

Position on Housing Options for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council believes that all people with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity and choice to live where and with whom they choose and to have the supports they need to live successfully in independent inclusive community-based housing.

Therefore the Council believes and advocates that Michigan must do the following:

- Develop programs to educate people with disabilities, their families and advocates, about the risks and benefits of the full array of living options.
- Provide navigators to help people who choose a more independent residential setting, to move from their present institutional or other supervised residential setting.
- Encourage the State to ensure the funding exists to provide the necessary supports and services for people with disabilities to live as interdependently and successfully in the community as they choose.
- Assure that competent, well-trained in-home services are available to all people with disabilities. Compensation (wages, healthcare, sick and vacation time, and mileage reimbursement) must be sufficient to attract and retain a talented, dedicated workforce. High quality training based on the skills and competencies necessary to serve people with disabilities using the full array of living options must be available and easily accessible. Assure that the Person Centered Planning process and Self-Determination processes are done with integrity where the desires of the individual are respected and implemented.
- Assure that people with disabilities have ongoing opportunities for choice and can seek alternative living arrangements as applicable. As with any individual, circumstances and preferences change and those should be honored on an ongoing basis.
- Assure that people with disabilities throughout the State have fair and unbiased residential options from which to choose.
- Increase the stock of safe, affordable, accessible housing options statewide.

****Adopted by the Council on October 8, 2013.**

Recommendations on Housing Options for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

1. The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council should:

- 1a) Work with the Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP) to reach students and their families while still in transition, to provide information and build expectations about independent community-based housing with needed supports.
- 1b) Track the information gathered through the Arc of Michigan's Dignified Lifestyles Program. Explore using the data gathered through that program to identify unmet housing needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- 1c) Develop a statewide grant project to provide training and technical assistance to educate individuals about the supports available for those who choose to transition to more independent, community-based settings. Develop a process to support individuals to transition to community-based settings. The project will subcontract with pilot sites across the state.

2. The Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Community Health, Pre-paid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs) and Community Mental Health services organizations should assure that people with disabilities, their families and advocates have:

- 2a) The understanding, knowledge, and resources to live in the community.
- 2b) Knowledge about others who are successfully living independently in the community and how they do it.
- 2c) Increased access to, and information about, supports for transition, and self-determination, Assistive Technology, and other assistance that would help people to live in more independent settings.
- 2d) Access to a permanent system of transition supports and services available to every person who does not want to live in congregate settings. This system should be independent and unbiased and should truly honor the person with a disability's choice rather than doing what is most convenient or easiest. This system could mirror the system for nursing facility transitions.

3. The Michigan Disability Housing Workgroup should:

- 3a) Take the lead in developing a checklist or standards for advocates for identifying a real community living situation. Standards should be based on [Keeping the Promise: Self Advocates Defining the Meaning of Community Living](#). Advocate for increasing the stock of safe, affordable, accessible housing statewide and making rental subsidies available to support people with disabilities' ability to live in the community.
- 3b) Advocate with MSHDA to prioritize people with disabilities for receiving housing choice vouchers.
- 3c) Advocate for increasing the number of 811 housing vouchers Michigan receives for housing in inclusive settings and to develop and implement strategies to increase MSHDA's chances of receiving more vouchers.
- 3d) Continue to advocate for changes in its Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) that will result in more affordable, accessible housing in the community being available to people with disabilities in Michigan.
- 3e) Advocate that competent, well-trained in-home services workers are widely available through sufficient compensation (wages, healthcare, sick and vacation time, and mileage reimbursement) and the availability of high quality training in order to attract and retain workers.

4. The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council should partner with other organizations and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to advocate for training and credentialing processes that will result in certified, skilled, direct support professionals working in home- and community-based services and supports in Michigan through the provision of a statewide certification and registry process.

- 4a) Other organizations could include: Disability Networks, MDHWG, MPAS, MDRC, DHS-Adult Services, LARA-Long Term Care Division, Bureau of Health Care Services. DCH-Medicaid Long Term Care, PHI-Michigan, the Michigan Assisted Living Association, MACMHB, PIHPs, The Arc Michigan, and DDI at Wayne State University.
- 4b) These same organizations should partner to develop curriculum leading to a statewide certification for direct support professionals that is recognized by all publicly funded employer/provider organizations.

- 4c) The training processes should be built around agreed core competencies that support and serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in all living/housing arrangements within a community-based context.
- 4d) The new training and credentialing process should draw on the experiences and resources of organizations providing supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- 4e) A statewide assessment process should be developed that would confer certification.
- 4f) A statewide registry should be developed that would reflect certification status and to assure employers that certified workers are eligible for employment.

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