

YLF
accessibility
accommodations
transportation
advocacy
PIP

Program Performance Report Highlights

Federal Fiscal Year **2013**



Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities

Changes in 2013

Virginia is a state known for tradition and history. With eight million residents and a central east coast location, the Commonwealth is thriving. One of the top 10 in per capita income, Virginia ranks 45th in fiscal effort for community-based ID/DD services.

Changes are underway in how Virginia addresses the needs of citizens with developmental disabilities.

Major changes include the planned closure of four state training centers, the expansion of integrated, independent housing and community supports, and the addition of 4,000 Medicaid Waiver slots over the next seven years. Thousands, however, remain on wait lists for services, affordable housing is limited, and significant work remains to coordinate housing, transportation, and support services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2013, the total census at training centers dropped, with fewer than 750 people remaining in state institutions at the close of the fiscal year.

Unemployment for people with disabilities remains high, especially in high-poverty regions (which are primarily rural, with approximately one-third of households earning less than \$25,000 per year).

Gaps remain in education, as nearly 40% of students with disabilities are not working in competitive employment or attending college or trade school one year after high school. The achievement gap between students with and without disabilities has widened, as have graduation rates. Due to a policy change eliminating the modified standard diploma, more students with disabilities will obtain the support and accommodations they need to attain a standard or advanced diploma which should lead to improved post-secondary outcomes.

Changes are underway
in how Virginia addresses
the needs of citizens with
developmental disabilities.



Promoting Advocacy

The Council expanded its reach through its first-ever public service announcement, recorded by the outgoing Governor for DD Awareness Month in March 2013. The 30-second spot was featured on the state portal (Virginia.gov) as well as on the agency site and YouTube; more than 390 views occurred in less than 30 days.



Angela has written about her journey to live independently and how to take advantage of the services that are offered to individuals with disabilities.

Graduates from the Board's training program Partners in Policymaking shared their personal experiences via the Council's quarterly print and electronic newsletter. Testimony from Numan addressed the lack of choices for Medicare recipients, Kerry wrote about providing school-age child care for all students, including those with ID/DD, and Angela wrote about living independently in her own apartment several years after graduating from college.

The Board's annual Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) trained 22 high school students with disabilities. Partners and Youth Leadership Forum graduates provided information about their post-training accomplishments via an

in-depth survey; more than 100 responses were received.

Advocacy activities ranged from participation in local Special Education Advocacy Committees, IEP meetings, transition councils, assistive technology, and more. Parents indicated they advocated not only for their own children, but for others—one parent reported "setting higher goals for our beautiful daughter" and another parent changed careers and became a special education teacher. Other program graduates indicated they were expanding their volunteer efforts with disability specific nonprofit organizations.

Self advocates indicated they were raising awareness through their efforts with policymakers, the media, personal care attendants, service providers, and employers. Youth reported being able to achieve more academic goals once they spoke up and asked for needed accommodations.

Notable Project—Film

During FFY13, the Board funded a 17:00 film about people moving out of state training centers. Shorter vignettes (2 min.) were used online and through social media to promote the documentary, which premiered in September 2013. Seven individuals were featured in the unscripted film, which was developed in cooperation with the Virginia Film Office. Support providers, family members, training center staff, and oversight agency officials are included; some of the most insightful comments occur during these interviews. Individuals who moved from the training centers are shown in their new homes and in their community. Siblings and parents express their thoughts about the changes in their loved ones.

For example, Bonita, once living at Southside Virginia Training Center, moved into a group home and got a part-time job. Her sister said: "...the social worker had told me that she was eligible and could go in the community, but I was skeptical." Training



center staff interviewed in the film noted: "I don't think the general public has bought into the fact that they can and are very good employees, very dependable employees. All they need is some training and job coaching. They want to go to work and they do enjoy working." Bonita's

sister said she was "surprised" that Bonita voted with assistance and that she could get a job, and that Bonita "loves her job."

Jon, who had lived in an institution for almost all of his life, moved to a home in the community. He is shown enjoying more freedom and flexibility, including eating out at a restaurant. His residential provider said: "Jon and many others like him have been in an institution all of their lives....Sometimes we make the mistake of believing they are satisfied where they are. Well, in most cases, it's the only environment they've



Working through the Virginia Film Office, a filmmaker was hired and went on location to document individuals moving out of state institutions. The film took 15 months to complete, and premiered at the Capitol in September 2013.

ever known. They're no different than you or I, they look for the same things in their environment...the opportunity to eat different foods and go different places."

Jim, who is in his 50's, moved from a training center to a provider in the community near the home of his parents. His father has been pleased with the transition and said, "you're part of the community rather than a part of something in another town someplace else."

Copies of the film were mailed to all legislators, and it is now being promoted on YouTube, as well as being screened at various organizational meetings and with advocacy groups.

Policy Comments

Protecting Children in Private Schools

To protect Virginia’s children, the Council made formal comments to the Board of Education on regulations regarding seclusion and restraint practices at private schools: “The Board has signed on to and strongly supports the public comments made by the Virginia Coalition for Students with Disabilities. We also stand in support of comments made by the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA). In particular, the Board opposes proposed language which would allow use of ‘aversive stimuli’ and of prone, face-down restraints (under 8 VAC20-6710650); and we recommend restoring prohibitions of both practices. Neither of these interventions has been proven effective in behavioral change, and both pose major risks—emotional and physical—to students with disabilities.”

Children in Foster Care

Children in foster care were also the subject of a public comment made by the Council to the Department of Social Services regarding Permanency Services Regulations: “...The Board is concerned about the rationale for this section and the assumption that a child may require facility-based services specifically because of his or her disability. As written, subsection E-2 ‘Requires long-term residential care for the condition’ without further guidance, this criterion is very broad and open to subjective judgment. With appropriate community services and supports, youth—and adults—with even the most significant disabilities are able to live in homes (natural family or foster care). Current language appears to be based on a broad assumption that ‘long-term’ residential care—rather than short-term—is required for certain conditions. This is inconsistent with the Olmstead Supreme Court decision and the work being undertaken under the Commonwealth’s Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice...”

Community Inclusion

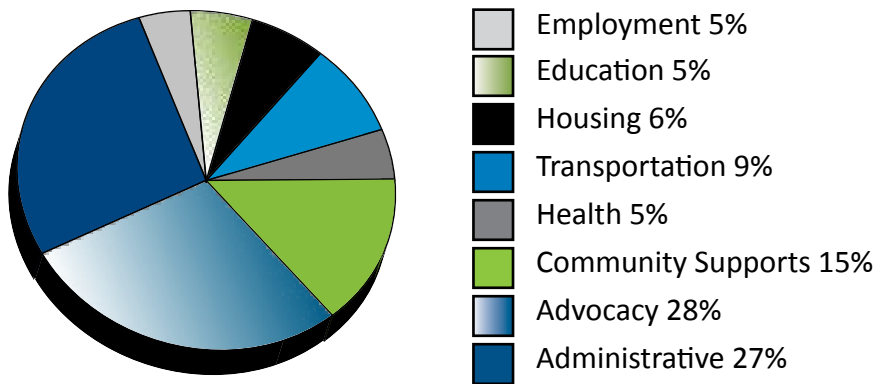
A letter to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding proposed federal regulations on home and community-based waivers commented on community inclusion: “Of concern to the Virginia DD Council have been recent attempts to develop gated segregated communities where individuals with ID/DD will reside. Such developments date back to an outdated ‘village’ or ‘commune’ service model that does not meet the principles of integrated, independent housing...To best serve individuals with developmental disabilities, HCBS standards should support access to the services, supports and accommodations needed to live and work in the setting that one has chosen and to participate fully in community life. The development of segregated ‘communities’ is contrary to our beliefs and values, to the community integration mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and to the Supreme Court Olmstead decision.”

Grants and Contracts

State Board of Elections The Council awarded a contract to the State Board of Elections (SBE) to improve voter access to polling sites statewide. This educational campaign included four videos, featuring actors with disabilities; the videos explained the ease of voting using an absentee ballot or voting in person via options such as curbside voting. The Virginia SBE promoted the use of an annual application to make a smoother, easier process for accommodations for individuals with disabilities wishing to vote. Although some of the activities occurred in FFY12, in FFY13, SBE saw an increase in the use of the annual absentee ballot application from 1,500 in 2008 to 1,721 for the 2012 Presidential election (November 2012).

During FFY 2013, the State Board of Elections reached 4,467 members of the general public through its videos and a brochure. The DD Council also promoted the SBE videos on its website and late in the FFY 2013 through social media on YouTube.

How the Board Spent Its Funds



During Federal Fiscal Year 2013 (FFY13), the Board spent a grand total of \$1,747,547, of which \$1,564,499 was from federal funds and \$183,048 was from state funds. The Board, like all DD Councils, can draw down federal funding over a three year period. Expenditures vary by year according to Board goals and priorities. State funds were used only for administrative expenses, which are described in the notes. Expenditures of federal funding are depicted in the pie chart above, which does not include the state funding. Through the Board's grants, contracts, and programs, match funds from local, state and private sources totaled \$89,100.

Notes: All percentages are based only on total expenditures of federal funds (\$1,564,499). Administrative costs include salaries/benefits for all administrative staff, IT costs, office supplies, rent, telecommunications, Board meetings/management, contractual services, premiums, and other operational expenses.

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

As Virginians move out of institutions into local communities, the Council solicited another state agency, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), to develop a “Peer-to-Peer” Education project. Peer-to-Peer mentoring is a required component of the DOJ Settlement Agreement and the Council decided it had a unique opportunity to provide support for this best practice. DBHDS in turn partnered with the Arc of Virginia and Hope House. Together they selected peer mentors and developed a curriculum. This project continues into FFY14.

This exciting project included a pre-test to gauge participants’ knowledge and awareness of Virginia’s service delivery systems. Helping people understand what waivers are and the principles of consumer direction, inclusion, person-centered planning, and informed choice are key as individuals move into less restrictive environments. Peer mentors will be paired with a community resident, and will have several meetings to help identify and express their interests and preferences. Truly changing the system requires people to understand how to connect what they want—employment, transportation, housing, and protections for Virginia’s most vulnerable citizens—to what exists across the Commonwealth.



Trainer Jamie Liban from the Arc of Virginia presents a homework assignment to a group of peer mentors. One of the tasks was to visit a training center. Mary Anne Bergeron, Executive Director of the Virginia Association of Community Services, was on deck to present next.

Transportation

Virginia's Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) received a grant to grow affordable transportation services in rural and underserved areas. DARS partnered with three Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) for three unique projects. One project improved service coordination, added additional hours and days of service and improved access to person centered transportation; ridership is increasing as word spreads about "I-Ride" through 2014. A second project provided individuals with disabilities with transportation for education, training, and employment opportunities. Increased demand for Saturday service continues to thrive with the third project; collaboration between agencies and organizations has raised awareness of the needs for paratransit and other accessible transportation, especially when people don't drive.



Employment

DARS—RGI—Rappahannock Goodwill Industries received funds to train consumer-directed direct support professionals. Some individuals have been recruited and trained to become direct support professionals during FFY2013. The project has led to employment for participants in other fields, in part due to transportation barriers that limit job opportunities. Results will be reported in FFY2014.

Transition

VAIL—Valley Associates for Independent Living received a Board grant to begin early transition planning with students in elementary and middle schools. Working with school districts, VAIL's goal is to involve younger students (and their parents) in thinking about post-secondary options as they design Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and to learn about benefits, etc. Results will be reported in FFY2014.

The Council has awarded several other grant projects designed to support implementation of the DOJ Settlement Agreement and community inclusion for individuals with disabilities. These efforts will have their outcomes in FFY14 and beyond.

2013 Board Members

Executive Committee

Chair, John Kelly (Woodbridge) - Vice Chair, Linda Broady-Myers (Richmond) - Secretary, Margaret Disney (Richmond) - At Large: Nancy Briggs (Chester) - At Large: C. J. Tate (Staunton) - At Large: Ed Turner (Richmond)

Advocacy and Outreach

Chair, Korinda Rusinyak (Virginia Beach) - Everlene Brewer (Norfolk) - Sharon Drennan (Midlothian) - Marissa Laios (Chantilly) - Carol Lewin (Leesburg) - C. J. Tate (Staunton) - Angela Yong West (Chesapeake) - Rose Williams (Charlottesville) - * Agency Designee: Ronald Lanier, Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH)

Community Integration

Chair, Sarah Ratner (Richmond) - Brian Clukey (Falls Church) - Margaret Disney (Richmond) - Charles Meacham (Glen Allen) - April Niamtu (Richmond) - Ralph Owen (Blue Ridge) - Summer Sage(Standardsville). *Agency Designees: Colleen Miller, disAbility Law Center of Virginia (dLCV) - Lee Price, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) - Terry Smith, Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)

Community Living and Transportation

Chair, Angela Sadsad (Virginia Beach) - George Randolph Burak (Gloucester) - Nancy Briggs (Chester) - Linda Broady-Myers (Richmond) - Stephen Joseph (Lynchburg) - Ron King (Manassas) - Jessica Philips (Henrico) - Kimberly Vanderland (Henrico) - *Agency Designee: Kathleen Vaughan, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

Education and Employment

Chair, Dennis Manning (Ashburn) - Dennis Findley (Fairfax) - Ethel Parris Gainer (Richmond) - Mary McAdam (Palmyra) - Ed Turner (Richmond) - * Agency Designees: John Eisenberg, Department of Education (DOE) - Donna Gilles, VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities (UCEDD) - Ray Hopkins, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DVBI) - Kristi Lockhart, Ex-Officio, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

2013 Staff Members



Heidi Lawyer, Executive Director
Teri Barker-Morgan, Program Manager
Kelly Bolden, Senior Fiscal Coordinator
Barb Dodd, Communications Director
Erin Hickey, Content Coordinator & Information Specialist
Michal Ketner, Administrative Staff Specialist
Katherine Lawson, Community Outreach & Program Manager
Rachel Loria, Partners in Policymaking Assistant
Nan Pemberton, Director of Administration
Linda Redmond, Research & Policy Program Manager
Lynne Talley, Grants Manager
Kara White, Youth Leadership Forum Assistant

This publication was funded through federal monies provided under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. VBPD publications are available in alternate formats upon request. Email info@VBPD.virginia.gov or call 1-800-846-4464.