



Prevent Inappropriate Hospitalization of Children and Adults with DD

Problem:

Hospitals are being used as crisis placements for children and adults with developmental disabilities across the state. Since July 2018, the DD Ombuds has worked with over 50 children and adults with developmental disabilities who were or are stuck waiting in a hospital without any medical. The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) cannot provide them with an appropriate residential placement in the community.

Some individuals with developmental disabilities were taken to the hospital for a medical condition, but when they were ready for discharge, they had no place to go because their residential services provider had terminated their services. Other individuals were dropped off at the hospital by a provider who could no longer manage their care or by a family-member who could no longer provide the specialized services the person needed. These individuals with developmental disabilities spend weeks or months in a hospital, which is often traumatizing to both the individual and the hospital staff, because DDA cannot locate available residential supports or placement with staff to provide care.

Solution: Make changes to the service system to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities have access to services that prevent inappropriate hospitalization: 1. DDA provide residential services to all eligible clients so people can discharge from hospitals as soon as they are declared ready by medical personnel. 2. DDA provide enhanced crisis and behavior supports in the community to address changing needs and prevent hospitalizations.

Proposals:

- a) Require DDA to expand the data collected about all people with developmental disabilities who are taken to the hospital to find out why people are stuck there. This includes people coming out of residential service settings and private homes.
- b) Expand the number and types of specialized providers. DDA should analyze the number and type of specialized providers needed to meet the current demands for service in each Region. Using this data, DDA employ or contract directly with specialists who can provide the following services throughout the state: Psychological assessments; Consultation on behavior supports for family caregivers, staff, and medical providers; Behavior supports for people with developmental disabilities living in hospitals; Therapeutic mental and behavioral health services; and Medication management
- c) Direct DDA to identify and remove barriers to utilization of behavioral support, such as in-home consultation, for children and adults who reside with parents.
- d) Fund increased diversion bed, emergency respite or other bed capacity so individuals with developmental disabilities have an appropriate placement available if they experience a crisis and need residential services.

Questions or comments?

Betty Schwieterman—Office of Developmental Disabilities Ombuds
betty@ddombuds.org 833.727.8900 ext. 209

