer 2008 issue of *Pipeline Quarterly* featured MBIWD program participant, Bob, on the job at Cintas in Fairfield County. Bob was the second person residing in Hocking County to be enrolled in the MBI program. (Fairfield County is the immediate northern neighbor to Hocking County.)

This first report on the program provides statewide data from April 1, 2008 when the program began, through December 2008. According to the report, at the end of 2008 there were 2341 people with disabilities enrolled in the MBIWD program. More than half of them (58%) are not required to pay a premium to maintain their Medicaid health care coverage. For those who are paying a premium, their average payment per month is about \$40. ODJFS notes that it collected almost \$80,000 in premium payments during the first eight months of the program.

Overall, Medicaid spending for people enrolled in the program was \$11.6 million according to ODJFS estimates. The report also shows that people throughout the state who are enrolled in the MBIWD program have greatly reduced their out-of-pocket spending on health care.

The annual report also includes county-specific data. The data show a fairly broad discrepancy in the number of enrollees in the program across counties of similar size. The MBIWD Advisory Council is reviewing this enrollment disparity among counties and is considering ways to make the MBIWD program more widely known to people with disabilities, advocates and staff at local agencies, such as County Departments of Job and Family Services, and County Boards within the developmental disabilities community.

For more information about the MBIWD program, eligibility guidelines, and an application, go to the [Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities \(MBIWD\)](#) section of the ODJFS website.

Current Status

According to a May 2009 MBIWD program update report from ODJFS, since the annual report was issued, the number of additional individuals enrolled has brought the total enrollment in the program to 3213, statewide.

*Acknowledgements to Ohio Legal Rights Service, Tom Hemmert, (614) 466-7264,
themmert@olrs.state.oh.us*



3. Spotlight on Self Determination, *Life Without Limits*

As Ohio Self Determination Association (OSDA) members prepare for the 2009 OSDA Conference, '*Life Without Limits*,' September 15-16 at University Plaza Hotel in Columbus, it's a great time to spotlight examples of self determination at work. In talking with County Boards and other service providers around the state it is clear that while this 'movement' has been a part of the developmental disability community for several years now, the enthusiasm for it has not diminished.

For example, at the Marion County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Superintendent Lee Wedemeyer reports that self determination is not just alive and well, it's thriving. He explains,

"Fortunately, I need only to walk around the corner from my office to see self determination at work. Brian Landis receives services from the Marion County Board of Developmental Disabilities and works here as a telephone operator. Not only has Brian started working for us in the last year, but he is finally living in his own home, a neat ranch on a tree-lined street in a quiet Marion neighborhood. After living his entire life with his parents and in group homes, Brian now decides what gets prepared for dinner, has the opportunity to lounge in his sunroom, and watch what he wants to watch on TV."

Lee adds, "Brian is just one of the individuals with disabilities who, with the assistance of agencies such as ours and an individual budget, has struck out on their own. Because of self determination, Brian and others are now able to make many decisions that impact their lives. Giving people the opportunity to live on their own is one of the biggest advances we have made in assisting individuals with disabilities."

Causing a STIR

Ohio has been ahead of the curve in understanding the importance of self determination, and the OSDA is continuing to increase awareness of its impact for people with developmental disabilities through *Project STIR*, which stands for *Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility*. STIR provides leadership and training for self advocates. It also assists individuals in advocating for themselves and others, and teaches specific skills such as communicating assertively, problem solving and negotiating, and becoming more involved in one's own community. Learn more about Project STIR at www.ohiosda.org.

ESDY Awards

At the September conference, OSDA members also will honor individuals, family members, and professionals who have played a role in advancing the concepts of self determination across Ohio, via the ESDY awards. ESDY Awards are presented to individuals who have played a role in advancing the concepts of self determination. Nominees are evaluated based on creativity, how they have supported the principles of self determination and their contribution toward system change.

Deadline for submission for ESDY Awards is August 21. Send to lhurst@senecacbmrrdd.org.

For additional information on the Ohio Self Determination Association, the conference, and the ESDY awards, visit <http://www.ohiosda.org>



4. Notice of Funds Available Through Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council ('DD Council') has announced the availability of \$608,000 in grant funds for 2010. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit proposals for a variety of projects listed at <http://ddc.ohio.gov/Grant/10COM.htm>, along with detailed grant information.

Carolyn Knight, Acting Director of the DD Council, explains that the FY 2010 Notice of Funds Available begins the organization's annual grant process, and all grant awards are contingent upon the availability of federal funds. Applicants must provide cash or in-kind 'matching' funds of 33.33% in non-poverty areas and 11.11% in poverty areas. She adds,

"The Council also will be hosting a bidder's conference on Wednesday, September 2, 2009, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' General Services Building, 4200 Surface Road, in Columbus. Directions A bidder's conference provides grant details and answers questions that potential grant applicants may have."



Application Instructions and Procedures

Grant applications will be processed using a new online submission process, which will be made available on September 3, 2009, following the Bidder's Conference. Training on the new submission process will be offered. Deadline for submissions will be Friday, October 2, 2009.

For more information: Carla.Sykes@dmr.state.oh.us



5. Ohio Department of Transportation Invests \$3.2 Million in Transit for People with Disabilities, Senior Citizens

Ohio's senior citizens and individuals with developmental disabilities soon will find it easier to travel to to jobs, school, and healthcare appointments due to an investment of \$3.2 million in new transit vehicles and equipment from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Specialized Transportation Program grants are being distributed to 64 non-profit agencies in 37 counties where existing transportation services are either unavailable or insufficient to meet the needs of these populations.

[View 2009 Specialized Transportation Program proposed grants by county. PDF*](#)

[*On some computers you must use the 'control' key to activate this feature/open pdf files.](#)

The goal of the Specialized Transportation Program is to improve mobility options for senior citizens and people with disabilities, by providing greater access to employment, medical appointments, grocery shopping, banking, and other needed services. The program builds upon ODOT's mission to promote a 'multi-modal' transportation system for all of Ohio's citizens.

Through various transportation-related efforts, [ODOT's Office of Transit](#) advocates continued personal mobility for all Ohioans by supporting, coordinating, and funding public transportation as a critical element of the state's overall transportation system.



[U.S. Senate Adopts ANCOR Resolution](#)

6. National Direct Support Professionals Week Begins Sept. 14

The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR*) reports that the U.S. Senate has adopted a resolution designating the week of September 14, 2009, as '*National Direct Support Professionals Week.*'

[The designation is a means of recognizing the important contribution that Direct Support Professionals \(DSP's\) make in every community throughout the nation.](#)

The designation provides a specific opportunity to discuss with legislators and others in the disability community the role Direct Support Professionals play every day in enhancing the lives of people with disabilities of all ages, and the challenges faced in recruiting and retaining a competitively paid, quality workforce.

More about Direct Support Professionals Week in the September issues of *Pipeline*. Also, look for articles illustrating the positive impact of direct support professionals within Ohio's

developmental disabilities community in the next issue of *Pipeline Quarterly*, publishing in September 2009.

**Read the ANCOR resolution at <http://www.ancor.org/documents/SRes228DirectSupportProfWeek.pdf>.*



September is National Preparedness Month

7. Get Ready for National Preparedness Month 2009!



The U.S. Department of Homeland Security – and locally, the Ohio Department of Public Safety – sponsor National Preparedness Month (September) and encourage people to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities. The effort includes a coalition of more than 600 national, regional, state, and local organizations pledging support.

The ODMRDD is among those supporting these efforts, and will focus on what we all can do to assist people with disabilities to be better prepared for emergency situations.

Again this year as last, the ODMRDD will focus on preparedness opportunities for residents living at the ten Department-operated, community-based Developmental Centers, as well as encourage provider-sponsored preparedness efforts.

Trainings for staff, individuals, and families via the national *Ready* campaign include activities that encourage individuals to have an *emergency supply kit*, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different threats that may affect them. Visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials.

Look for more information at www.mrdd.ohio.gov in September.



8. Interagency Work Group on Autism, Status Report Online

Ohio's Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA) has published a *Status Report* noting progress and accomplishments. Since implementing a Work Plan of activities in late 2008, the IWGA has identified many opportunities for state agency partners to coordinate efforts, be

creative despite challenging budget issues, and determine ways to join efforts in serving and supporting individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. The report may be viewed at <http://mrdd.ohio.gov/topics/iagautism.htm> .



Pipeline PostScripts

Note: Many events are online at the ODMRDD website event calendar, accessed from the lower bar 'calendar' on the homepage, at https://mrdd.ohio.gov/apps/internet/evcs/EVCS_View.aspx

1. Reminder: Ohio District Aktion Club Convention, August 29 & 30

Ohio District Aktion Club's annual convention is August 29 and 30, 2009 at *Recreation Unlimited* in Ashley, Ohio. According to Ohio District Aktion Club Administrator, Sande Johnson, the convention theme is "The Hero Within," and there will be a poster and speech contest on the theme topic, "How has Aktion Club made you a hero in your community?" This year's conference will incorporate several training and discussion elements along the subject of leadership.

For more information: <http://www.ohioaktion.org/>; Sande Johnson at sande@gofindlay.com



2. Ohio SIBS Conference Information Online

The Ohio Adult Sibling Conference ("SIBS" conference) event information is now available at www.ohiosibs.com. The Ninth Annual Ohio Adult Sibling Conference will be November 6-7, 2009, in Columbus. Complete information will be shared as the event draws nearer, or contact Tom Fish at The Ohio State University Nisonger Center, (614) 292-7550 or fish1@osu.edu .



3. Editor's Note: Terminology

The terms 'mental retardation' and 'developmental disability' are part of current clinically-accepted terminology. Usage of this terminology in ODMRDD publications is in no way intended to restrict or label any individuals based on their particular disability. Changes to accepted terminology are influenced by many factors, including research, accepted clinical definitions, and usage/social acceptance. 'Mental retardation' is one of many developmental disabilities, and usage of the term will be gradually and appropriately phased out wherever feasible. Currently, in the interest of communicating clearly and respectfully, usage of the term 'retardation' may be seen in ODMRDD publications, and is never intended as negative slang.



ODMRDD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and other Possible Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs)

To report abuse/neglect and other MUI's call toll-free: **1-866-313-MRDD (6733)**. Please note that MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of MRDD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict -- or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances it is important to remember that the hotline number exists, and is to be used for reporting concerns in these situations.

Pipeline feedback ... direct from you to the state ...

Pipeline is an electronic publication of the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD), distributed approximately twice monthly to update and inform readers of timely, relevant information affecting MRDD stakeholders. Share your questions or comments about *Pipeline* at feedback@odmrdd.state.oh.us, or contact Sherry Steinman, sherry.steinman@dmr.state.oh.us, phone (614) 644-0262.

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After October 5, 2009

Ohio | Department of
Developmental Disabilities