

“DDD News”

September 2007 - 1st Edition

Jon S. Corzine, Governor

Jennifer Velez, Commissioner

Kenneth W. Ritchey, Assistant Commissioner

The Assistant Commissioner's Perspective:

With six months on the job, I have begun to know New Jersey's highways very well. My tenure as Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) started in March and it has been a truly unique time for me. My 37 years of experience in the field of developmental disabilities has prepared me for the challenges in this line of work; however, no one could have prepared me for the prices of homes in New Jersey!

But let me focus right now on the many challenges facing our division and the human services organizations operating throughout the state. We are confronting financial challenges at local, state and federal levels as we must maintain, and even expand, services to care for the most vulnerable individuals in the state.

I see my work in threefold measure: to support consumers and their families with services in the best way possible; to maximize the federal funding DDD receives; and, to expand services on the Community Care Waiver (CCW).

These measures are actually the starting point for system wide change that will result with increased services and supports for all of our consumers. DDD's success is dependent upon meaningful and productive partnerships with the individuals, families and the providers offering services.

I believe it is an honor and a privilege to work with and for our consumers. I know that when we truly abide by this belief, then we will continue to make a difference in the lives of New Jersey residents and families.

It is my plan for this newsletter to offer you consistent information about DDD and to keep you “in the loop” on our evolution. I look forward to continuing this conversation with you.

Ken Ritchey, Assistant Commissioner

WE NEED YOU! - Welcome to the first edition! We cannot possibly continue to issue this new publication without your support and an exchange of information. Tell us your ideas and share concerns through this newsletter. We need your input, so send comments to dddnewsletter@dhs.state.nj.us.

Division Update

No news is not necessarily good news, so it's time to bring you up to date on the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) --- the latest news on the what, where and who of the division. DDD, a state agency within the Department of Human Services, serves people with developmental disabilities, such as mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida and traumatic brain injuries. The agency strives to provide resources and services to help people with developmental disabilities live as independently as possible.

Beginning with this newsletter, we will regularly provide you with information about DDD, our involvement in New Jersey's disability community, local issues and national news of interest. “What is DDD doing to change and improve its system?” and “Who does DDD call its partners/stakeholders?” are questions, along with others, that will be answered through this medium. We will also use this newsletter to easily introduce you to DDD staff, stakeholders and providers, as well as to keep you informed on upcoming events, new programs, grants, etc.

“DDD News”- Name That Newsletter!

Now's the time to take the chance to create the official name for the DDD Newsletter! E-mail your name suggestions to dddnewsletter@dhs.state.nj.us. All submissions must be received by October 15, 2007. A winner will be announced in the November issue.

Reminder:

Open Enrollment - Olmstead Individualized Community Supports and Services See DDD Web site: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/index.html> September 1 - 15, 2007 Submission of pre-submission qualification documents by noon-DDD providers, including Real Life Choices Qualified.

The DDD News Center (<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/DDDnewscenter.htm>) is the place to get all the news regarding the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

The September edition of “The Path To Progress: Olmstead News” will be available soon.