

# Quality Community Supports and Services for Children and Adults with DD to Reduce Use of Crisis Services



## Problem:

The long-term care system in Washington State is ranked as one of the best in the country. Not so for individuals with developmental disabilities: Washington State ranks 37<sup>th</sup> in the country for fiscal effort for services for individuals with developmental disabilities according to the 2017 State of the State Report.

Staff turnover is close to 50% in residential supported living services, and likely higher since the pandemic. The highest number of complaints the DD Ombuds handles concerns access to DDA services, and discharge/transfer. The DD Ombuds sees a pattern of both children and adults with behavioral supports needs who are unable to access needed services to stay in their own home or at home with a parent. Budget cuts to the service system have been proposed as a result of the pandemic.

## Proposals:

- a. Preserve funding for services to children and adults with developmental disabilities.
- b. Mandate caseload forecasting for DDA community supports and services.
- c. Increase direct service workers wages in supported living to reduce turnover and increase retention of well-trained staff.
- d. Address the needs of the 14,000+ clients DDA has identified who asked for services but are waiting (no paid services caseload) by increasing availability of waiver services. Identify children and youth on the no paid services caseload, under the age of 21 and on Medicaid and determine if there are unmet needs and whether those can be met under the state Medicaid plan through EPSDT.

## Questions or comments?

Betty Schwieterman—Office of Developmental Disabilities Ombuds  
[betty@ddombuds.org](mailto:betty@ddombuds.org) 833.727.8900 ext. 209

