

Potpourri

Name Change

The Developmental Disabilities Services has changed its name to **Division for Developmental Disabilities** and has obtained "Division" status within the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Strategic Plan in the Works

After taking over as Director of the Division for Developmental Disabilities in July 2002, **Fred DeCrescentis** embarked upon a journey throughout the state of Colorado. His intent was to meet with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, advocacy organizations and service providers, and become familiar with how Colorado was serving people with developmental disabilities and identify major issues the Division should address.

Mr. DeCrescentis gathered a significant amount of information that he turned into an issue paper (**Issue Paper 2003**) that he presented to the Developmental Disabilities Services Advisory Committee (a committee consisting of stakeholders in the field of developmental disabilities "Committee") in March 2003 for review, input and prioritization. The Issue Paper 2003 included national standards, national issues and trends, Colorado issues, trends and recommendations and his observations.

After receiving input from the Committee, Mr. DeCrescentis has taken this information and presented the Committee with his first draft of **Strategic Plan for DDD-05/05/03**. Over the next two months the Committee will be providing comments, recommendations and prioritization of the issues set forth in the draft document. The Strategic Plan sets forth the Division's Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Core Values, Action Plan for FY 2003-04 and Strategic Goals for FY 2004-05 and Beyond. Some of initiatives the Division will undertake for FY 2003-04 include stakeholder workgroups that will submit recommendations relating to Self-Determination models, Home Ownership, improvement of community employment and community participation Outcomes and a statewide Incident Tacking System, to name only a few.

A strategic plan developed and implemented by the Division for Developmental Disabilities is a new concept in Colorado. Bravo Mr. DeCrescentis!

Budget Cuts

The Colorado General Assembly 2002-2003 session has ended. Nearly 1 Billion Dollars was cut from the State budget. How did services to people with developmental disabilities fare? There were cuts, but cuts in DD pale in comparison to other human service programs.

DD was cut in four programs. **Adult services** were cut by \$1,000,000.00 in State funded Supported Living Services. Out of a total budget of \$7,377,122.71, \$849,973.71 was cut from State Supported Living Services programs and \$149,995.29 from administrative fees to Community Centered Boards. However, the good news is that **Medicaid program services** to adults with developmental disabilities, that include both Comprehensive and Supported Living Services with a budget of approximately \$250,000,000.00, were not cut.

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Children's services were hit the hardest. **Early Intervention services** were cut by 80 resources that the program had been allocated for the 2002-2003 budget year. Children's Developmental Disabilities are managing these cuts by cutting each Community Centered Board (CCB) first by the amount of unused resources for each and then cutting a used resource from each CCB.

Children's Extensive Services was cut by the 10 new resources that had been allocated for the 2002-2003 budget year. This cut was realized through attrition and thus no existing family in the program has lost their funding.

Family Support Services was cut the hardest. 50% of the resources were cut, including Case Management.

House Bill 1326 Passes the General Assembly.

An egregious tort reform bill was initiated in the Colorado General Assembly by the Colorado Association of Community Centered Boards (CACCB) for the 2003 legislative session. The CACCB is an organization comprised of 20 Community Centered Boards around the State and other service provider organizations. This bill was sponsored by Representative Fritz of District 51 (Larimer County), and Senator Dyer of District 27 (Arapahoe and Jefferson Counties).

The bill was introduced as a **limited liability bill** that was to give agencies that provide services to people with developmental disabilities either immunity from suit, or require an almost impossible standard of "willful and wanton" misconduct to prove a suit. The target of this bill was people with developmental disabilities. So the very people who CCB's are required to protect, and who are the most vulnerable population in the nation, were targeted to lose the right to sue in a manner consistent with every other citizen in Colorado.

Through the efforts of many volunteers, the bill was amended several times. However, it passed both Houses and is awaiting signature by the Governor. In its final form, House Bill 1326 **creates significant barriers** for people with developmental disabilities to sue Community Centered Boards and other providers who may cause them injury through negligence, assault, rape or financial exploitation. Members might wish to contact their local CCB and request an explanation as to why they initiated and supported such a discriminatory and onerous bill.

CMS is Coming

The **Center for Medicaid/Medicare Services** will be sending an audit team to Colorado in July. This team will investigate the State's developmental disabilities service system to determine whether the State services are in compliance with Federal Medicaid rules and regulations. If members have issues regarding your family member's services, past or present, contact your local Arc unit, or The Arc of Colorado if you have no local Arc serving your area, to find out how to get this information to the CMS audit team.