

Health & Community Services for People with Disabilities

Mission

To assist persons with developmental disabilities in accessing services and to work with service providers and communities to develop a system of community-based supports based on the needs and desires of these individuals to help them reach their full potential.

Summary of Activities

The Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS) at the **Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)** provides assistance to individuals with developmental disabilities that is directed toward enabling them to reach their fullest potential. BDDS works with service providers and communities to develop and provide a system of community-based supports based on person-centered plans that meet the individual's needs and desires. BDDS encompasses nine district offices, which collectively serve people in all 92 counties.



Services provided by BDDS include: diagnosis and evaluation, day services (life skills, community, and vocational), supported employment, epilepsy support, and residential programs. Home and community based residential options include supervised group living, semi-independent living, supported living services, respite care, and emergency support services. The Medicaid program allows Indiana to provide a variety of home and community-based services to individuals who would otherwise require the level of care provided in an intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded (ICFMR). This program is known as the "ICFMR waiver."

Multiple funding streams finance community and residential services for individuals with developmental disabilities, including Medicaid, the federal Social Services Block Grant, and various state line item appropriations. In 1999, 5,187 individuals with disabilities received community, residential, and other non-institutional services through these programs. In addition, 4,164 individuals were served in group homes and 1,163 received services in large private ICFMRs. Assistance is also provided to family members and guardians in the form of respite services, which provide relief to stressed caregivers and divert possible moves toward institutional services for persons with developmental disabilities.

FSSA is committed to assuring that persons with developmental disabilities are supported in a manner that protects them from harm and ensures that they reach their fullest potential. Thus, a major priority is quality assurance, which includes: 1) On-site quality monitoring statewide to identify "red flags" and evaluate residential community settings; 2) Annual **Indiana State Department of Health** surveys of group homes and private ICFMRs; 3) Standardized quality tracking of individuals affected by facility closings and downsizing efforts; and 4) Case management functions which are shared by the local BDDS offices and case managers. A number of additional initiatives are in the formative stages, including:

- ◆ Development of rules, policies and procedures which will establish a legal framework that will be enforced to ensure that individuals served are safe and engaged in meaningful activity.
- ◆ Development of quality indicators, which will be used to monitor the extent to which program elements are operating effectively and efficiently as well as achieving the desired person-centered and program outcomes.
- ◆ Review and assessment of the current service delivery system to streamline eligibility and service determination processes to serve people as quickly as possible.

External Factors

Community and residential services for individuals with developmental disabilities have changed dramatically over the years. With the closure of the New Castle and Northern Indiana State Developmental Centers, and the implementation of recent legislation, there has been increased emphasis on ensuring that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families are being provided with choices about community living and community activities.

This shift to community-based services has had a positive impact on the lives of many individuals.

The Department of Justice and the federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) are overseeing states' compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA-related lawsuits across the country have focused national attention on these issues. Specific attention is being focused on ensuring that individuals reside in the least restrictive environment and that choice is being provided to individuals.

Evaluation and Accomplishments

Since 1997, over 1,500 people with developmental disabilities have either moved into or are targeted to soon begin receiving services in the community. The number of individuals enrolled in the ICFMR waiver program increased by over 165% between 1995 and 1999, from 627 in 1995 to 1,676 in 1999. A Quality of Life unit has also been created within BDDS to provide overall oversight of programs dedicated to people with developmental disabilities.



FSSA is committed to assuring that individuals with developmental disabilities reside in the least restrictive environment with the first alternative being community-based services. Community-based services allow for opportunities that reflect the individual's unlimited value and capacity to grow and contribute to the community in which they reside. Staff have been added to the programs serving persons with disabilities to conduct the tasks necessary to support all field functions and assure that quality assurance mechanisms are in place to evaluate and monitor the health and safety of individuals residing in the community.

Plans for the Biennium

Over the next biennium, state programs for people with disabilities will continue to look toward providing the least restrictive living arrangements. In addition, BDDS will refine programs and processes to further ensure the health and safety and improve the quality of life of each individual with a disability.

