

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Senate Finance Committee, HHR Subcommittee
September 29, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today. VACIL represents the 16 Centers for Independent Living. CILs have provided DD case management since 1999.

VACIL supports redesign of the DD, Day Support and ID Waivers. The redesign should enhance the planning process, improve services, and allow people with disabilities to live in their communities with the supports they need.

These waivers are extraordinarily important to people with disabilities and their families. Changes proposed for services and the planning process may be beneficial. However, change can be difficult and threatening, especially if the changes impact your day to day life and the plans you have. Components of the planning process are still in development and we are anxious to resolve outstanding issues.

DBHDS proposes to use the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) as a tool to determine the range of a service package that will be available to an individual. The first step in this process should be to provide information about the purpose of the SIS to people with disabilities, families and others involved in the planning process. Then the SIS assessment should be done. Instead the process has been reversed with the SIS assessments being conducted before the process is established and before accurate information is provided to people about the use of the SIS.

The rate study did not include personal care, respite or companion services. These services are used by 91% of the people enrolled in the DD Waiver. The impact of this omission is unknown. The use of the proposed services packages and the SIS scores needs to be validated before being used to determine services.

The DD Waiver waiting list has been administered as a chronological waiting list with 10% of funds used for people in emergency situations. The waiver redesign will significantly change this long standing practice. DBHDS proposes that the 2,100 people now on the DD Waiver waiting list will be reassessed and placed on an urgent or nonurgent waiting list with individuals who are on the ID Waiver waiting list. This change will be quite a surprise to people. People who have low waiting list numbers should have the opportunity to receive waiver funding before the DD and ID Waiver waiting lists are merged.

VACIL will continue to collaborate with DMAS and DBHDS to achieve the best possible outcome with waiver redesign. Many complicated issues with services, waiting lists and assessments have been resolved. Determining the appropriate use of the SIS and services packages and establishing a fair waiting list process are issues yet to be resolved.

VIRGINIA'S CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Access Independence – Winchester ♦ Appalachian Independence Center – Abingdon ♦ Blue Ridge Independent Living Center – Roanoke ♦ Clinch Independent Living Services – Grundy ♦ disAbility Resource Center – Fredericksburg ♦ Disability Rights and Resource Center – Rocky Mount ♦ Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living – Exmore ♦ Endependence Center, Inc. – Norfolk ♦ Endependence Center of Northern Virginia – Arlington ♦ Independence Empowerment Center – Manassas ♦ Independence Resource Center – Charlottesville ♦ Junction Center for Independent Living – Norton ♦ Lynchburg Area Center for Independent Living – Lynchburg ♦ Peninsula Center for Independent Living – Hampton ♦ Resources for Independent Living – Richmond ♦ Valley Associates for Independent Living – Harrisonburg