



**News Updates:**

**OPWDD Invitation Prompts 35 Eligible Organizations to Submit Letters of Intent to Become DISCOs**

In response to its invitation to eligible organizations to indicate their intention to apply to become Developmental Disabilities Individual Support and Care Coordination Organizations (DISCOs) or provide specialized developmental disabilities services through existing managed care entities, OPWDD received 35 [responses](#) from interested parties. Per OPWDD’s request, each letter included information on the respondent’s board membership, type of managed care plan (DISCO, long-term care or mainstream) and the counties of operation. The regional breakdown of the potential services coverage areas of these organizations included:

Region	Letters of Intent Received
New York City & Surrounding Counties	11
New York City & Long Island	6
New York City only	5
Partial New York City	3
New York State	4
Capital District	2
Central New York	2
Western New York	1
Multi-county upstate	1

Later this year, OPWDD will formally solicit DISCO applications through a request for applications (RFA). Additional information about the anticipated DISCO application process can be found in the [draft RFA](#) on OPWDD’s [People First Waiver resources page](#).

**Videoconference Held to Review Medicaid Data for Transition to Managed Care**

On May 14, 2013, entities interested in the implementation of specialized developmental disabilities managed care plans participated in a statewide video conference to review the People First Waiver Medicaid Databooks posted on the [People First Waiver Web Page](#). OPWDD’s actuarial consultant, Optumas, provided an overview of the Databooks elements and clarified questions related to categories of services and populations. Responses provided by Optumas and OPWDD staff addressed questions and will be captured in a Q&A document to be posted on the Waiver webpage in the coming weeks. This follow-up document will describe next steps in terms of data sharing for entities that have expressed interest in becoming a DISCO.

**Update on OPWDD’s Transformation Agreement**

OPWDD has begun implementing OPWDD’s recently approved Transformation Agreement (TA) with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Through the TA, OPWDD will ensure it is providing person-centered services in the most integrated settings. Immediate priorities and deliverables include:

- Growing the number of people participating in **competitive employment** by a net of 700 individuals - OPWDD delivered a baseline analysis to CMS in late May, identifying the number of people currently working in jobs paying more than or equal to minimum wage and located in integrated settings (about 5,000).



- Expanding information about and participation in **self-direction** - Using the Front Door Information Sessions for individuals and families as well as presentations to self-advocacy organizations and day habilitation programs, OPWDD is working to reach 1,500 individuals by the end of June with an overview of the elements of self-direction. By the end of March 2014, OPWDD hopes to have 470 new beneficiaries using self-direction.
- Transitioning 148 individuals **out of Taconic and Finger Lakes Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) and into community-based settings** by January 1, 2014 - This effort involves work by regional office staff and providers to locate/develop community-based opportunities as well as to establish processes and databases to track all the movements.
- Creating a plan and timeline to **transition residents from the remaining campus settings and non-campus based ICFs to community settings.**

In addition, several Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are being developed to secure the expertise needed to implement other key TA initiatives, such as developing the Pathway to Employment service, the crisis-intervention START program, Money Follows the Person outreach and coordination efforts, and validity testing of assessment tools.

### **Upcoming Joint Waiver Discussion Board and Voluntary Agency Quarterly Videoconference**

On Monday, July 15, 2013 from 9am until 11am, OPWDD will host the next quarterly, joint statewide videoconference for both People First Waiver Discussion Boards and voluntary agency service providers to offer an update on key elements of the People First Waiver. A list of videoconference sites will be posted on the [People First Waiver web page](#) under "**Latest People First Waiver News.**" Discussion Board members and staff from provider agencies should e-mail their [People First Waiver Liaison](#) to register for the videoconference. Following each videoconference, the PowerPoint and a video of each presentation will be posted on the [People First Waiver web page](#).

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **How will OPWDD achieve getting costs below the 50% benchmark by 10/1/15 without dictating or mandating service changes to individuals?**

OPWDD is not required to reduce costs by 50 percent. Rather, New York State (not just OPWDD) must demonstrate by October 1, 2015 that less than 50 percent of its total Medicaid long-term Medical Assistance budget is spent on institutional services. New York will achieve this objective by promoting opportunities for community-based services and supports that can facilitate a more integrated life for people who currently reside in institutional settings and assisting those individuals to plan for and achieve a successful transition.

#### **Join the People First Waiver Mailing List**

Receive notice of new developments related to the People First Waiver! Join the People First Waiver Mailing List at [www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd\\_services\\_supports/people\\_first\\_waiver/home](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home).

#### **People First Waiver Information:**

**Webpage:** [www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd\\_services\\_supports/people\\_first\\_waiver/home](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home)

**Email:** [People.First@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:People.First@opwdd.ny.gov)

**Comment Line:** 1-866-946-9733 or TTY: 1-866-933-4889