
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION
AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Bob Taft, Governor
Kenneth W. Ritchey, Director

VISIONS NEWSLETTER

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1. Open Letter to the Field—CAFS Funding Issue

This letter is intended to make the Ohio MRDD community aware of a situation that has occurred with the Community Alternative Funding System (CAFS) program. CAFS provides federal reimbursement through Medicaid to county boards of MR/DD and private providers for medical and support services provided to persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. CAFS also provides services to children in schools.

ODMR/DD identified a problem with payments being made for CAFS services because an unallowable cost has been included in the new rate-setting methodology. Because the state could not claim a federal match for payments after it identified the problem, payments to all providers of CAFS services were suspended. ODMRDD and ODJFS have worked diligently with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) during the last ten days to correct the problem.

CMS has stated that Ohio should change the CAFS rates using a methodology that carves out the unallowable costs. In order to assure the availability of funds to pay claims in full prior to the federal claiming it is also imperative that rates for CAFS be sustainable over a long period.

In early April, a 90-day emergency rule will be filed with JCARR and will take effect immediately. This rule will allow payments to be made for services delivered between January 1 and March 31, 2004 using the current fee schedule. The emergency rule will also establish more sustainable rates, which will take effect in early April 2004.

Permanent rules will be filed providing structural systemic changes to the CAFS program. It is important to note that permanent rules must be adopted during this

timeframe or the State risks a situation similar to the one we are currently experiencing. *Pending payments that have been approved will be released as soon as possible once the emergency rule takes effect.*

We believe that these actions will help to resolve this situation and will minimize the impact on county boards, private providers and local school districts.

Kenneth W. Ritchey
Director

2. 50 Begin Work As MR/DD Family Advisory Council

The Family Advisory Council held its first meeting March 10 in Columbus and used the forum to begin working on issues related to waivers, supported living, family resources, employment, benefits, community living, recreation, service coordination and case management.

Director Kenneth W. Ritchey was pleased with the attendance and encouraged the group to continue providing the state with comments and suggestions. The insights and experiences of the families are invaluable to ensuring that the Department lays the groundwork that allows people to lead meaningful lives no matter where they live in Ohio.

About 50 family members representing 30 counties attended. The advisory council was created by the Ohio Department of MR/DD to give families the opportunity to share information about programs, services and resources available in their counties, to deliver strategies to the state for solving problems and to be briefed on the work being done on the state level.

This exchange of information is also valuable to families who advocate for their loved ones as well as others in their community, said Peggy Martin, Family Advocate for the department. The forum is also an opportunity for the professional staff at the Ohio Department of MR/DD to hear the concerns and issues that face people with disabilities and their families around the state and to use it as policies and laws are being written, she said. A thoughtful exchange of information may become the catalyst for system improvements statewide.

Work groups were formed around four issues. The work groups and their leaders are:

- Waivers, Supported Living and Family Resources
Leader: Keith Hammond, Hamilton County
- Employment/Benefits
Leader: Jane Novick, Montgomery County
- Community Living/Recreation
Leader: John Martin, Lucas County

- Service Coordination/Case Management
Leader: Jackie Martin, Franklin County

The next Advisory Council meeting is June 2.

3. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING—Complaint Resolution

The Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice of its intent to amend rule 5123:2-17-01 entitled "Complaint Resolution." As required by section 5123.043 of the Revised Code, this rule establishes procedures for the filing and resolution of complaints involving any of the programs, services, policies, or administrative practices of the department or any of the entities under contract with the department. The department is proposing to amend the rule based on a review conducted under section 119.032 of the Revised Code. New language is being added for clarification to specify that complaints involving Medicaid appeals will be stayed pending the final outcome of the applicable Medicaid appeal process and to specify that the hearing officer's standard for review shall be based upon applicable statute and/or rule.

A public hearing on the proposed amended rule will be conducted on **April 29, 2004**, beginning at **9:30 A.M.**, and continuing until all persons in attendance have had an opportunity to testify, at **1810 Sullivant Avenue (small conference room)**, Columbus, Ohio.

The department will accept verbal and/or written testimony on the proposed amended rule at this hearing. Written comments submitted on or before the public hearing date will be treated as testimony.

Requests for a copy of the proposed amended rule and/or submittal of written comments should be made to Debbie Marcum, Administrative Rules Coordinator, by email at debbie.marcum@dmr.state.oh.us, by fax at 614/752-5302, or by mail at 1810 Sullivant Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43223-1239. A copy of the rule is also available on the department's web site at <http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/>.

4. Health Care Seminar Focuses on Individual Rights and Health and Safety

The Ohio Department of MR/DD is sponsoring a seminar on Balancing Health and Safety With the Rights of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities.

A panel comprised of health care professionals, lawyers and self-determination advocates will discuss the issues at May 21 seminar in Columbus. Those attending can earn approximately 4.8 continuing education credits.

Cost is \$35. To learn more and download the applications, click [here](#).

The seminar is the seventh in the Health Care Education Series offered by the Ohio Department of MR/DD.

5. Ohio AAMR Call for Papers and Presenters Annual Conference, Columbus-Dublin Embassy Suites-September 8-9, 2004 "Healthy People Build Healthy Communities"

The 2004 conference will focus on best practice in areas of health and wellness. Ohio AAMR is seeking speakers, panels, and research presentations on health issues, health initiatives, mental health and behavioral interventions, aging and health, disease prevention and screening, holistic health, and the elements needed for building healthy communities with and for persons with MR/DD.

The conference will be co-hosted by the Arc of Ohio, in collaboration with the Ohio Department of MR/DD and assistance from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council. As it has in the last several years, this conference continues to promote professional discussions that focus on best practice, innovations, and solution-oriented sharing for productive actions when attendees return to work.

Presenters are invited to attend on the day of their presentation at no charge, and are eligible for member rates for the entire conference. If there is a panel or group presentation, these considerations are limited to three presenters per session. Special consideration is given to proposals that align with the themes described above.

Proposals are due April 27, 2004. We will send notification of acceptance by June 1. Accepted presenters will receive an agreement letter that will allow presenters to spell out specifics, identify needed equipment, name co-presenters, and share important information. Generally, sessions are blocked for one and one-half hours, but proposals will be accepted for double sessions if the time can be justified.

Please submit a letter with the following information:

- Name
- Qualifications
- Title of Presentation (As you would like to see it in the program)
- Brief Description of the Content
- Learner Outcomes
- Justification for including this Presentation in the Conference

Please send your proposals to:

Ohio AAMR Conference 2004 Review Committee
c/o David C. Pfriem, President, Ohio AAMR
1621 Euclid Avenue, Suite 802
Cleveland, OH 44115

E-mail submissions are gladly accepted. Please send them to:

dcpfriem@cmr-cleveland.org

Remember, the deadline is April 27, 2004. If you have any questions, feel free to call or to send an e-mail.

6. Update to DD Council Estate Planning Booklet

There is a slightly revised version (February 2004) of the popular Estate and Future Planning booklet available in hard copy through the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council. To receive a copy of the updated version, call the DD Council offices at (614) 466-5205 or (800) 766-7426. It is also available on the council website at <http://ddc.ohio.gov/Pub/Guard.htm> along with our booklet on Guardianship in Ohio.

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