



*COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA*  
*Virginia Board for People with Disabilities*

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James W. Stewart, III, Commissioner  
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services  
P.O. Box 1797  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-1747

Dear Mr. Stewart:

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) is writing to provide comment to the State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services regarding the following policies under review:

- Policy 1016 (SYS) 86-23, Policy Goal of the Commonwealth for a Comprehensive, Community-Based System of Services;
- Policy 1034 (SYS) 05-1, Partnership Agreement; and
- Policy 1036 (SYS) 05-3, Vision Statement.

VBPD recommends two general language changes for each policy. First, we recommend replacing the term "mental retardation" with either "intellectual disability" or "intellectual and developmental disability," as applicable. Second, VBPD recommends elimination of the term "consumer" in reference to any individual served within the DBHDS system. The term "consumer" focuses on the economic relationship between an individual and a service provider. Consistent with person-centered principles, the explicit focus should be on the individual first. We recommend these substitutions for various "consumer" terms:

- ✓ Replace "consumer" with "individual" or "individual being served";
- ✓ Replace "consumer-focused" with "person-centered";
- ✓ Replace "consumer-driven" with "individual-driven"; and
- ✓ Replace "adult consumers" with "adults being served."

VBPD would like to make additional comments specifically on two of the policies. In regards to Policy 1016, page 3 states:

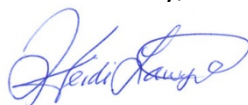
*"Further, it is the policy of the Board that CSBs shall be responsible for the continuity of all publicly funded services, including inpatient services, provided to individuals with mental illnesses, mental retardation, or substance use disorders. State Board Policy 1035 describes this responsibility in more detail."*

VBPD is concerned that this policy would preclude future case management options for individuals with intellectual or other developmental disabilities, especially in the context of State Board Policy 1035, (SYS) 05-2, Single Point of Entry and Case Management Services. Policy 1035 describes CSB roles/responsibilities in admission and discharge planning regarding services at state facilities; and emphasizes the State BHDS Board commitment to CSBs being both the "only approved providers of Medicaid mental health and mental retardation targeted case management services" and having "primary responsibility...for delivering, coordinating, ensuring the continuity of, and managing, within available resources, all public mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse services received..."(page 3). As DBHDS assumes a greater leadership role in planning developmental disability services, individuals with developmental disabilities, their family members, and advocates continue to voice a strong desire for options in case management, including targeted case management, and for clear boundaries between case management and direct services. This emphasis on CSBs having responsibility for continuity has implications for future development of a "universal Medicaid waiver."

With regard to Policy 1034 (SYS), VBPD recommends that core value # 4 (page 3) be rewritten to be more consistent with the recent plans for Training Center closures as stated in the Settlement Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Currently, core value #4 states: *Community and state facility services are integral components of a seamless public, consumer-focused, and community-based system of care.*

We appreciate this opportunity to provide input for your policies. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information. I can be contacted by phone at (804) 786-9369 or by e-mail at [Heidi.Lawyer@vbpd.virginia.gov](mailto:Heidi.Lawyer@vbpd.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,



Heidi L. Lawyer

Cc: Christy Crowther, Chair, VBPD  
Heidi Dix, Assistant Commissioner, DBHDS  
Lee Price, Director, Office of Developmental Services, DBHDS  
Ruth Anne Walker, Director, Legislative Affairs, DBHDS