



News Updates:

New Videoconference Schedule Announced

In order to provide more comprehensive and informative updates to its stakeholder constituency as the People First Waiver moves forward, OPWDD has revamped its videoconference schedule. Beginning in October 2012, OPWDD leaders will hold videoconference sessions **jointly** and on a **quarterly** basis for members of the People First Waiver Discussion Boards and voluntary agencies to discuss key aspects of waiver reforms. These videoconferences, which will replace the previously held separate monthly videoconferences for People First Waiver Discussion Boards and voluntary agencies, will be held in October 2012 and January, April and July 2013. The specific dates for this new schedule will be announced shortly. If you have any questions, please e-mail the [People First Waiver Liaison](#) in your region. Following each videoconference, as with previous workshops, the PowerPoint and accompanying video of each presentation will be posted on the [People First Waiver web page](#).

Targeted Work Teams

The work of OPWDD's three targeted teams is well underway to explore and define specific details of system reform under the People First Waiver. The work teams, which include individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, providers, and representatives from county government, have met several times since early August and will continue their sessions throughout the fall. Their efforts will center on the following focus areas:

- **The Access, Enrollment & Advocacy Work Team** will focus on enrollee rights within the pilot managed care organizations known as DISCOs (Developmental Disability Individual Support and Care Coordination Organizations).
- **The Care Coordination Work Team** will develop quality measures, in collaboration with Delmarva, a consultant group with experience in formulating quality outcomes in other states, and outline the parameters for the qualifications of the lead care coordinator.
- **The Modernizing the Fiscal Platform Team** will focus on principles of rate reimbursement reform under DISCOs and the various approaches to structural rate reform.

OPWDD will post the charters and final recommendations of the work groups on the People First Web page at the site noted above. Moving forward, key elements of the work groups' recommendations will be incorporated into revisions to the draft "Request for Applications" (RFA), as outlined below, that will ultimately be submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of OPWDD's 1915 b & c People First Waiver applications. OPWDD expects to submit these applications to CMS on October 1 and hopes to receive final approval by April 2013.

Needs Assessment Update

OPWDD has been working with assessment consultants from the University of Michigan and the interRAI assessment consortium to establish what will be known as a "Coordinated Assessment System" (CAS) tool for all people who receive OPWDD supports and services in New York State. OPWDD has submitted the latest CAS draft to the consortium for review; once approved, the CAS is expected to be publicly released in the next several weeks. The assessment specialists will begin using the CAS tool in November 2012 when it will be automated for use within the case studies. During the case studies, feedback related to the assessment process and the information obtained from the tool for the purpose of informing a person-centered planning process will be sought and evaluated. During this time, individuals and families will also provide feedback related to the assessment process. OPWDD is presently interviewing State employees with experience as Medicaid Service Coordinators (MSCs) as the first group of workers to conduct the assessments.



Innovative Ideas Workshops Update

On September 19, 2012, OPWDD will hold 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 are scheduled to share their innovative ideas at this workshop. CDS Monarch will present information on “Caretracker,” its new electronic record keeping system. CDS Monarch will also detail its efforts to partner with for-profit companies to generate meaningful work in employment programs, and about the creation of comprehensive housing opportunities for senior citizens with developmental disabilities in western New York. The second group, Maranatha Human Services, will offer insight into the creation of a “Caregivers, Homes and Choices” – a person-centered support model developed by small and medium-sized agencies with strong histories of providing culturally appropriate services to people with developmental disabilities in the New York metropolitan area. To register to attend the September 19 workshop, the public is invited to email their People First Waiver liaison. A notice of the workshop and a list of liaisons and their email addresses are available on the [People First Waiver Web page](#).

Frequently Asked Question:

OPWDD has changed its plans to obtain an 1115 research and demonstration waiver and is now applying for a combination of 1915 b and 1915 c waivers. When will we get the chance to read the waiver applications?

In order 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 CMS as part of OPWDD’s finalized 1915 (b) and (c) People First Waiver applications. OPWDD, working with the NYS Department of Health, anticipates forwarding these applications to CMS for review and approval by October 1, 2012. Once submitted, CMS and OPWDD will post the applications on their respective Web sites. It is expected that CMS will render its decision on the application by April 1, 2013. Once final approval is obtained, OPWDD will finalize the RFA, and eligible entities may respond to the RFA to become DISCO pilots. These pilots are expected to be launched in November 2013.

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