

Executive Office

44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229-0001

TEL: 518-473-1997

FAX: 518-473-1271

TTY: 866-933-4889

www.opwdd.ny.gov

June 3, 2011

Dear OPWDD Colleagues,

In recent weeks, OPWDD has implemented several improvements in relation to incidents of abuse and neglect, in an effort to enhance the oversight and protections provided to the people with developmental disabilities we serve. Most recently, OPWDD announced a vital initiative which mandates that both DDSOs and voluntary agency providers use OPWDD's Incident Report and Management Application (IRMA) to report incidents and allegations of abuse.

Unveiled in 2008, IRMA is a Web-based electronic application that provides a comprehensive system for oversight and monitoring of incident reporting. All of you in the DDSOs have been inputting information into IRMA for some time, and some nonprofits have had access, as well. Going forward, OPWDD will be requiring all voluntary providers submit their allegations of abuse and serious reportable incident reports through this online application. By using IRMA across-the-board as the method for reporting incidents, it will allow us in this agency to create more real-time information to use for assessment and analysis.

The implementation of IRMA is about system improvement. As you know, incident management has taken on high visibility in the past several months. We recognize that systematically, incident management is an area we can and must improve in the developmental disabilities system.

One of the main goals and objectives of IRMA is standardization. We will be looking at reports and trending data. The agency's leadership team will be working with Regulatory Affairs—as well as all of you in the DDSOs and staff in the voluntary sector—to design a trend reports that will provide us with consistent information throughout the entire service system. With this, we will be able to formulate uniform best practices.

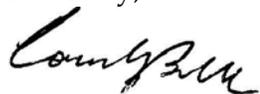
Trainings on IRMA for voluntaries are currently taking place and are expected to be completed by the end of August. An emergency regulation will be announced when these training sessions are complete.

Incident management is critical to the OPWDD's mission of helping people with developmental disabilities live richer lives. We must ensure that individuals are safe from harm and that we have systems in place that support swift and appropriate actions. This improvement one in a

series of critical steps we are taking toward vital programmatic, administrative, and fiscal reform, and I am very excited to be taking part in this process with all of you.

Please post this attached copy of the letter where staff who do not have access to email can see it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Courtney Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Courtney Burke
Commissioner