



VOICES & VISIONS

A VOICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ❖ A PROMISING VISION FOR TOMORROW

Ups & Downs in the 2009 General Assembly

The recently concluded legislative session was an especially notable one with significant votes both for and against measures of interest to Virginians with disabilities. Understandably, the current financial situation focused attention on budgetary impacts, but other key issues were also addressed.

To maintain Virginia's eligibility for federal stimulus funds, the legislature deleted proposed state cuts to Medicaid waiver programs before passing an amended biennial budget. A cap on the number of individuals who could be served under the Elderly and Disabled with Consumer Direction (EDCD) Waiver and a change from an individual to an aggregate cost methodology under all of the home and community based waivers were eliminated. Both changes would have limited waiver eligibility or services, potentially increasing institutionalization.

The Governor's proposals for Southeastern Virginia Training Center (SEVTC) and Central Virginia Training Center (CVTC) were greatly modified by the General Assembly and attracted considerable

public and media attention. His original budget amendments shifted \$18.5 million of \$43 million in CVTC capital outlay funds from renova-



State Capitol and our old home from our new home (see page 2)

tion of current buildings to creation of community housing for CVTC residents. He also proposed the closure of SEVTC and the redirection of its capital outlay funds to community housing for its residents. The Virginia Alliance for Community, of which the Board is a founding member, had earlier recommended the redirection of all CVTC capital outlay funds to community housing for CVTC residents, and it supported the Governor's proposed redirection of resources for both institutions.

After much debate, the General Assembly approved building a smaller 75-bed facility on the current SEVTC site and diverted \$10 million of the \$18.5 million proposed for community housing for CVTC residents toward the downsizing of SEVTC, leaving \$8.5 million for community housing at CVTC. While these measures were considerably less than community integration advocates had encouraged, they did mark a significant, even historical, change in priorities for the Commonwealth. The 2009 session marks the first time that state capital outlay funds have been earmarked for community housing.

No additional Individual and Family Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver slots were approved; however, 400 additional Mental Retardation (MR) Waiver slots, spread over the current biennium, were. A three percent increase

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Paths to Advocacy & Leadership

Lisbet Dula, Chair, Virginia Board for People with Disabilities



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Cecily Rodriguez

In this letter to you, I am looking toward the end of my term on the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. I have been a Board member for the past seven years and have had the wonderful opportunity to serve as its Chair and work with many great advocates. The Board has provided me with many adventures and experiences.

I remember my first meeting. I was completely intimidated sitting around the table with the other thirty-nine Board members, trying to learn what the protocol was to participate in the meeting and how to work the microphone. I had to recuse myself from a vote, and I was extremely shy about using it and speaking in front of everyone. If you had told me that I would end up facilitating those very meetings as the Chair of the Board for three years, I think that I would have run away as quickly as my wheels could roll! But Executive Director Heidi Lawyer and her staff mentored me every step of the way. I learned skills and confidence, achieving goals that I would have never dreamed I could do.

My own learning path on the Board makes me reflect on the path each of us takes individually to leadership roles in our own lives, the communities where

we live, and beyond. It is hard to imagine how much impact we can make as one advocate, but as we see things around us needing to be done and start doing them, we gain skills, make connections, and see our impact expand.

The Board has embarked on a campaign themed "Able to Choose" to raise public awareness of the importance of making all aspects of community life accessible. In their own ways, Virginians with disabilities, together with friends and fellow advocates, each have a role to play in changing attitudes and creating accessible communities where everyone can participate equally.

Let's be proud of our independent lifestyles and all the aspects of having a disability that make us unique. We are all important parts of the diversity of Virginia, and we should be proud to be who we are and to take part in our communities.

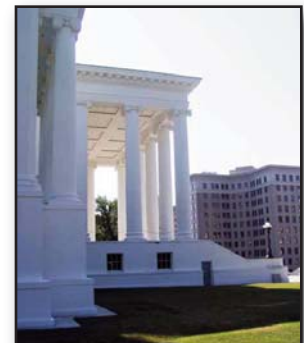
I look forward to continuing to work with each of you as we advocate for our civil rights and to the excitement of hearing reports of all the unique ways you are working to create a better, stronger Virginia for everyone. ♾

We've Moved!

On March 27, the Board's offices were relocated from the 9th Street State Office Building, the former Richmond Hotel just northwest of Capitol Square, to the renovated Washington State Office Building, constructed in 1923, at the southeast corner of Capitol Square.

Our telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and website are unchanged, but we have a new mailing address:

**Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
Washington Building, Capitol Square
1100 Bank Street, 7th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219**



State Capitol and new home
from our old home
(see page 1)



Collaborator's Update: Partnership for Capacity Development

John A. Toscano, MSW, MBA, President & CEO, Commonwealth Autism Service

Commonwealth Autism Service's Unique and Effective Model for Systems Change in Autism

John Toscano is a member of the Board, and this article is part of a continuing series of updates on the activities of its community partners. To learn more about Commonwealth Autism Service, visit www.autismva.org.



Commonwealth Autism Service (CAS) has developed a unique service delivery model in support of school systems and other autism service providers. Our Partnership for Capacity Development is unique to Virginia and from our knowledge unlike any other model in use across the country.

Unlike traditional consultative and didactic training models, the hallmark of this model is the deployment of CAS staff directly into the service providers' environment. Our clinical and management teams support one or more embedded CAS staff members as they work intimately with all appropriate personnel to assess areas of strength and need, develop an action plan, and provide staff development. We meet regularly with our partners to discuss outcomes and to plan for the future. This model requires a strong and deep commitment to long-term capacity development and systems change.

The relationship begins with Commonwealth Autism Service leading the partners in a strategic discussion about autism service delivery in their organization and what their future vision looks like. We then undertake a comprehensive review utilizing an audit package we have developed which includes survey instruments, observations, questionnaires, and focus groups applied to all constituencies. The final report serves as the starting point for Capacity Development and Systems Change.

Additionally, through collaboration with the University of Mary Washington (UMW), we are able to bring a coursework sequence in behavior analysis to our partners. Commonwealth Autism Service developed the coursework at UMW in 2007 for the three course sequence in Behavior Analysis that serves as the foundation for acquiring certification as a Board Certified assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA). In our partnerships, embedded CAS staff deliver the UMW coursework, then provide the clinical supervision hours required to sit for the BCaBA certification exam. This helps to "close the loop" in capacity development as it leaves permanent change in the form of trained and certified personnel.

In 2009, Commonwealth Autism Service will have embedded staff serving in excess of forty school divisions in the Commonwealth. ♡♡

No Choices Day at the General Assembly

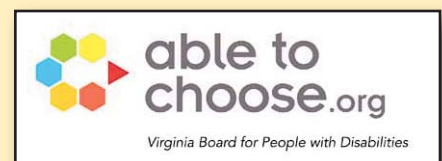
Tom Driscoll, Strategic Planning & Marketing Manager

After months of research, planning, and preparation, the Board-sponsored Able to Choose public awareness campaign officially "launched" on February 11, the day when each house of Virginia's General Assembly must have completed work on its own business and moves on to consider measures from the other house. Board staff were on hand on "crossover" day, as the campaign team led by BrandSync, LLC, introduced its principal message to legislators: Individuals with disabilities of all types and degrees can and do live successfully in communities of their own choice when individually appropriate services and supports are available to them. The day's events emphasized that those individually appropriate supports are currently often unavailable.

In the morning, legislators, their aides and staff, and other visitors to the General Assembly building were invited to a "coffee break" where they were given one choice – black coffee in a medium cup, no cream, no sugar, no lattes, just black coffee in a medium cup. This friendly reminder of the limited options for Virginians with disabilities is the theme of four new public service announcements (PSAs) premiered at the event. Additional displays highlighted the stories of Virginians living successfully in the community, including alumni of the Board's Partners in Policymaking and Youth Leadership Forum programs.

At midday, disability advocates joined the team in delivering lunch from a mock Chinese restaurant menu to legislators' offices – item #46, plain white rice, the only item on the menu – representing Virginia's ranking of forty-sixth among all states in funding of community supports. At both the coffee break and during the lunchtime deliveries, campaign brochures were distributed, and legislators were engaged about the need to

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A Practicum—Partners In Policymaking at the General Assembly

Erin Hickey, Sponsored Programs Assistant



On April 4, in a hearing room at Virginia's state capitol, twenty-seven advocates for the rights of people with disabilities gave testimony to a panel of distinguished guests. This legislative exercise represents one of the final first steps that Partners in

Policymaking take on what will be a lifelong path.

Their testimony covered a wide range of topics.

Several self-advocates discussed the need for affordable housing and gave examples of how they and their friends are living and working successfully within their communities. Other self-advocates and parents spoke passionately on the need to eliminate Medicaid waiver waiting lists. Panelists learned that military families can spend years on waiting lists only to be moved back to the end of the list if they are transferred into or out of a state. One parent shared her experiences trying to get hearing aides for her daughter through insurance and being told that they were considered "cosmetic" and not covered by her policy.

The 2009 Partners have completed seven of eight two-day training sessions and will graduate on May 16. Over the last eight months, they have acquired information and skills needed to become knowledgeable and effective advocates. At the final session, they will present their personal advocacy projects. Varied and intriguing, the projects range from an original children's book celebrating inclusion to a business that trains people with disabilities in construction and house renovation.

Virginia Partners can be found throughout the Commonwealth, speaking about and striving for the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities. Past graduates have developed projects begun during their PIP training into influential programs. There is no doubt that the Class of 2009 will follow suit. Upon completion of the program, they join a nationwide network of parents and self-advocates working to create systems change. Congratulations to the PIP Class of 2009! ♡♡



Partner, Angela Sadsad

For information on how to become a
PARTNER IN POLICYMAKING
and better find your way as an advocate,
visit www.vaboard.org/policymaking.htm.
The application deadline for the Class of 2010
is April 30, 2009.

Photos by Regina Craig, PIP 2009



Partner, Richard Edge

Ups & Downs in the 2009 General Assembly (continued from page 1)

in reimbursement rates for personal care services was also approved. As the session drew to a close, a proposal was resurrected and passed expressing the General Assembly's intent to gradually phase-in additional slots to end the waiting lists for both the DD and MR waivers by 2018.

Due to concerns raised about eligibility for certain federal funding streams, last year's bill to substitute "intellectual disabilities" (ID) for "mental retardation" in state statutes and operations was not reaffirmed this year as required for enactment. The name of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS), however, was changed to the Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services (DBDS), effective July 1, 2009, and it is anticipated that advocates will continue to strongly pursue a complete transition by the state from the use of MR to ID. Reinforcing its new name, DMHMRSAS positions with expertise in autism and developmental disabilities were retained in the final budget.

State legislators also took steps to address parents' concerns regarding proposed changes in the state's special education regulations. In response to a regulatory change which would have shortened the time to appeal a due process hearing from one year to 90 days, the General Assembly enacted a code change ensuring a 180 day statute of limitations for appeals.

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Celebrating Virginia's 10th Annual Youth Leadership Forum!

Kara White, Sponsored Programs Assistant

This summer from July 13-17, at Christopher Newport University, the Virginia Youth Leadership Forum will celebrate its tenth anniversary as the premier leadership development program for high school students with disabilities in the Commonwealth. YLF is proud of its more than 180 graduates and their accomplishments in setting and achieving their goals. They are leaders in their schools and communities and outstanding role models for all high school students and young adults.

The 2009 YLF will mark this milestone with some exciting events and activities. Of special mention, YLF Delegates will participate in hosting a display of the impressive and nationally acclaimed "It's Our Story" exhibit, featuring a 12 by 19-foot sculpture of the American flag containing over 600 "story sticks." The Story Flag's mission "to evolve policy, attitudes, and employment opportunities for the disability community" utilizes a powerful blend of traditional storytelling and the latest technology.

The exhibit's creators explain its vision this way: "In 1999, the World Bank asked 60,000 people living on less than a dollar a day to identify the biggest hurdle to their advancement. It wasn't food, shelter, or health care. It was access to a voice. By empowering people to tell their stories, 'It's Our Story' gives a voice to the voiceless, and to the people who fight for our freedom."

The Board thanks the Statewide Independent Living Council for its support in bringing the "It's Our

Story" exhibit to YLF for its 10th anniversary and for giving the YLF Delegates yet another opportunity for leadership by contributing their unique stories. Watch for more information on the exhibit coming soon. We look forward to a successful and memorable 2009 Youth Leadership Forum. ♾



It's Our Story from the grass roots...to the grass tops...



Learn more at <http://dmi-us.blogspot.com/>.

Ups & Downs in the 2009 General Assembly *(continued from page 4)*

Further improving a program strongly supported by the Board and its affordable, accessible housing partners, the legislature also expanded the annual individual limit for the state's Livable Home Tax Credit from \$500 to \$2,000 and increased the percentage of eligible retrofitting costs from 25% to 50%. "Sunset" for the Community Integration Advisory Commission was extended until July 2010, and the requirement for the Board's periodic assessment of Virginia's disability services system was changed from every two years to every three years.

The House of Delegates and the Senate approved a joint resolution, initiated and championed by the Board's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) alumni, to designate October as Disability History and Awareness Month in Virginia's public schools. YLF alumni have been invited by the Department of Education to assist in developing appropriate curriculum for its observance to begin this fall.

Measures not approved by the legislature, that attracted considerable attention and are likely to reappear at future sessions, included the mandating of private insurance coverage for autism services, the creation of a Virginia Housing Trust Fund, and several measures to provide tuition assistance or scholarships for children with disabilities to attend private schools of their families' choice.

Final actions on legislation and the budget, including the General Assembly's response to amendments and vetoes by the Governor, will take place before this issue goes to press. ♾

Partnering to Promote State Employment of People with Disabilities

Lynne Talley, Grants Manager

In January 2007, Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (VCU-RRTC, www.worksupport.com) began work on a Board-funded project to increase state government employment for people with disabilities. This initiative's core strategy was to apply to the public sector a private sector model, created by RRTC under previous Board grants, that partners staffing organizations and people with disabilities seeking employment. When "Promoting Partnerships and Employment for Virginians with Disabilities" ended on December 31, 2008, it had exceeded expectations and laid a strong foundation for future systemic impact on state government employment.

As reported earlier in V&V, the Governor's Senior Advisor for Disability Issues in the Workforce, Ed Turner, successfully championed the effort to build support for this initiative at the highest levels. On October 23, 2007, Governor Kaine signed Executive Directive Number Eight (ED#8) instructing all executive branch agencies including institutions of higher education, boards, and commissions to expand existing efforts to recruit, accommodate, retain, and advance people with disabilities for state government positions. Progress by state agencies in fulfilling the Governor's directive will be documented by a required annual progress report from the Secretary of Administration and the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM).

Extensive training and effective cooperation among the projects' partners were key to the project's success. RRTC, in conjunction with its collaborators, conducted five regional seminars and a six-part webcast series covering disability awareness, interviewing candidates with disabilities, recruiting and hiring people with disabilities, job coaching, assistive technology with rehabilitation engineering, and other topics. In addition to those already named, the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, The Choice Group and Career Support Services employment services organizations, and the Caliper, Abacus, and Maxim state-approved staffing organizations worked together to train more than 1,400 people. Most were state agency personnel from all across the

Commonwealth, but other employers were reached as well. In addition, DHRM continues to promote completion of RRTC's Disability Awareness online training by posting a prominent link to the seminar at www.dhrm.virginia.gov.

During the project, forty-two individuals were placed in employment, mostly in state agencies but also in local government and nonprofit organizations. Thirty have developmental disabilities, and twelve have other disabilities. Fifteen have continued in employment for more than six months. Twenty-five placements involved staffing organizations; however, in the course of training, it was discovered that they are not used by some state agencies. As a result, seventeen individuals were directly hired through DRS.

A few problems were encountered during the project, such as individual managers who were biased against even interviewing people with disabilities. These

limited difficulties did not prevent the project from making great strides in educating state personnel and improving public sector employment for people with disabilities.

Education efforts will be ongoing. DHRM will create a new Managing Virginia module focusing on disability awareness issues, which should be operational by July 2009, that will provide guidance and assistance to all new hires and employees promoted to be first line managers. The Governor's directive will continue to provide a mechanism to promote and monitor progress in state employment, support, and advancement of workers with disabilities. ♡♡



VCU-RRTC's final report and its desktop resource, "A Guide to Increasing the Successful Recruitment and Hiring of People with Disabilities: Tools and Resources for Directors, Managers, and Staff," are available under Grant Highlights at www.vaboard.org/grants.htm.

"There's No Place Like Home"—Outreach to Families

Linda Redmond, Research, Policy & Program Manager

The Board recently concluded funding of a project addressing its commitment to community inclusion and its desire to keep families together and improve quality of life for children with significant developmental disabilities. "Outreach to Families of Children at Risk of Institutional Placement or Currently Residing in Institutions" was conducted by the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL) from July 2007 through December 2008.

The project sought to educate the families of children with disabilities and the staff of institutions currently housing children about available community services and to provide technical assistance to prevent additional institutionalizations or to transition children back to their families' homes in the community. In the process, it identified persistent barriers to obtaining community services and to successful transitions.



Representatives from Virginia's sixteen Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and twelve "Parent Partners" were trained to provide outreach to parents of institutionalized and at-risk children and to institutional staff. Nineteen community workshops were held for families on the wide array of available community supports, including Medicaid State Plan, Medicaid Home & Community Based Waivers, and other healthcare and disability services resources. Individual follow-ups were made by phone or in-person to link families with specific services, and a toll-free number was provided for further information and referrals about Medicaid Waivers.

Concurrently, a project committee identified nursing homes and Intermediate Care Facilities for Mental Retardation (ICFs/MR) with residents ages 21 and under with disabilities and began a dialogue with their leaderships about the project. Outreach workshops conducted at five of those facilities were primarily attended by staff but, at one, twenty-two parents participated. Of the ten institutions, only one indicated that its residents' families would be interested in information about community services. Their reasons included a perception that discussing options would be stressful to parents who had adjusted to the difficult institutional placement decision, assuming that needed services did not exist in their communities, and that the parents would be unable to provide needed supports in their homes. These perceptions



were a clear barrier to more direct family outreach at some facilities.

Nonetheless, CIL representatives were able to meet with several families interested in transition information. During the grant period, one child transitioned home, and the parents reported a marked improvement in that child's health, behaviors, and happiness as a result. Transition efforts began for two additional children and will be completed after the end of the Board's funding of the project.

Other significant project outcomes included approximately 500 individuals, mostly parents, trained on available community resources, 76 youth who received community services and supports, five who received supports to reach their educational goals, and six who received services needed to reach developmental goals. ♡♡

Able to Choose

(continued from page 3)

increase community supports and make them more person-centered.

A second round of deliveries later in the day dropped off bags



of candies, with multiple colors and flavors, further calling attention to the lack of choices offered earlier. Prominent placements of the campaign's logo, as well as the individual conversations, encouraged visits to the Able to Choose website for more personal stories, news, and resources and to view the PSAs.

Along with its main website, Able to Choose makes extensive use of online social media—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and more—to spread its message. New personal stories continue to be posted to the website, and their coverage in print and broadcast media will be strongly promoted.

Additional legislative outreach, community events, and grassroots advocacy are planned and will be widely publicized. Visit www.AbletoChoose.org, check out its stories, resources, and links, pledge your support, and help spread the message. ♡♡

State Trends in Facility Rebuilding

Linda Redmond, Research, Policy & Program Manager

As the cover story on 2009 legislative activity reports, for the first time, state capital outlay funds have been committed to create community housing for current residents of Virginia's Training Centers. In doing so, Virginia joins a trend long underway in most other states of shifting resources from institutions to community supports. Research shows that, nationwide, states are responding to persistent and insistent requests by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and their families to downsize and ultimately close large, aging "training" or "development" centers in favor of community integration. States also recognize that maintaining large facilities cannot be fiscally sustained due to ever-rising maintenance and remodeling costs required by higher state and federal physical plant and program standards.

According to annual data from Minnesota's Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTCCL, www rtccl.umn.edu), only seventeen states built new state-operated ID/DD institutions over the past thirty years, mostly in the early 1980s. These new buildings were constructed as part of those states' overall strategic plans to eliminate or significantly reduce their number of facilities and target remaining ones at individuals with ID/DD having co-occurring mental illness, challenging behaviors, or criminal justice involvement. Typically, these smaller facilities house forty to eighty residents for time-limited, short-term stays for crisis stabilization or specialized behavioral assessment and treatment planning. In a few states, they were located on the grounds of state psychiatric facilities as a part of facility consolidation and sometimes later transferred to their use as ID/DD clients were integrated into communities. The following useful examples illustrate this trend.

California has closed six state ID/DD centers, is closing another, and in the past decade, has opened three

"It is rare that new state institutions are created at all. ...States are continuing to downsize and to close facilities. There is now a substantial discussion within states about closing their institutions as they face unprecedented budget challenges."

Charlie Lakin, Director, Research & Training Center on Community Living, University of Minnesota.



Virginia Alliance for Community Rally for Reform, Capitol Square in Richmond, December 3, 2008

specialized state-operated facilities. One provides secure treatment for up to ninety-six residents with forensic status or severe maladaptive behaviors such as assaults and sexual offenses. The other two are community-based ID/DD facilities for forty-five and sixty residents, respectively, with significant challenging behaviors.

Minnesota has closed nine state ID/DD institutions, leaving only one with a capacity of forty-eight residents that opened in 1997. That facility serves only adults with ID/DD who have extreme behavioral issues or have co-occurring mental illness that poses a public safety risk.

Virginia's neighbor, Tennessee, is currently completing twelve community homes as part of closing one of its three remaining large ID/DD centers while continuing to downsize the other two. These "New Life" Community Homes (www.state.tn.us/dmrs/WestTNCommunityHomes/index.html) will transition forty-eight individuals with ID/DD and significant medical needs into state-operated, community-based Intermediate Care Facilities for Mental Retardation (ICFs/MR) with four residents each.

The nation's and Virginia's remaining large ID/DD institutions stand as concrete and mortar symbols of long-prevailing but outmoded attitudes toward individuals with disabilities from a time when they were marginalized and ostracized to isolate and hide them from the community. While Virginia has a long way to go to catch up with states that have taken the lead in downsizing and closing institutions and reallocating their funding to community housing, congratulations are in order for its significant first step taken this year. ♡

Helping Older Virginians Avoid Nursing Homes

Katherine Lawson, Community Outreach & Program Manager

The Commonwealth continues to seek additional resources and innovative solutions to reduce dependence on institutionalization in favor of more effective and person-centered community supports for Virginians with disabilities of all ages. In October 2008, the Department for the Aging (VDA) began a new program to reduce the number of individuals aged sixty-five and older who must resort to nursing homes to obtain services and assistance with daily activities due to health needs or disabilities. This pilot project, funded by a \$759,000 grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging, continues through May 2010 and targets individuals served by three of the state's Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) – Bay Aging, the Jefferson Area Board for Aging, and the Valley Program for Aging Services.

In a recent interview, Kathy Miller, VDA's Director of Long Term Care, described the added dimension that these new federal resources bring to Virginia's efforts to build community supports that maintain independence and self-determination. The project further supports the wise use of limited private and public resources by avoiding expensive nursing home care in favor of home and community based services, both reducing the need for families to "spend down" their assets to qualify for assistance and reducing Medicaid costs.

To be eligible, individuals must have incomes at or below 300% of SSI and be likely to be denied Medicaid eligibility due to excess resources. They must also lack an informal support system, such as a family caregiver, or their caregivers must be demonstrating difficulty in meeting their needs. Dependence on assistance in two to four activities of daily living, cognitive impairments requiring prompting or supervision and affecting decision-making abilities, especially to avoid injury or in emergencies, and specific evidence of a health condition that requires at least monthly monitoring and medical or skilled care must be indicated as well.

VDA's anticipates serving a minimum of fifty-five individuals through the pilot program. Each will receive up to \$1,200 per month for in-home care supports. This financial assistance will be coupled with an emphasis on person-centered planning and consumer choice and control of the services received.

The Departments of Medical Assistance Services and Social Services will join the collaborators already mentioned in managing the grant. Virginia's "No Wrong Door" initiative, which includes the new Virginia Easy

Access online information and referral portal, also managed by VDA, will be key resource.

At the project's conclusion, VDA hopes that more than 80% of support recipients will have avoided entering a nursing home and that at least 85% of them, or their caregivers, will report that the availability of flexible funding and self-directed services have improved their lives. It is also hoped that at least 85% will report excellent or good experiences with the No Wrong Door system.



VDA's nursing home diversion effort joins a growing number of initiatives seeking to transform Virginia's service system, many described in previous issues of V&V. These include No Wrong Door, the Money Follows the Person demonstration project, and the Board-funded Nursing Home Outreach

and Outreach to Families projects that have helped transition individuals with disabilities, old and young, out of institutions and avoid others' admission to them. Virginia's Veterans Hospitals in Hampton and Richmond are engaged in a similar federally supported pilot project addressing the needs of veterans with disabilities, and just as each of the projects listed above have learned from each other, VDA and the Veterans Administration are sharing what they learn. ♡♡

For more information on U.S. Administration on Aging Nursing Home Diversion Grants, visit www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/HCLTC/NH/D/index.aspx. To learn more about the Virginia Department for the Aging, go to www.vda.virginia.gov.

The Old Dominion Chapter, National Spinal Cord Injury Association's new Craig H. Neilsen Resource Center features a wide variety of printed, audio-visual, and online materials to assist individuals with spinal cord injuries or disease with successful community living. Located in their office at 5206 Markel Road, Suite 105, Richmond, VA 23230 (near Willow Lawn Shopping Center), the Center is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment. In some situations, resources may be available to individuals who are hospitalized or otherwise unable to visit the Center. A complete listing of materials will soon be available online. **More information** is available by calling 804-726-4990, by e-mailing info@odcnsia.org, or in their March newsletter at www.odcnsia.org/newsletter.htm.

Meetings & Events of Interest

Statewide Independent Living Council Committee Meeting

April 22-23
Department of Rehabilitative Services - Eastern Shore
Richard Kriner (804) 662-7509, richard.kriner@drs.virginia.gov

Long-Term Care Administrators Board Meeting

May 5 9:30 am
Board of Long-Term Care Administrators
Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center,
9960 Mayland Drive, 2nd Floor, Suite 201,
Conference Room#2, Richmond, VA
Lisa R. Hahn, (804) 367-4595, lisa.hahn@dhp.virginia.gov

State and Local Advisory Team (SLAT)

May 7 9:30am
Department of Social Services
1604 Santa Rosa Road,
Richmond Room, Richmond, VA
Marsha Mucha, (804) 662-9816,
marsha.mucha@csa.virginia.gov

State Rehabilitation Council

May 11 10:30am
Department of Rehabilitative Services
8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond, VA
Barbara Tyson, (804) 662-7010, barbara.tyson@drs.virginia.gov

Virginia Assistive Technology Advisory Council

June 10 10:00am
Department of Rehabilitative Services
8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond, VA
Robert W. Krollman, (804) 662-9994, robert.krollman@drs.virginia.gov

Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund Advisory Board

June 12 10:00am
Department of Rehabilitative Services
8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Conference Room 101, Richmond, VA
Kristie Chamberlain, (804) 662-7154, kristie.chamberlain@drs.virginia.gov

Statewide Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

June 13 10:00am
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
397 Azalea Avenue Room 1 and 2, Richmond, VA
Susan D. Payne, (804) 371-3184, Susan.Payne@dbvi.virginia.gov

Board for the Blind and Visually Impaired Quarterly Board Meeting

July 14 1:00pm
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
397 Azalea Avenue Room 1 and 2, Richmond, VA
Eva F. Ampey, (804) 371-3110, Eva.Ampey@DBVI.virginia.gov

Virginia Brain Injury Council Quarterly Meeting

July 24 1:00pm
Department of Rehabilitative Services
8004 Franklin Farms Drive,
Conference Rooms 103-105,
Richmond, VA
Kristie Chamberlain, (804) 662-7154,
kristie.chamberlain@drs.virginia.gov

**Next Board Meeting
June 10, 2009
Wyndham Richmond
Airport Hotel
4700 S. Laburnum Avenue
Richmond, VA**

Statewide Independent Living Council Committee Meeting

July 22-23
Department of Rehabilitative Services - Fredericksburg
Richard Kriner, (804) 662-7509, richard.kriner@drs.virginia.gov

Governing Board

July 28 9:00am
Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy
1910 Byrd Avenue, Suite 5, Richmond, VA
Lisa Shehi, (800) 552-3962, lisa.shehi@vopa.virginia.gov

**Meeting agendas, minutes, and public comment policies can be found at
www.vaboard.org/aboutvbpd.htm.**

For meetings and events across Virginia, visit www.vaboard.org/meetings.htm

Heidi Lawyer Executive Director

Teri Barker-Morgan	Programs Manager
Kelly Bolden	Program Support Tech, Sr.
Hsing-Jung Chen	Disability Policy Fellow
Tom Driscoll	Strategic & Marketing Manager
Erin Hickey	Sponsored Programs Assistant
Katherine Lawson	Community Outreach & Program Manager
Karen Lindley	Administrative Coordinator, Sr.
Nan Pemberton	Director of Administration
Linda Redmond	Research, Policy & Program Manager
Sandra Smalls	Executive Assistant
Lynne Talley	Grants Manager
Kara White	Sponsored Programs Assistant



VIRGINIA BOARD FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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