



June 2012

Dear Stakeholders,

May was a productive month for the Department, as we recognized Better Speech and Hearing Awareness with [a letter to the editor](#) and a Public Service Announcement [video](#) made during my visit to an Assistive Technology Demonstration Center operated by the Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) at the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf in Ewing Township. We also highlighted Mental Health Awareness with an [Op-Ed](#) from Assistant Commissioner, Lynn Kovich and a [proclamation](#) and [letter from the Governor](#) to mental health providers, confirming the state's commitment to diagnosis, community-based treatment and recovery.

In addition: six very talented teenagers [were awarded](#) by our Office of Child Support within the Division of Family Development for their winning entries in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Teen Media Contest, which helps promote parental responsibility in New Jersey's youth; about 250 New Jersey residents [were trained](#) in Disaster Crisis Counseling, and I visited Trinitas Regional Medical Center to [announce the launch](#) of Involuntary Outpatient Commitment (IOC) in five counties.

Deputy Commissioner Lowell Arye and I participated in a wonderful [event](#) with the Department of Health that launched an enhanced service delivery system known as the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC). The [ADRC](#) serves as a visible and trusted source of information on long term services and supports for persons of all incomes. This initiative created a single point of access in all 21 counties for information on publicly and privately funded services, screening to determine level of service needs, counseling and assistance, and

assistance with eligibility processes and applications – an invaluable convenience for people with mobility and transportation challenges.

This month, our focus is the [budget](#). As you know, there are [some reform and realignment plans](#) pending that include: the transfer of aging services from the Department of Health to DHS, and the transition of services to children with developmental disabilities and adolescents with behavioral health needs from DHS to the Department of Children and Families.

At the same time, we continue our efforts to secure federal approval for the Comprehensive Medicaid [Waiver proposal](#) so that we can maximize the state's investment in home and community based services and program options for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Our meetings with stakeholders on these and other issues continue to provide valuable support and guidance.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe summer,

*Jennifer Velez*