



**To:** Executive Directors of Voluntary Provider Agencies  
Directors of Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices  
Directors of Developmental Disabilities State Operations Offices

**From:** Megan O'Connor-Hebert, Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Quality Improvement 

**Date:** April 25, 2014

**Subject:** COMPASS Development Changes

In this time of transformation and reform, it has become apparent that a well developed mechanism for the provision, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement of supports and services needs to be in place both system wide and within each provider agency.

These efforts require working collaboratively with all stakeholders including our provider community. A workgroup of stakeholders has been established to advance this work so that *all* service providers have an expectation of continuous quality improvement and that both provider agencies and the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) can validate the outcomes. The workgroup will make recommendations that will lead to a clear system-wide expectation of quality indicators for agency practices; the provision of high quality supports and services; practices to evaluate provider agency achievement of the expectations and continuous quality improvement approaches; and recognition of agencies' achievement or lack of achievement toward these quality expectations and indicators.

With this plan to establish quality indicators for all provider agencies, OPWDD will also reassess the role of COMPASS within a quality continuum. As a result, OPWDD Division of Quality Improvement (DQI) will not be accepting or processing inquiries and applications related to COMPASS. All agencies that are currently candidates for COMPASS, including agencies involved in the People First Waiver Case Studies should continue to implement quality improvement activities. OPWDD/DQI will continue to complete Validation Visits at COMPASS designated agencies and will continue as a resource to agencies currently participating in COMPASS development activities.

OPWDD is aware there are many agencies whose culture and processes strive for delivery of high quality supports in person-centered ways with vigilance toward future improvement. While new opportunities to enter the COMPASS process will not be offered at this time, any actions taken by a provider agency to establish internal quality assessment and improvement practices will benefit the agency and the people they support in the current and future service system. This will position the agency to meet the system wide quality expectations and indicators that the workgroup is developing. During this transition period, OPWDD DQI will continue to provide information, resources, and guidance to all providers through DQI training and other venues to promote continuous quality improvement practices.

If you have any questions, please contact: Jeanne Levey: [jeanne.levey@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:jeanne.levey@opwdd.ny.gov); (585) 393-6634 or Barbara Van Vechten: [barbara.vanvechten@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:barbara.vanvechten@opwdd.ny.gov); (315) 253-6283 x127.