
IMPORTANT NOTICE AND MEETING INVITE TO ALL INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES RECEIVING SERVICES FROM THE NORTHERN HUMAN SERVICES FAMILY SUPPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SERVICE SYSTEM CHANGES AHEAD

There are some potentially BIG changes coming to N.H.'s Developmental Service System over the next two years that individuals/families and providers need to be aware of.

Several members of the Northern Human Services team (Family Support Advisory Council members, NHS staff and board members) have been attending virtual information sessions and work group meetings that cover multiple parts of what N.H. Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) is calling “BDS Systems Work.”

Individual and families receiving services through Northern Human Services are invited to attend a special **in-person information session on Tuesday, May 24 at 6:00 p.m. at Northern Human Services 626 Eastman Road, Center Conway.**

Pizza and beverages will be provided. This is a family-friendly event.

Masks are required and will be available at the event.

RSVP by **May 19** to *Public Policy and Marketing Coordinator, Michelle St. John* (mstjohn@northernhs.org).

BACKGROUND AND BRIEF HISTORY

The N.H. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) contracted with Alvarez & Marsal (A&M), a public sector services consulting firm, in the fall of 2020 to review the Developmental Services System. The intent of the review was to identify opportunities for DHHS and its programs to more effectively and efficiently support the citizens of New Hampshire.

A&M gathered background information through state staff interviews, collaborations, and other data analysis. The resulting proposal from A&M focused on a large scale system change in three primary areas:

1. Waiver Structure Changes (program redesign).
2. Reimbursement Rate Changes (rate setting).
3. Information Systems Updates (technology).

DHHS has developed a web page that contains project details, background, meeting recordings, fact sheets, and more. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/disability-care/developmental-services/bds-systems-work>.

HOW DOES THE PROPOSED SYSTEM OF WORK CHANGE IMPACT ME/MY FAMILY?

The BDS System Work changes that may be of greatest interest to folks are the waiver and the reimbursement rate changes. BDS has made the decision to separate the current DD Waiver into two waivers:

1. **Supports Waiver** - focused on supporting individuals served with more community-based services (most individuals will likely be served on this waiver).
2. **Comprehensive Waiver** - focused on supporting people who have complex needs, accessing 24/7 residential services.

BDS is also developing a new rate methodology where each service type will have a set rate.

We hope you are able to join us on Tuesday, May 24 beginning at 6 p.m. at Northern Human Services 626 Eastman Road, Center Conway. Feel free to reach out with questions.

Sincerely,

Danielle & Emily



Danielle Oaks (danielleoakes1121@gmail.com)

Emily James (ejames@brewsteracademy.org)

Northern Human Services Family Support Advisory Council Co-Chairs

POTENTIAL QUESTION TO ASK DURING THE INFORMATION SESSION

BDS will present information about the System Work changes during the May 24 in-person information session. There will be an opportunity to ask questions to gain clarification about the state's intentions regarding these changes. Here are some questions you may want to ask during the event.

- Why do we need two waivers? Can you give concrete examples of how the current single waiver is not working and how the proposed two waiver system will address the issue?
- What criteria will be used to determine who can access the Supports Waiver and the Comprehensive Waiver?
- How will BDS determine what services will be on the Supports Waiver and the Comprehensive Waiver and what services will be on both waivers?
- How easily will it be to move from one waiver to the other (i.e. From the Supports Waiver to the Comprehensive Waiver) when there is a change in an individual/family's situation/circumstance?
- What type of appeals process will there be when an individual/family disagrees with the rate they have been assigned?
- Is BDS considering capping one or both waivers? What factors will BDS consider to determine whether or not to cap the waiver(s)?
- Under the new rate methodology BDS has stated "your services won't change," but will individuals still receive the same level of funding?
- Given the extreme workforce crisis, why are we changing to an "assessment-based rates" approach (i.e. additional service qualification requirements) right now? Won't that create barriers and make it harder for families and vendors to find workers (i.e. DSPs, PCAs, etc.)?
- Why was camp tuition, a long-time service category, taken off the list of eligible services currently being considered?
- BDS has stated it will "establish new services to expand the service array." Expanding and creating new services will require a larger financial commitment on behalf of the state legislature. Without increased legislative financial commitment an Adult Waitlist could result. What then?
- Describe the process BDS is developing "to ensure families will have access to the same services." How is that different than what is done now?
- Will there need to be changes made to statutes and rules? Can you give examples?
- How will BDS determine the financial impact to vendors and also to families utilizing the PDMS model?
- What criteria will BDS use to choose Area Agencies to serve as "the primary partners for capacity development?"

P.S. If you would like to receive occasional email communications from Northern Human Services about the BDS System Work project, monthly Family Support Advisory Committee meetings, or legislative news and information that could impact your family, send your contact information and email to NHS's new Public Policy and Marketing Coordinator, Michelle St. John mstjohn@northernhs.org.