Building the developmental disability community’s 2022 Washington state legislative omnibus request

CAC Notebook Meeting, December 6, 2021
Your North Star Co-Facilitators, Eric Matthes and Anthony Nash
Original Timeline:

- **January - March**: Brainstorming calls
- **April - June**: Logistics calls
- **July & August**: Synthesize, strategize, and prioritize
- **September & October**: Ask legislative staff to prepare bill
- **November**: Get legislative co-sponsors; advertise the bill at forums, etc.
- **December**: Pre-file the Omnibus bill
Initial guiding principles

• If we don’t do something bold now, we’ll be struggling with the exact same challenges in 20 years.

• Our community has precious few resources. We can and should improve leveraging those resources, organizing around a singular focus.

• We won’t ever get what we don’t ask for.

• Those closest to the problems are closest to the solutions.
How did we do?

- The community, which consisted of self-advocates, people of color, families, and service providers, held close to 90 public meetings over 11 months.

- The community created and contributed to a spreadsheet that was and is open to the public to warehouse and categorize ideas.

- The community chose volunteer leaders to lead 8 workgroups and 1 main group

- The community collectively decided on prime and co-sponsors for our bill(s)

- The community generated 732 problems and solutions for communal consideration this session. 80 of those problems were presented to the legislators.

- The workgroups, at the request of legislators, prioritized their top 19 requests for the legislature to address this session.

- The remaining 61 requests remain on track to be addressed in next session’s bill(s)
Large Group

Health Care

Systems Accessibility

Day Services

Housing

Transportation

Civil Rights

Caregiving

Schools
The bill vehicles will look a little different than we had planned, but that’s okay!

What we wanted (omnibus bill)  What we’re getting this session
Final proposals to the legislature include:
Housing

1. Ask the legislature to create a 3-year plan to close all state run institutions.

2. Provide caseload forecasting for DD housing

3. Invest $120 million dollars in community based “scattered site” housing over the next 3 years.
Transportation

1. All drivers across all settings must be trained to properly secure wheelchairs. (Several wheelchair users complained that this is spotty at best)

2. People cannot access the restroom on long bus rides and need bathroom breaks, making it impossible for people to access medical appointments. This is especially problematic for people in rural areas.
Civil Rights

1. Benefits planning is not accessible to everyone. We need benefits planners for every person who needs them.

2. Sexual health education should be available and encouraged for people with I/DD, just as it is for students without I/DD. People with I/DD should be supported in expressing their gender identity and sexual orientation just as anyone without I/DD. Students with I/DD should be required to take the same health classes as their non-disabled peers.
Health Care

1. Increase the amount of money a person can make without losing Medicaid coverage.

2. Need Medicaid rates to increase so that more providers will accept individuals with IDD.

3. Implement TEFRA to have Apple Health cover children between 0-18 years old with a disability, regardless of DDA status.
Day Services

1. Allow for community inclusion and individualized employment to be concurrent/co-occurring waiver services.

2. DDA should include safety support tasks (DDA refers to this as “supervision”) as part of an individual’s care plan, per assessment, and hours should be built into all services without restricting the individual’s rights to autonomy or their ability to make their own decisions and direct their own care. (This used to be called "cognitive supervision" but was removed because of budget scarcity. Families need it put back in because it would allow families to work and allow people to have more activities during the day)

3. Provider rates need to be increased and made equitable between employment and day services contracts (individual employment, community inclusion, and community engagement).
Caregiving

1. Upfront and immediate investments are needed to give agency and IP caregivers a livable wage that is self-sufficient, both in pay and benefits. Wages should be automatically increased regularly with other cost-of-living or minimum wage increases and caregivers should earn a thriving wage no matter whether they are in a rural or metropolitan area. (Self sufficient wage)

2. Compensation for training/orientation of new caregiver is critical to continuity of care.
Schools

1. Restraints and seclusions need to be eliminated. Schools should have to call CPS when students are neglected or abused by school staff. Seclusion should be clearly defined and reporting requirements need to be studied and enforced. Adults in school need to be trained in de-escalation.

2. Create video monitoring and requirements for preservation of footage, and at least 1 supervising adult as better safety measures on school buses.

3. Require special education/IEP training as part of college's teacher prep programs and WA's certification process for teaching staff classified administrative and Certificated Staff. Substitutes if they have worked longer than 30 days in a school year.
Systems Accessibility

1. Shift to support needs-based access vs. eligibility-based access. This should be done via caseload forecasting of all HCBS waivers, with a commitment to fund 100% of everyone who needs services.

2. Translate information, documents and user interfaces in plain English and other languages appropriate for the recipient; provide qualified interpretation and translation services to people from diverse cultures and languages; distribute information using alternative delivery methods including visual/video formats. (This will start with DDA and then extend to other agencies.)
In addition to the North Star Coalition’s requests, Sen. Randall and Rep. Taylor have announced the creation of a...

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