



connection

The Commonwealth's Developmental Disabilities Council

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Dental Care for Adults with Disabilities

By Teri Barker-Morgan

"Oral health care for adults with disabilities is a health care area that has received scant attention. It is estimated that one out of two persons with a significant disability cannot find a professional resource to provide appropriate and necessary dental care. Lack of access to dental services for this growing segment of our population is reaching critical levels and is a national dilemma."



That quote could be from 2011, yet it was written by Doris Stiefel, who ran the University of Washington's Dental Education in Care of Persons with Disabilities in the 1980's.

Research shows the lack of affordable, accessible dental care has been a long standing issue for children and adults with disabilities. The consequences of a lack of dental care are significant, including higher risk of heart disease, increased behavioral challenges and social isolation.

A lack of training has often been cited by dentists as a reason for not providing dental care to children and adults with disabilities. Hours devoted to training for the care of people with significant disabilities varies widely among dental hygiene students and physicians.

To address training, affordability and access concerns, in 2009 the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) awarded the Integrated Dental Services Initiative grant to Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC). The goal of this project was to build regional capability, capacity and commitment for the provision of dental health services to people with developmental disabilities. NVTC partnered with the Arc of Northern Virginia to accomplish this goal through the following objectives: dental self-advocacy and education activities; training of dental professionals in treating individual with disabilities; increasing access to dental services in private practice dental settings; and, developing a dental rotation internship with Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Dentistry on providing dental services to individuals with disabilities.

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Board Members

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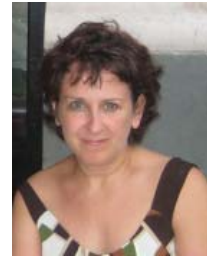
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Where will you be?

By Heidi Lawyer



In the wake of the U.S. Department of Justice findings from its investigation into Central Virginia Training Center and the Commonwealth's community-based services, historic opportunities await individuals with disabilities, their family members, and advocates. Whatever the final settlement with DOJ may entail, it is clear that the Commonwealth's bias towards providing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in institutions must and will end. Providing quality, safe, community-based supports is the future.

Change will not happen instantly, and Virginians need to be thoughtful as it is implemented to prevent unintended consequences. The Commonwealth must be ever vigilant to ensure that people don't move from large state-run institutions to publicly or privately operated "community" institutions. Careful planning and making the right decisions will not be easy, but the result will improve lives and alter our communities for the better. What role will you play, and how will you remember the coming years of change?

There are usually a few events in a lifetime that alter our lives, our attitudes, our politics, our actions—and our lives—that they are forever embedded in our psyche. We remember specific details of the day vividly. Who can forget the horrific events of September 11, 2001?

Yet other events leave lasting images, too—the 1963 March on Washington, where more than 250,000 demonstrators heard Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Much has changed since the 60's.

Events that have shaped the disability rights movement have frequently been more subtle, occurring gradually versus a specific day. These events have been of equal significance—the passage of a multitude of civil rights laws and court decisions mandating non-discrimination, equal access and equal opportunity—the promises of which are yet to be fully realized; the rise and success of the independent living movement; the closure of state institutions; changes in our lexicon, and the strong and expanding voice of self-advocates in pursuit of their human and civil rights.

In Virginia, progress and change have been slow and incremental, the results measured by years of hard work and advocacy. As we create history through new opportunities, we all have a role to play in how change is pursued, how quickly (or slowly) we effect it, and how we remember and record it.

Will you remember where you were when:

- ▶ Virginia closes its first Training Center—and its last?
- ▶ Segregated sub-minimum wage workshops are no longer accepted as "employment"?
- ▶ Your child is included in *No Child Left Behind*?
- ▶ Insular communities no longer avow "*not in my backyard*" but instead seek out and welcome diverse, inclusive communities?

Those who read about the history will recognize that the world was changed because of your efforts...so remember the dates of these historic moments in the lives of people with disabilities in the Commonwealth. ■

Highlights from the 2010 Program Performance Report

By Lynne Talley

Each year the Board, as Virginia's DD Council, submits an annual Program Performance Report (PPR) to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) documenting the outcomes of activities authorized and funded by the DD Act and guided by the State Plan goals and objectives. The ADD uses these reports to inform Congress and others of the outcomes achieved by DD Councils and their community partners to meet the goals of the DD Act. The Board submitted its PPR in December 2010 for the period October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2010, and ADD approved the PPR in April 2011.

FFY2010 was a productive year in which the Board continued to broaden and intensify its advocacy efforts through significantly expanded, higher quality marketing and outreach efforts, position papers, legislative and regulatory public comment, and partnerships with agencies, disability organizations, self-advocates with disabilities and other key stakeholders. The majority of the Board's sponsored programs and grant projects met or exceeded their goals. Following are a few examples that highlight 2010 Board projects and outcomes, organized by Area of Emphasis. A full narrative report is available under Federal Program Performance Reports at www.vaboard.org/reports.htm.

Housing & Transportation:

- ▶ Through a contract with the EasyLiving Home Program in Virginia, 219 people (including realtors and builders) were trained in the benefits of Universal Design (UD) and the inclusion of UD features in MLS listings. 3 houses were built and certified as EasyLiving Homes.
- ▶ Through the Board's policy work and collaboration, the State Board for DBHDS adopted Policy 4023, which emphasizes the importance of separating housing and services.
- ▶ Through a previously funded grant to Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, the Transportation & Housing Alliance Toolkit (THA), a comprehensive catalog of tools and resources for systemic planning, continues to be utilized. Transportation services have been developed, improved or enhanced through coordinated planning and needs assessments that capture the needs and desires of all residents. The Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission used the THA Toolkit in the development of their coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan resulting in 137 individuals with disabilities gaining access to transportation and new transit routes.
- ▶ Through a grant to SeniorNavigator, the "Creating a Community-Based Network of VaNavigator Centers" (VaNavigator Centers) project worked with 49 localities to expand transportation efforts and develop new transportation programs to ensure that individuals with disabilities were included in programs which had previously targeted the aging population.

Health:

- ▶ Through a grant to Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC), the "Integrated Dental Services Initiative" developed and implemented a program to improve community dental services for adults with developmental and other disabilities. 166 adults with disabilities and dental professionals were trained in dental care and hygiene. Dentists in the program committed to follow-up care for the individuals at their community offices. NVTC is also working with VCU Health Systems School of Dentistry on a special needs dentistry internship program.

Cross-Cutting:

- ▶ The Board continued to expand outreach and policy activities within traditional disability constituencies as well as to broader audiences, reaching approximately 270 state and local government leaders and 1.2 million general public. In addition, the Board developed and released its "Benchmarks for Evaluating Public Policy in Virginia."
- ▶ The VaNavigator grant educated 149 local government leaders about the challenges facing adults with disabilities in accessing services and the value of a 1-stop site for services information, assistance and needs of elderly and adults with disabilities. This resulted in 205 VaNavigator centers established throughout the Commonwealth with approximately 1/3 of the centers located in rural and/or poverty areas. ■

Employment First Efforts in VA

By Lynne Talley

The Board, along with many other partners such as disability agencies and self-advocates, is a member of the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) Advisory Group which is spearheaded by the Department for Behavioral Health & Developmental Services. One of the strategies to achieve the SELN's goal of increased integrated and competitive employment for people with disabilities is to develop and implement an Employment First policy in Virginia.

Twenty six states have made a commitment to Employment First policies; four have legislation. Under an Employment First policy, expectations are changed among educators, state agencies, service providers and people with developmental disabilities that individuals with developmental and other disabilities can and want to work and that employment (vs. day support or other programs) should be the first option considered. State policies are developed and implemented to create flexible on the job supports and remove barriers, such as lack of transportation, that create disincentives for people with disabilities to find and maintain competitive employment in the community where they can interact with co-workers without disabilities with customers and the general public.

The VA SELN is sponsoring an Employment First Summit on October 4-5, 2011, in Virginia Beach. This summit will kick off the Commonwealth's commitment and efforts towards an Employment First policy that ensure that people with disabilities have the same choices and opportunities as people without disabilities. For more information on the summit contact Adam Sass at DBHDS, adam.sass@dbhds.virginia.gov or 804-382-1515. ■

Everyone Can Work!



**Employment First
Summit
October 4-5, 2011
Virginia Beach**



Dental Care

Continued from page 1

A special needs dentistry workshop was held in 2010 to train 30 dental and health care professionals. Twelve of those trained provided dental services to sixty-four individuals with disabilities at a dental outreach clinic and committed to continued dental care in their community practice. Individuals with disabilities received needed dental care as a direct result of the outreach and training efforts and the Arc of Northern Virginia has a longer list of community practices where individuals with disabilities can be referred. Collaborative relationships have been established and future initiatives to further improve training, affordability and access to dental care for people with disabilities are being discussed and planning is underway. ■

Medicaid Mentor Webinars Reach 1200+

By Linda Redmond

Books, songs, television programs, and even the Wizard of Oz all know: "There's no place like home."

Medicaid waivers are confusing for thousands of Virginians. To demystify the process, the Endependence Center in Norfolk, in collaboration with various state agencies, developed a mentor system via a recent Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) grant.

Both individuals and professionals often are not aware of the full range of services available under Medicaid waivers. For example, in 2006 (most recent year available), although access to supported employment services is offered under certain waivers, only 8% of individuals receiving the ID Waiver used that service, and only 2% receiving the DD waiver did so. More effective use of service options are especially important for youth as they transition from high school into adulthood and post-secondary activities.

To increase access to and raise awareness about available options, almost two dozen "Medicaid Mentors" in various parts of the state were trained on the most current Medicaid processes and services. The Endependence Center worked with the Departments of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and the Virginia Organization for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA).

Realizing that people have busy schedules, webinars and workshops were developed on how to access Medicaid services; mentors were available afterwards to provide one-to-one technical assistance to individuals to help them obtain the services that best fit their needs. A toll-free number was widely distributed during workshops and webinars to help link individuals to local or regional mentors.

A total of 27 webinars were held, and 73 workshops were provided statewide. A total of 1,290 individuals—which included Waiver service providers, case managers, and school personnel—participated in either the workshops or webinars. Feedback was positive, especially regarding the individualized technical assistance.

In addition, the Endependence Center developed a new Medicaid Waiver Services Guide (current as of March 2011), available online at www.endependence.org/Waiver%20Guide%202011.pdf or by phone (toll-free) at 866-323-1088. This guide is a user-friendly resource on all services available under the Medicaid Waivers, including eligibility, descriptions of service options, and procedural safeguards, rights and protections. Center staff can link individuals to mentors in the community for assistance.

Outcomes for webinar and workshop participants are being monitored on a quarterly basis for two years. Ending in March 2011, this project found that 65 adults and 12 children with disabilities had obtained needed services or supports as a result of information obtained. Another four adults were able to obtain supported employment. ■

Did you know that based on federal guidelines, a person receiving SSI benefits (unreduced benefit = \$637 per month in 2008) could afford monthly rent of no more than \$191 at 30 percent of that monthly benefit? In 2008 in Virginia, 82,629 non-elderly adults (ages 18 to 64) with disabilities received SSI benefits—and the average fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment was \$818.



Youth Leadership Forum at VCU

By Kara White

For the first time in the history of the YLF program, staff and delegates convened in an urban setting...Richmond!

The 23 students who graduated from the 2011 Youth Leadership Forum were:

Elizabeth Angeley, Charlottesville
Joseph Barnett, Leesburg
Adam Brakman, Newport News
Zachary Brown, Hopewell
Toni Christian, Colonial Heights
Elizabeth Conlin, Virginia Beach
Shannon Flanagan, Crozet
Justin George, Chester
Benjamin Gibbs, Vienna
William Kirchhoff, Midlothian
Doniella Kissinger, Fairfax Station
Christian Metzler, Woodbridge
Brendan Oakes, Charlottesville
William O'Connell, Virginia Beach
David Palencia, Richmond
Davonte Ragland, Portsmouth
Alexa Schlichting, Springfield
Mathew St. Clair, Hampton
Violet Strawderman, Portsmouth
Caroline Tobe, Richmond
Joseph Wilkinson, Fairfax
Michael Williams, Lynchburg
Aaron Woloshin, Yorktown

Youth Leadership Forum
July 18-22, 2011
Virginia Commonwealth
University

Hurricanes and Other Disasters: Be Prepared

By Katherine Lawson

Individuals with disabilities are often less prepared during emergency situations and have to depend on hospitals in greater proportion than people without disabilities. This year the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) collaborated with the disability services agencies to develop a series of Community Based Emergency Response Seminars. CBERS seminars reached 425 Virginians from around the Commonwealth to educate individuals with disabilities and their in-home care support providers on how to shelter in place.

During the training, a video from Hampton Roads was shown; it's an excellent training tool that reflects upon steps that individuals with severe disabilities can take to developing a "go" kits should relocation be necessary. Making a plan takes only a few minutes, but it can be essential to think ahead before a hurricane or emergency happens. To view the 11 minute video, which has pointers for kits and transportation, go to <http://bit.ly/EP11vb> or www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tmtkEJHzlw and prepare!

Disasters affect an entire community; FEMA notes that on average after disasters, 50% of businesses do not return. FEMA also estimates that at least 50% of the population of the population has an access and functional need. Active participation by individuals with disabilities to better prepare for disasters is essential.

Involvement and accommodation of disability community leaders as expert partners in planning is important for sound response and recovery success. Planning WITH people with disabilities not FOR people with disabilities is key, as is considering "access and functional needs" rather than "special needs." Physical /architectural access, effective communication access, and placing importance upon inclusion in the planning and response process ensures that all parts of a community—business, faith, first responders, and others—are responding to people with disabilities.

To learn more about how to become better prepared as an individual, or otherwise become involved in or take part in your local Community Corps as a volunteer, visit www.vaemergency.com or contact the Virginia Department of Health at www.vdh.virginia.gov/EPR/ to learn more. ■



2011 Assessment: Your Data Resource

The *Assessment of the Disability Service System in Virginia* has been published by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. This 420 page book is a comprehensive resource for policy makers, advocates, families, and people with disabilities in the Commonwealth.



The 2011 edition is the Board's third assessment; the last edition was published in 2008. An additional document, *Key Findings and Board Recommendations*, a 28-page separate publication, is also available.

Disability services and supports that are primarily—but not exclusively—funded, operated, licensed, regulated, or contracted for by state agencies are detailed in the chapters, which range from early intervention, education, and community supports to employment, housing, transportation, Medicaid, institutional services, health, and emergency preparedness. Online links to key reports and a reference list of websites is included in the *2011 Assessment*.

To request a hard copy of the book, send an email to info@vbpd.virginia.gov or call (804) 786-0016. A fully accessible PDF version is available on CD and an audio version will be available online soon.

Your feedback counts—so let us know what you think about the 2011 Assessment!

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Twenty-seven More Virginians Are Now Trained Advocates



By Erin Hickey

On May 14 twenty-seven individuals received their Partners in Policymaking (PIP) pins at a graduation ceremony in Richmond. The occasion was the culmination of an intense eight month training that connected Partners with people, agencies, organizations, and resources for improving the lives of people with disabilities. Each person was selected to participate in the program because they wish to be engaged in long-term systems change and to utilize their training community-wide in their home towns. In developing their PIP personal projects, they have demonstrated that they are up to the task. The 2011 PIP graduates have already been spotted giving public testimony, organizing trainings, publishing articles, and presenting at international events. When you see them in your community, and tell us how they're doing by dropping an email to info@vbpd.virginia.gov

Families and friends of the graduates had an opportunity to get a small taste of what Partners have been thinking about since September when they heard the keynote message from Dr. Al Condeluci (Executive Director of United Cerebral Palsy of the Pittsburgh District). An active advocate since 1970, Condeluci has dedicated his life to "working towards a community where each belongs". In his presentation, Condeluci examined what it means to be a leader, stressed the importance of building social capital and community, and discussed how Partners can help to create cultural shift by building bridges between people.



Photos were taken by Rick Sleeman and Don Sweeney. ∞



Beat the Heat at Accessible Sprayground

The Joey Pizzano Memorial Fund and Fairfax County turned on the water at Our Special Harbor Sprayground on May 21, 2011. Children (and adults) enjoyed watching the water bubble, spray, and flow... here are a few images from the event, where Virginia Board chair Christy Crowther delivered remarks alongside Fairfax officials.

Our Special Harbor is open to the public from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. (except Wednesdays, when it closes at 5:00 p.m.) and is operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority. A grant from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities provided \$250,000 to assist the Joey Pizzano Memorial Fund (www.jpmpf.org) with building the accessible sprayground.

For a more information, and a map to Lee District Park, visit <http://1.usa.gov/sprayground> or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/lee/lee-spraypark.htm



Consumer Satisfaction Survey: Your Opinion Counts!

It's that time of year again—the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey will be available mid-August until the end of September. Individuals with disabilities, their families, service providers, policymakers, advocates, and other concerned citizens are encouraged to complete the survey online. We want to hear from you, so be sure to give your feedback at www.VBPDvoice.com

If you need assistance completing the survey, are unable to complete it online, have questions, or require another format, please contact the Board at info@VBPD.virginia.gov or 800-846-4464.

Individual responses remain anonymous and confidential, so please answer all questions as accurately and completely as possible. Tabulated survey results will be used to plan and improve future Board activities (including grants, training, and outreach), and reported to federal and state oversight and funding authorities. ■

Meetings of Interest

08/07/2011

Virginia Department for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Advisory Board
Meeting
Contact: 804-662-9502

08/08/2011

10:30am
State Rehabilitation Council
Contact: 804-662-7010
DRS Central Office
Richmond, VA 23239

08/08-13/2011

The Arc of VA State Convention
Contact: 804-649-8481, ext. 102.
Wyndham VA Beach Oceanfront
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

09/08/2011

10:00am
Virginia Assistive Technology Advisory
Council (DRS)
Contact: (804) 662-9994
DRS Central Office
Richmond, VA 23229

09/13/2011

10:00am
Board of Medical Assistance Services
Contact: 804-786-8096
DMAS
Richmond, VA 23219

09/21-22/2011

18th Annual Mid-Atlantic ADA Update
Contact: 1-800-949-4232
BWI Marriott
Baltimore, MD

10/08/2011

Virginia Office for Protection and
Advocacy: Disabilities Advisory Council
Meeting
Contact: 800-552-3962
Richmond, VA

10/11/2011

1:00pm
Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Quarterly Meeting
Contact: (804) 371-3110
DBVI Administrative Headquarters
Richmond, VA 23227

10/20/2011

9:00am
Insights Pre Conference Workshop:
Diagnosis and Treatment of
Developmental Disabilities in Racially,
Culturally, and Linguistically Diverse
Communities
Contact: Cecily.rodriguez@dbhds.virginia.gov

10/26/2011

1:00pm
Virginia Brain Injury Council Meeting
Contact: 804-662-7000
(Kristie L. Chamberlain)

11/02/2011

Virginia Department for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Advisory Board
Meeting
Contact: 804-662-9502

11/11/2011

Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Contact: 800-622-2155
DBVI Administrative Headquarters
Richmond, VA 23227

Now is the Time to Meet with Your Representatives



Each year when legislators attend the Partners in Policymaking public testimony exercise, they remind Partners that the time to visit and discuss ideas and concerns is in the summer and fall seasons. That is the time legislators are preparing for the upcoming year and setting priorities. Visit the Virginia General Assembly website to find out who represents you and plan visit to their home district offices.

Who's MY Legislator? <http://bit.ly/VALegislators>

