

Call for Letters of Intent and Expressions of Interest Specialized Managed Care for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

The Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is initiating a process to offer specialized developmental disability services within a managed care delivery system. Provisions added to the Public Health Law and Mental Hygiene Law in the recently enacted New York State budget offer several options for providing specialized intellectual and developmental disabilities services within managed care. One of these options is a new type of managed care entity called a Developmental Disabilities Individual Support and Care Coordination Organization (DISCO) that is described in Public Health Law §4403-g. The new law also allows for existing managed care entities to offer developmental disability services with the approval of the commissioners of OPWDD and the Department of Health.

Organizational Framework for Entities Coordinating Developmental Disability Services

The People First Waiver, when approved by federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), will provide authority to create DISCOs. Eligible organizations must be controlled by one or more nonprofit organizations with a history of providing or coordinating services to persons with developmental disabilities. DISCOs will be responsible for providing individualized care coordination and long-term supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities who voluntarily enroll.

Following approval of the People First Waiver, OPWDD will seek further changes to federal agreements that will allow managed long-term care plans (MLTCPs) and mainstream managed care plans to offer specialized services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. The enacted budget requires that all organizations coordinating OPWDD services will be subject to all requirements applicable to DISCOs for quality assurance, grievances, and appeals, informed choice, person-centered planning, and marketing. The law further requires that managed long-term care plans and mainstream managed care plans that offer specialized developmental disability services have the ability to provide or coordinate services for persons with developmental disabilities. If a potential MLTC or mainstream plan does not itself have adequate experience in this area, it must establish an affiliation arrangement with an entity or entities with experience serving persons with developmental disabilities. In these instances, the affiliated entity will oversee or directly carry out the coordination and planning of the OPWDD services.

Letters of Intent to Coordinate Developmental Disability Services

OPWDD is now inviting eligible organizations to indicate their intention to coordinate developmental disability services by submitting a letter of intent. Letters of intent should inform OPWDD:

- Whether the potential applicant will be a DISCO, a MLTC or a mainstream managed care plan;
- The existing developmental disabilities service agencies that are participating on the board of directors (for DISCOs) or will be affiliated with an existing managed care entity (for MLTC or mainstream managed care plans); and

- The counties in which the potential applicant intends to operate.

Next Steps

Later this spring, OPWDD will formally solicit DISCO applications through a Request for Applications (RFA) to become a DISCO. Additional information about the anticipated DISCO application process can be found in the [draft RFA on OPWDD's People First Waiver webpage](#). For informational purposes, OPWDD has also published [Medicaid databooks](#) that describe regional service usage. Further solicitations will be issued for MLTC and mainstream managed care plans, upon approval from CMS.

Letters of intent must be submitted by close of business May 3, 2013 to:

**Commissioner Courtney Burke
NYS OPWDD
44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229**

Or email to: People.First@opwdd.ny.gov