Rebalancing Initiative

Governor Pat Quinn announced a plan to rebalance the state’s approach to care for individuals with developmental disabilities and mental health conditions. Called the Active Community Care Transition (ACCT) plan, the initiative will increase the number of people with developmental disabilities and mental health conditions living in community care settings across Illinois.

Under the first phase of the plan, residents of Jacksonville Developmental Center (JDC) in Jacksonville, IL and patients of Tinley Park Mental Health Center (MHC) in Tinley Park, IL will be transitioned to community settings and the facilities eventually closed.

Rebalancing Background: The Quinn administration announced its intention to rebalance Illinois’ use of institutionalization for the care of people with developmental disabilities. Illinois lags behind the rest of the nation in the utilization of person-centered, community-based care, which has been demonstrated to allow people with developmental disabilities to lead more active, dynamic lives. Community settings allow individuals to receive the care they need – including 24-hour care – in their hometown and even their family home. Community care can also be significantly less costly than institution-based care. The ACCT also dovetails with the administration’s recent settlement of a series of court cases related to the Americans with Disabilities Act, requiring the expansion of community care settings.

The administration has worked collaboratively with the General Assembly on this initiative, receiving valuable input from members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) following public hearings in October and November. The General Assembly also worked with the administration to reallocate funds to allow continued operation of all state facilities through the end of Fiscal Year 2012 (June 30, 2012).

The ACCT is a policy decision that also has positive fiscal benefits for the state. In addition to improving quality of life for hundreds of individuals across the state, the move is expected to save the state of Illinois $19.8 million annually, and allow for alternative uses of some of the state’s costliest facilities.

To read more please visit DHS website at:
http://www.illinois.gov/PressReleases/ShowPressRelease.cfm?SubjectID=2&RecNum=9977

Ligas Consent Decree

The Ligas lawsuit was filed on behalf of adults with developmental disabilities residing in ICFs/DD who choose to move to community-based services or settings and on behalf of adults with developmental disabilities residing at home who are seeking community-based services or settings.

On June 15, 2011, a Consent Decree was signed by the Court in the Ligas lawsuit.

Principles of Ligas:
- People with disabilities will have a say and a choice about how and where services and supports will be provided.
- People who want services in the community will have that option.

Person-centered planning will be used as the cornerstone in documenting individual needs and preferences. Services will not be limited to those which are currently available.

Complaints Regarding Ligas Activities Contact: Troy Markert, Manager of Program Development, in the Division of Developmental Disabilities at (217) 785-6171 or Email: Troy.Markert@Illinois.gov.
Illinois at the Tipping Point – Blueprint for System Redesign Update

In May 2012, the new report Illinois at the Tipping Point – Blueprint for System Redesign Update was released and found that:

- Illinois is still not providing services to individuals with reasonable promptness. The wait list nearly doubled since the first report.
- Illinois still relies heavily on State Operated Developmental Centers, private ICFs/DD and 24/7 community group homes for the majority of the services population.
- Illinois still does not invest enough money in Home and Community Based Services.

However, the new report also found that: State policy makers have shown a willingness to make necessary changes and commit to a person-centered service system.

The DD Disabilities’ seven year strategic plan can be used to manage many of the changes in policy and practice that must occur. Implementation of the Ligas Consent Decree and the Governor’s rebalancing initiative are providing opportunities for individuals to transition to community options.

Self-advocates are increasingly calling for changes to promote community integration and self-direction.

Integrated Care Program

The Integrated Care Program is a program for older adults, and adults with disabilities who are enrolled in Medicaid but not enrolled in Medicare, in the following counties: Suburban Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, Kankakee and Will.

This program promotes your health and wellness. Under the program you must pick a health plan and a doctor or clinic as a Primary Care Provider (called PCP) for your medical home.

Under the Integrated Care Program, a team of providers and case managers will work with you, to help you reach the health goals that are important to you. You will get to choose a health plan and PCP. You will pick a PCP in one of these two health plans to manage and coordinate your healthcare.

Health Plan Contact Information:

- Aetna Better Health
  1-866-212-2851
  Aetna TTY Number TTY: Illinois Relay 711
  www.aetnabetterhealth.com/Illinois

- IlliniCare Health Plan
  1-866-329-4701
  IlliniCare - TTY Number TTY: Illinois Relay 711
  www.illinicare.com

Do you have questions about Health Care, Insurance or Medicaid?

Arc of Illinois Family to Family Health Information Center

We can help you find answers to questions about health care, insurance, All Kids, Medicaid, dental care, finding doctors, school health and much more. We serve Illinois families of children up to age 21 who have any kind of special needs, disability and/or chronic illness.

We are part of a national network of 50 Family to Family Health Information Centers in every state, funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. All staff members are parents of people with special needs.

Call the Family to Family Health Information Center toll free at 1-866-931-1110 or send an e-mail to familytofamily@thearcofil.org

Lots of helpful information in both English and Spanish is also available at www.familyvoicesillinois.org
Illinois Life Span Project

Illinois Life Span is the 411 of developmental disability resources in Illinois. It is a free, informational resource that links people with developmental disabilities, their families and professionals to local and statewide advocacy services and service provider organizations. Life Span offers detailed information for hundreds of support groups and thousands of advocacy resources and service provider organizations. Illinois Life Span staff helps families to prioritize tasks and strategize advocacy efforts to meet the needs of their loved one with a developmental disability.

Mike Kaminsky, Director
Illinois Life Span Project
1-800-588-7002 -The Arc of Illinois
www.IllinoisLifeSpan.org

What is the Family Transition Project?

The Family Transition Project is an outreach to families whose loved ones are transitioning from life in state operated centers to community life. It’s about families talking one on one and sharing their stories; families supporting families through the challenges of change.

Our advocates are guardians who deal every day with the realities of life for loved ones with disabilities. The project is two-fold. We meet with families who have experienced a positive transition to community life and are willing to share their stories.

We meet with families who are facing the transition process or considering it, listen to their concerns, and share what we’ve learned about successful transitions.

We provide support and hope. We’re always interested in hearing from families and individuals who would like to tell us about their successful transitions to the community.

Please contact Katherine Hamann at 708.465.2827 or Katherine@thearcofil.org or Michele Westmaas at 217.473.6450 or Michele@thearcofil.org.

Bringing It All Together! Featuring Dr. Temple Grandin

Dr. Grandin will examine the role of finding the right job for people on the autism spectrum, where passion becomes the foundation for one’s work. Dr. Grandin will also cover the issue of oversensitivity in autism and how simple modification in the workplace and the classroom can provide a successful and comfortable environment. Believing the world needs all kinds of minds, she will provide meaning to the current job market.

There will be time for questions and answers!

Autism Conference:
Thursday, September, 27, 2012
Tinley Park Convention Center
18451 Convention Center Dr.
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708-444-1100

To register for this event please visit the Arc’s website at: http://www.thearcofil.org/events
We're pleased to announce the second annual Sibs in the City for adults who have siblings with disabilities. This unique event is organized for siblings and their guests from Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin by SIBS (Supporting Illinois Brothers and Sisters) and FVSSN (Fox Valley Sibling Support Network). On Saturday morning, July 21, you'll join other siblings for our Food for Thought Seminar on the topic of what happens when siblings take over once parents are no longer in the picture.

Tamar Heller, sibling and one of the co-founders of the Sibling Leadership Network will lead the discussion. (A $10 donation will be collected at the event to help cover breakfast.)

Then off to see the parade...the Disability Pride Parade, that is. More than 40 floats and groups march in the parade ending with a big celebration at the Daley Plaza for music, performances, exhibits and fun.

CALL NOW to REGISTER!!

Sibs In The City, July 20-21, 2012
First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple
77 West Washington St., Chicago, IL 60602

Dreaming New Dreams

The Family Support Network is excited to share with you information about upcoming training events!

In anticipation of the expected enrollment of 400 new participants in the Home-Based Support Services Program, The Arc of Illinois is sponsoring “Dreaming New Dreams Seminars” presented by Charlotte Cronin, Advocate and recently retired Executive Director of FSN and Arc advocate, Michele Westmaas. These seminars will assist you to learn new options for Home-Based Services!

This training can be paid for with your Home-Based Support Services funding. The Arc of Illinois is an approved “Medicaid” provider. Just remember that the training must be written in as part of the Individual’s Service Plan for the month they wish to attend the training.

“I like advocating for others.”
— John Porter

Please join us as we “Dream New Dreams” for people with disabilities all across Illinois.

Dates and Locations of seminars:

Wednesday, September 19, 2012
United Presbyterian Church
2400 West Northmoor Road
Peoria, IL 61614
Telephone: 309-693-2002

Wednesday, October 10, 2012
Hosted by UIC
Institute on Disability & Human Development
1640 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608
Telephone: 312-413-1647

Wednesday, November 28, 2012
Roland Lewis Community Building
800 S. 27th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
Telephone: 618-242-6890

To register for these events please visit the Arc’s website at:
http://www.thearcofil.org/events
The most significant bill passed in 2012 so far is SB 2840, the Medicaid "Reform" law that was signed by the Governor. The bill supposedly saves $1.6 billion from the Medicaid budget, mainly by making cuts to certain programs and eliminating others.

For persons with disabilities, the most significant cuts were (1) the elimination of the Illinois Cares Rx program as of July 1, 2012. Illinois Cares Rx provides approximately 180,000 senior citizens and persons with disabilities on Medicare with prescription drug assistance.

(2) New restrictions on the waiver for Medically Fragile/Technology Dependent children, namely a family income eligibility cap of 500% of the federal poverty level and new family cost sharing that will be created by administrative rule. Changes in this waiver must be approved by the federal government.

(3) Stricter eligibility standards for the Home Services Program, including raising the Determination of Need (DON) score required for eligibility from 29 to 37 for new applicants and a review of personal attendant hours for current recipients. Also, children receiving home services will be limited to respite.

(4) Adults on Medicaid will have their dental care limited to emergency extractions.

There are many other changes as well.

"For persons with disabilities, the most significant cuts were the elimination of the Illinois Cares Rx program as of July 1, 2012."

Other bills of note that passed both houses:

**SB 820** is an HDA bill that makes changes to the El Act, the most significant being an expansion of the State’s Interagency Coordinating Council membership.

**HB 3826** changes the Guide Dog Access Act to the Service Animal Access Act and adds miniature horses trained as service animals and broadens the scope of their allowed service functions.

**SB 278** codifies the Human Services Commission, (previously created by Executive Order). There is no sunset date for the commission in the bill. Membership and purpose is defined and initial report to the General Assembly and the Governor is due June 30, 2013.

**SB 679** amends provisions of the Insurance Code concerning coverage for therapies for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders to provide that any changes in the DSM regarding ASD between April 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014, shall not affect coverage for those individuals.

**HB 5602** allows police to orally share information with school officials about a student who is under a current police investigation for one or more specified offenses if there is a threat of imminent harm to students or employees. The purposes of this bill are stated to be to protect the school, serve the best interests of the student, and to ensure that the student receive services and supports.
The Family Support Network advocates for needed supports and services so that children and adults with disabilities can live in their own homes with their families and friends or in the homes of their choices in the community. Today, we remain committed to providing information and resources to help you advocate for services and supports that will enable you to continue to enjoy community living!

On May 16, 2012 The Family Support Network in conjunction with the Arc of Illinois hosted a legislative coffee in Springfield. We met with over 30 legislators, Jack Lavin the Governor’s Chief of Staff and Mark Doyle the Governor’s lead staff person on rebalancing! Our message was one of supporting the Governor’s Rebalancing Initiative and restoring full funding to community respite, dental and other grant funded services.

The highlight of the event was witnessing Self-advocates: John Porter and Joe Bishop share their story of “Life in the community.”

It has been a busy year. The Family Support Network’s website has been redesigned in such a way that it allows individuals, families, professionals and the community of providers to navigate it easily and to access crucial information in a timely manner. There is a built-in feature which enables individuals to submit their questions directly through our website. Individuals can now join the FSN with the click of a button.

We are excited about our newly updated “Frequently Asked Questions Document.” We invite you to email us with new questions, clarifications, or even tell us we’re wrong! This document is stronger with the combined voices of all the DD community who work to support people with disabilities. Charlotte Cronin serves as our volunteer editor. Email her charlottecronin@comcast.net. Thanks Charlotte for your hard work and continued support!!!

We’re on the Web! see us at: www.familysupport.org
The Governor has developed a Rebalancing Initiative bringing in national experts to assist individuals and their guardians to make a safe and secure move to community living. The approach is very different from past state institutional closings because it requires the full participation of the individual and their guardians every step of the way utilizing a person-centered approach. This could well be a national model for institutional closures.

Transitioning people with developmental and intellectual disabilities out of institutions into the community is a process that offers opportunity, inclusion and choices for individuals and families.

Approximately half of those currently living in community homes came from an institution or a nursing home. They are now proud, happy and productive members of their communities and proof that it can be done.

**What is the overall goal of the Active Community Care Transition plan?**

The plan offers people with disabilities a personalized and individualized approach to living in a community setting close to family and friends. The transition from an institution to community care offers people an improved quality of life with the freedoms, opportunities and support not present in an institution.

Each transition plan utilizes an Independent Person-Centered approach that is customized so families and individuals have control over the planning process and most of all, their own lives.

**What resources are available to help families and guardians?**

The Illinois Department of Human Services included disability advocates, like The Arc of Illinois, early in the process to help develop a well thought out and comprehensive transition plan. People going through the transition are not alone and the Family Support Network and The Arc, along with other advocates, will be there every step of the way to offer support and guidance through the process. The Arc has launched the Family Transition Project that connects family members who have gone through the transition to offer peer support to those that are just beginning their journey.

**What is an Independent Person-Centered approach?**

It is a detailed planning process that includes the individual and their support system to identify their needs and desires to develop and coordinate a successful move into community living. This Person-Centered approach incorporates family and guardian input as well as formal monitoring of the transition and long-term care. Each plan is customized with safety and quality of life as the top priorities.

**Why is an individual transition plan important?**

Just like the population at large, people with cognitive and other developmental disabilities have varying challenges and gifts. Everyone can be supported in the community as long as they have the necessary supports and staff. The process that has been put in place allows for a comprehensive plan created by a professional team including families to assess what exactly each person in transition needs. This team will determine the place where that person will live, including people who pose a threat to themselves or others. In addition, the current safety net will be improved and expanded.

**This can be a scary process. What are parents and guardians saying after their loved ones made the transition into community living?**

Research shows that family member attitudes change dramatically after community placement. Before community placement, less than 20% of families agreed with community living and 58% strongly opposed community placement; however, after placement, 66% of families strongly agreed with community placement and less than 5% opposed.

Source — Arc of Illinois 2012
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South Holland, IL 60473

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Fax: 708.339.5423
E-mail: 
shirley@familysupportnetwork.org
  cynthia@familysupportnetwork.org

Let’s do together what we can’t do alone!

Shirley A. Perez, Executive Director
Cynthia Justice, Administrative Assistant

We are proud to be in alliance with

The Arc Illinois

The mission of the Family Support Network is to unify individuals with disabilities and their families to advocate for funding, services and community resources that strengthen and support the individual and the family directly by responding to their individual needs and empowering them to live in their own homes. The Family Support Network further seeks to ensure the continuation of all individual supports throughout the life span of the individual.