

Tier Standards Workgroup - Employment and Day

Standard Recommendations, Policy Considerations and Challenges

The Employment and Day Tiered Standards Workgroup met on four occasions. During our meetings, there was much discussion initially regarding the various challenges and issues presented by The Community Settings Rule, ideas regarding what the standards would and should include and several policy issues.

Members of the other Tiered Standard workgroups participated in our Employment and Day workgroup sessions and provided insight and updates as to the work being accomplished in their respective workgroups.

The following outline captures the recommendations, policy consideration and, challenges and issues raised during our workgroup meetings.

Policy Statement:

As an employment first state, by March 17, 2019, DDA will require that all individuals engaged in day/supported employment have a person centered plan aimed at Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). The person centered plan will include the individual's path to CIE, including exploration for individuals not previously exposed to employment and/or meaningful days for individuals who do not want or do not have support to achieve CIE. DDA will also require new direct support professional (DSP) training to support individuals achieve their goals.

Recommendations:

- Person Centered Plan: By March 17, 2019, every individual receiving DDA-funded services, not just employment and day services, should have a Person-Centered-Plan (PCP) that ensures informed choice and goals/outcomes to meet the person's wishes.
 - For employment, the team will strive to assist the individual obtain CIE in accordance with his/her wishes. The team will discuss employment at least annually but as appropriate through regular follow up.
 - Tiered Standards: although the group did not reach consensus, below are additional requirements the team discussed:
 - The employment discussion will formally occur at least twice a year. The discussion would include what supports an individual needs to ensure success.
 - DDA may create a different standard for individuals new to services (e.g., TY) and/or people who received services for a period of time.

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1/20/2017

- DDA Core DSP Training for new staff: By March 17, 2019, all new DSP staff will receive the following training: Person Centered Planning/Thinking; Employment First (including discovery and customization); and Independence/Inclusion.
 - Tiered Standards:
 - At some future date (not set) all current staff who have not previously received the above training will receive it. (Also discussion about other employees, e.g., a new CEO receiving the training.)
 - At some future date (not set) consistent with approved waiver amendments, appropriate staff will receive certification for customized employment and/or job coach certification.

Challenges:

- Lack of opportunities in rural settings.
- Uncertainty over rates and how they will support these efforts.
- Concern that the school system is not adequately preparing individuals/families for employment.
- DDA assumption that providers will all be able to access grant funding to encourage transition.
- Ensure any CCS training is consistent with DSP training.

Ongoing Concerns:

- Many participants expressed significant concern and frustrations that the Community Settings Rule would close their organizations.
- Not sufficient time, and funding to achieve compliance given size of some organizations.
- Concern over disconnect between current COMAR and Community Setting Rule standards – Interpretation, licensing, compliance.
- How do the CQL standards impact the floor and tiers?
- Need to understand the relationship that exists between DDA and Education and the substance of the dialogue.
- Messaging from DDA is inconsistent: Deputy Secretary stating he will not close the doors on Day Programs – Message from DDA representatives; Day Program buildings will close under Community Setting Rule.
- Unintentional creation of disenfranchised population of individuals with severe disabilities and medical conditions as integration may not be as achievable or appropriate.
 - Concern was raised that the settings rule would force people who have significant disabilities to be redirected to more segregated services such as

nursing homes and adult day care centers. People will be forced out of DDA/CMS services if the floor doesn't allow for people to spend some time in a building owned and operated by a provider agency.

- Concerns regarding health and safety - proper education of community resources (police, first responders) and lack of appropriate facilities – delegable nursing responsibilities, private changing rooms.
- Ability to properly communicate and educate community at large – significant paradigm shift – need for statewide PSA across the State of Maryland.
- Ability to adequately staff compliance with the Community Setting Rule intention – significantly smaller ratios – given industry wide high turnover and inability to fill open positions.
- DDA should develop a plan to ensure the 600 individuals in DDA-funded medical day have support to access the community/opportunities for CIE. This will include discussions around staffing, transportation, etc.
- Need for DDA to better coordinate all the various work groups – Tired Standards and Employment 1st – under one facilitator to work more efficiently and effectively.
- Need further clarification of what is considered CIE.
 - Agency acts as Temp Agency and places individuals who are still employed through organization.
 - Versus, being employed by business.