



News Updates:

Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) Now Available

Following months of careful collaboration with assessment consultants from the University of Michigan and the interRAI assessment consortium, OPWDD has unveiled its new “Coordinated Assessment System” (CAS) tool. The CAS has been specifically tailored to ensure that it adequately captures the unique health and support needs of individuals with developmental disabilities in New York State. The assessment process is designed to feel like a conversation between the individual, his or her family, the assessor and others who are most important in the individual’s life. Trained assessment specialists will begin using the CAS tool next month when it will be automated for use within the case studies. The assessment specialists, who were largely drawn from a pool of State employees with experience as Medicaid Service Coordinators (MSCs), will spend one to two hours visiting individuals and their families at home to gain an understanding of their lives and their goals for the future. Feedback obtained from this process, particularly from individuals and families, will be incorporated into the CAS tool moving forward. To request a copy of the CAS, contact People.First@opwdd.ny.gov.

Waiver Applications Update

OPWDD staff continues to prepare the necessary People First waiver applications for submission to federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The agency anticipates submitting the following waiver applications to CMS in late October or early November 2012. CMS will then review the applications and request additional information from New York State, if needed.

Waiver Application	Purpose
Application to amend current 1915 C Waiver	To marry the new managed care service system structure (proposed in the 1915 b waiver application) to the existing HCBS
1915 b Waiver Application	To establish a managed care service system structure

October 18 Joint Videoconference Announced

On Thursday, October 18, 2012 from 1pm until 3pm, NYS OPWDD will host **the first in a series of quarterly, joint statewide videoconferences for both People First Waiver Discussion Boards and Voluntary Agency Service Providers** to offer an update on key elements of the People First Waiver. This joint videoconference will replace the previous, separately held Discussion Board and Voluntary Agency Service Provider videoconferences. 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](#).

Draft Request for Applications (RFA) Posted on Website

To help service providers better prepare for system reforms, a **draft** of OPWDD’s RFA for pilot managed care organizations known as DISCOs (Developmental Disability Individual Support and Care Coordination Organizations) has been posted for **informational purposes only** on OPWDD’s [People First web Page](#). (http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home). Key elements of the recommendations of the three Targeted Work Groups will be incorporated into revisions to the draft RFA that ultimately will be submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of OPWDD’s finalized 1915 (b) and (c) People First Waiver applications. Once final approval is obtained from CMS in the spring of 2013, OPWDD will finalize the RFA, and eligible entities may respond to the RFA to become pilot DISCOs. The pilot DISCOs are expected to be launched in November 2013.



Targeted Work Teams Wrap Up

The work of OPWDD's three targeted teams – Access, Enrollment & Advocacy, Care Coordination and Modernizing the Fiscal Platform – is complete. The work teams, which included individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, providers, and representatives from county government, met several times between early August and late September. OPWDD is incorporating their recommendations, which can be found on the [People First web page](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home) at (http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home), into the revised draft RFA as noted above.

Innovative Ideas Workshops Update

On September 19, 2012, OPWDD held the third in a series of statewide videoconference workshops showcasing some of the innovative ideas collaborating groups of nonprofit agencies are developing as they seek ways to support people with developmental disabilities under the People First Waiver. These workshops, which have been held via statewide videoconference, have presented general information on collaborative directions underway by groups of providers that have joined together independent of OPWDD in anticipation of service delivery changes. Two groups –CDS Monarch and Maranatha Human Services -- shared their innovative ideas at the September workshop. Information on the Innovative Ideas presentation, including Power Point documents and video footage, can be found on the People First Web page at (http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/innovative_ideas_workshops). The next Innovative Ideas workshop has tentatively been scheduled for Tuesday, December 4th from 9am to 1pm.

Statewide 5.07 Plan Hearing Planned

SAVE THE DATE: A statewide videoconference will be held on Thursday, November 15 to elicit public input on the current update to OPWDD's Comprehensive State Plan 2012-2016 (5.07 Plan). It is anticipated that participants will be able to participate in the videoconference at one of six regional sites. Please check the OPWDD web page over the coming weeks for registration information.

Frequently Asked Question:

How can someone appeal the results of a Coordinated Assessment System (CAS) needs assessment under the People First Waiver?

The CAS appeals process afforded individuals enrolled in DISCOs will essentially follow the process that is currently established in state law for managed long-term care (MLTC) organizations (Article 44 of the Public Health Law and associated regulations NYCRR 98-1). In this process, as in OPWDD's system today, the individual or family member does not appeal the results of a needs assessment, but rather, can appeal a decision about services. Thus, if a member of a DISCO feels the results of a needs assessment have limited the individual's access to a requested service, an individual, family or advocate may appeal the service plan. The DISCO will review all grievances and appeals and make a decision within required timeframes. If the DISCO is unable to resolve the issue or an individual finds the appeal result unsatisfactory, individuals also have recourse to outside review through a Medicaid Fair Hearing and/or an External Review. The first step of any appeals process, however, involves both parties making an effort to address the complaint informally and avoid the need for filing a grievance or appeal. OPWDD anticipates that DISCO Care Coordinators will work closely with individuals to minimize the need for formal appeals.

People First Waiver Information:

Web Page: www.opwdd.ny.gov/opwdd_services_supports/people_first_waiver/home

E-mail: People.First@opwdd.ny.gov

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