

INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:

New Staff 2

Announcements/
Acknowledgments 2

Regional News 3

News Changes to Provider Compliance 4

Overview of HCBS Regulations 4

Regional Self Advocacy Group 5

Provider Fairs Held During DD Month 6

Lawsuit Filed Against State of Ohio on DD Integrated Services

Disability Rights Ohio (DRO) filed a lawsuit on March 31, 2016 in U.S. Federal Court against the Governor of Ohio and other state officials for alleged noncompliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Medicaid requirements.

The suit claims that state government hasn't done enough to prevent Ohioans with developmental disabilities (DD) from being unnecessarily admitted to care facilities that DRO considers to be institutions – places in which people with disabilities live, work and receive care while separated from the wider community. The suit is primarily concerned with intermediate care facilities (ICFs). For more information from DRO, go to <http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/class-action-lawsuit-community-integration-people-developmental-disabilities>.

John Martin, Director of the Ohio Department of DD, released a statement on March 31, 2016, disagreeing with the claims of the lawsuit by outlining the strides Ohio has made in the past few years as it moves forward to meet the revised CMS regulations. The Ohio Department of DD (DODD) currently is working with county boards to revise services to meet CMS regulations. See page 4 for An Overview of the Home and Community-Based Settings Regulations.

The Ohio Association of County Boards (which is not a party in the case) has prepared a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to explore the potential impacts of this litigation on various individuals and organizations in Ohio's DD system. The document will be updated throughout the legal proceedings.

The FAQ include:

- Why is this suit being

brought against the State of Ohio and its agencies?

- Who are the individuals or organizations (plaintiffs) bring this case to court?
- Who are the individuals or organizations (defendants) being sued?
- What specific goals does Disability Rights Ohio hope to achieve with this lawsuit?
- When are new developments likely in this lawsuit?
- Where will the lawsuit be heard?
- How could this lawsuit be decided in court?
- How could Ohio's DD system change if the court rules against the state?
- How do recent CMS rules affect this lawsuit?

To access these FAQs, go to: <http://www.oacbddd.org/clientuploads/emails/2016/>

SOCOG Participates in Employment EXPO

The Southern Ohio Council of Governments (SOCOG) attended the 27th Annual Employment Expo sponsored by the Chillicothe Chamber of Commerce, Ohio University-Chillicothe, South Central Ohio Job and Family Services and VA Health Care. The event was held at the Shoemaker Center at Ohio University-Chillicothe on March 3, 2016. SOCOG staff were on hand to provide information to job seekers about opportunities in the field of developmental disabilities.

If you are interested in job opportunities at SOCOG, visit our website at www.socog.org and check out our current job postings.

SOCOG Welcomes New Staff

Candice Jeffers, Investigator, joined SOCOG in October 2015. Previous work experience

includes five years with Meigs County Job and Family Services. She is a native of Pomeroy, Ohio, and is a graduate of Meigs High School. She will graduate in May with a degree in social work from the University of Rio Grande. She provides investigative services for Meigs and Gallia County Boards of DD.

Mollie King, SSA Assistant at Scioto County Board, joined SOCOG in Janu-



ary 2016. She completed a 120 hour psychological internship at Scioto County Board of DD in 2015. She is a native of West Union, Ohio, and a graduate of West Union High School. She will receive her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Shawnee State University in May.

Cera Wymer, SSA Assistant at Scioto County Board, joined SOCOG in January 2016.

She was employed at Scioto Residential Services in several capacities for six years. She received her liberal arts degree this month and will receive her Bachelor of Psychology in January 2017 from Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH.



Kathy Smith, receptionist in the SSA Department at Clinton County Board, joined SOCOG in Octo-

ber 2015. Kathy lives in Wilmington and graduated from Clinton Massie High School. She previously worked at Orion and Snow Hill Country Club.

Adina Carrico, receptionist in the SSA Department at Clinton County Board, joined SOCOG in October 2015.

She lives in Sabina and graduated from East Clinton High School. She previously worked at Orion, Clinton Memorial Hospital and Autumn Years Nursing Center.



Announcements/Acknowledgments

- Beth Atherton, Investigator, received a plaque for attaining five years of service to SOCOG.
- Candice Jeffers, Investigator, will graduate with a Bachelor of Social Work in May 2016 from the University of Rio Grande.
- The Ross County Board of DD was awarded the Community Impact Pacesetter Award in the Education Division by United Way.
- Mollie King, SSA Assistant, will graduate in May with a Bachelor of Psychology from Shawnee State University.
- Cera Wymer, SSA Assistant, will graduate May 1, 2016, with an AA Degree in Psychology from Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH.
- Lori Yoakem, Business Manager, received a plaque for attaining five years of service to SOCOG.

Regional News

Region Welcomes Superintendents

The SOCOG region welcomed two new superintendents at the Athens County Board and Ross County Board.

Kevin Davis, MEd, MPA, assumed his position as Superintendent of Athens County Board of DD in November 2015. He comes to this position with a wealth of experience in the DD field as well as in education. He was the founding director of Ohio University's Center for Campus and Community Engagement, Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer of Gallipolis Developmental Center, Adult Services Direc-



tor at Meigs County Board of DD, Adult Services Director at Hocking County Board of DD, Residential Services Director at Pickaway County Board of DD and Program Director for Easter Seal Society of Central Ohio. Kevin earned his Master of Education Administration and Master of Public Administration from Ohio University in Athens and Bachelor of arts in social Science from Shawnee State University in Portsmouth. He has completed all his coursework for his PhD in Education Administration. He also has completed the Executive Program of the Ohio Association of County Boards. Kevin and family live in The Plains, Ohio.

Leia Snyder first joined Ross County Board of DD as Assistant Superintendent in March of 2015 and then



moved into the Superintendent position after the retirement of Rick Marriott in December. She returned to Chillicothe after four and one half years as Quality Assurance Director for Butler County Board of DD. Previously she was employed by SOCOG as an investigative agent for 4 years and lead investigator for one year. She also has experience in education and was an English and Special Education Teacher for grades 9-12 for Eastern Brown Local School District for three years. Leia earned a Master of Education at Xavier University in Cincinnati, a Bachelor in Education and English from Wilmington College and Associate Degree in General Education at Southern State University, Hillsboro. She completed the Superintendent Development Program of the Ohio Association of Superintendents of County Boards of DD in December 2013. Leia and her daughter, Jayla, live in Chillicothe.

Rick Marriott Retires

Rick Marriott retired at the end of 2015 after 35 years as Superintendent of Ross County Board of DD. Previously the Newark native worked for the developmental disabilities boards in Licking and Perry counties. When he was hired at the age of 29, Ross



County already had some good programs in place, so he was able to build from there and brought many changes to make the Pioneer Center better and to develop new services such as public transit and housing for individuals with DD. Marriott credits his current and former board members, his wife and family, in addition to Pioneer staff members for their support over the years in making the Pioneer Center a success.

"I've said it many times in and out of Ross County that one of the big

things I've been able to do over these years is hire a very dedicated, well-trained staff and give them the opportunity to use their creativity to do things that maybe children and adults normally wouldn't get to do and I want to thank them for their dedication and their creativity and their willingness to really go above and beyond," Marriott said. "I just want to say thanks to the community...without that support, we couldn't do half the stuff that we've been able to accomplish."

New Changes to the Provider Compliance Review Process Requires Regular Email Communication

Beginning with reviews in June of 2016, the Ohio Department of DD (DODD) will begin using a new software system for notification and tracking of provider compliance reviews. Review Data System (RDS) will replace the existing system CMO. RDS will allow the reviewer and the provider to communicate entirely through the system for notification, scheduling and completion of the review.

Providers will receive notification of their upcoming provider compliance review by an email through the RDS system. Providers will have to respond to the reviewer through the RDS system. All communications will be via the RDS system. If the provider is required to provide a plan of correction based upon the outcome of their review, this also will have to be completed and submitted through the RDS system.

What does this mean for providers? **It is essential that all providers ensure that their contact information, including their email address is accurate in the Provider Certification Wizard (PCW).** Email will be the main contact with providers through the RDS system. Providers must check their email often for notifications and information from the reviewer. If the provider fails to make contact through this system, it could lead to them receiving notice that they are being non-compliant with the review process and ultimately could lead to their certification being in jeopardy.

It is recommended that all providers check their contact information in the Provider Certification Wizard and update any information needed. DODD will be send out further communication as to how providers will access the RDS system in the near future and trainings/instructions will be available to providers. Stay tuned for more information and double check your information in PCW now!

An Overview of the Home and Community-Based Settings Regulation

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) identified five primary characteristics required for settings where home and community-based services (HCBS) are provided.

The rule applies to residential and non-residential settings, including workshops and day programs, funded through HCBS waivers.

1. The setting is integrated in and supports individual's full access to the greater community. This includes opportunities to
 - a. Work in integrated settings
 - b. Engage in community life
 - c. Receive services in the community to the same degree of access as people not enrolled in waivers.
2. The setting is selected by the person from among non-disability specific settings.
3. The setting ensures individual's rights of privacy, dignity and

respect, and freedom from coercion.

4. The setting optimizes, but does not regiment, individual initiative, autonomy and independence in making life choices.

5. The setting facilitates individual choice regarding services/supports and who provides them.

The definition is designed to be outcome-oriented and experiential. This means a determination about whether or not a setting meets these characteristics is based upon the needs of the people receiving services there, as reflected in their person-centered plans. It is not based upon the physical location of the setting, the size of the setting, or a prescribed duration or number of community-based activities.

See the table "Overview of the HCBS Regulations" on page five for more information.

NOTE: The Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) identified these five primary characteristics which are required for settings where home and community-based services (HCBS) are provided and has given notification that Ohio needs to work toward compliance by 2019.

Regional Self Advocacy Group Continues to Grow

The Southern Ohio Advocacy Group continues to meet on a monthly basis. At the March 2016 meeting, nominations for new officers were taken and voting will occur at the April meeting. The group reviewed its goals from 2015 and were able to complete all goals set for that year. The group set new goals for the year. In 2016, the group will focus its efforts on recruitment, fund raising and would like to have a regional self-advocacy festival in the fall of 2016.

The group’s main focus will be recruitment in order to have more self-advocates join the group. Currently we have representatives from Athens, Clinton, Fayette, Jackson, Lawrence, Pickaway, Pike and Ross who regularly attend the meetings. The group hopes to have participants from all 15 of SOCOG’s counties in attendance by the end of the year. A recruitment letter and video are being developed to highlight some of the great topics that the group tackles each month. In addition to the discussion of important topics, the meetings allow for self-advocates to interact with each other and share their experiences.

If you are interested in attending the monthly meetings, these are held the third Tuesday of each month from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The meetings are held at the Ross County Library Annex Building located at 140 S. Paint

Table: Overview of the HCBS Regulations

What the rule requires of waiver providers	What the rule DOES NOT require
Providers are required to offer opportunities for all individuals served to get involved in their communities. This could include community employment and/or participating in community-based events/activities.	All workshops and day programs will close.
Providers must offer opportunities that are meaningful to individuals and support their personal interests/outcomes.	100% of all day program supports must be provided in fully integrated, community-based settings.
Providers must provide necessary services/supervision to maintain health and welfare, as identified in person-centered plans, while individuals are involved in community-based events/activities.	All providers must provide community employment services.
What the rule means for people receiving waiver services	What it DOES NOT mean for people receiving waiver services
People have greater opportunities to try new things.	Everybody is required to work in community-based settings.
People are able to make informed choices, based on experiences, about community employment and what community-based activities/involvement they may enjoy.	Individuals cannot spend time during the day with other people with developmental disabilities.
People may get involved in community employment and/or other community-based activities based on their interests and desired level of involvement.	When not working in the community, no other day program options will be available.
People who do not want to receive waiver services in disability-specific settings, such as workshops, day programs, group homes, etc. cannot be made to do so.	People are required to spend a specific amount of time in or participate in a certain number of community-based activities each day/week/month.

Street, Chillicothe, Ohio 45601.
Meeting dates for the remainder of 2016 are as follows:

- April 19th
- May 17th
- June 21st
- July 19th
- August 16th
- September 20th
- October 18th

November 15th
December 20th

For more information about the Regional Self Advocacy Group, please contact Jennifer Goodwin at jgoodwin@socog.org.

Provider Fairs Held During National Developmental Disabilities Month

Provider Fairs were held by the county boards in Athens, Highland, Jackson and Ross Counties during the month of March to communicate provider resources available for individuals and their families. Photos: (clockwise) Disability Festival Athens CB, (two) Provider Fair Ross CB and (two) Provider Fair Highland CB.



Southern Ohio Council
A Council of Governments

**126 East Second Street
Suite C
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601**

**Phone: 740-775-5030
Fax: 740-775-5023**

**Office hours - M-F
8:00AM-4:00PM**

The Southern Ohio Council of Governments was formed in March 1996 and began services in March 1997. The Council was created by Superintendents of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities in southern Ohio. The Council is a government entity created under Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code, representing 15 County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. The Council provides administrative supports for County Boards in Adams, Athens, Brown, Clinton, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pickaway,



SOCOG Mission Statement

- Do things together we can't do effectively and efficiently alone
- Offer members a trusted source of external expertise and feedback

April 2016