

ELIMINATION OF ONE-TIME FUNDING

The Vermont Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) recently announced that it will not allocate any one-time funding for individuals and families from the \$7.5 million it has identified end-of-the-year monies.

The decision represents a marked change in DAIL policy. DAIL has distributed one-time funds every year since at least 2003, according to a review of Developmental Services records.

Considered critical to addressing short-term and temporary gaps in service, one-time funds are described in the Developmental Services System of Care Plan as an additional resource for people who are financially and clinically eligible for developmental services. In FY '14, DAIL provided \$600,000 in one-time funds. In Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013, the annual figure was approximately \$750,000.

Each year, an annual pool of money accumulates because of the accounting approach that states use to track spending for home and community-based services (HCBS). HCBS service packages are awarded to individuals as a 12 month commitment, even when a person will not require 12 months of funding – of example, in the case of newly enrolled individuals.

The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council would like to hear from individuals and families directly impacted by this unexpected announcement. If you had been anticipating one-time funding in the coming months, or if you have received one-time funding in the past, please contact:

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Self-advocates and families are also urged to contact their local Representatives and Senate members to express objections to DAIL's decision to eliminate one-time funding this year – even though there is sufficient end-of-the-year funding to support these critical, temporary needs.

House Link: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/people/all/2016/House>

Senate Link: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/people/all/2016/Senate>

Find a Legislator: <http://legislature.vermont.gov/people/search/2016>

(Next Meeting July 27th)

TALKING POINTS - Elimination of One Time Funding for Fiscal Year 2015

- DAIL has an obligation to allocate available resources in a manner consistent with the *Developmental Services System of Care Plan for Fiscal Years 2014-2016*.
- Since at least Fiscal Year 2002, the State's System of Care Plan has presented one-time funds as a part of the resources available to Vermonters who are financially and clinically eligible for developmental disabilities services.
- One-time funds are not a "bonus." They are a critical part of the safety net described in the System of Care Plan. This Plan recognizes that there are gaps in coverage that if unaddressed, will lead to much more costly, comprehensive community-based services or to an increased need for acute medical care.
- One-time funds provide prevention-oriented services such as emergency respite, crisis intervention, dental care, home modifications for safety, and durable medical equipment. They are the *only* funds available when an individual with I/DD who has not been found eligible for a package of HCBS has an unanticipated and critical need.
- This decision was made by DAIL without input from the State Program Standing Committee on Developmental Services. Revisions adopted in 2014 to the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Act require that, at a minimum, the Commissioner must consult this Advisory Board about any proposed changes to the System of Care Plan [18 V.S.A. 204:A, §8733]. Significant changes must go through the legislative rule-making process.
- Developmental Service Directors have offered to provide AHS with revised reporting to strengthen accountability for one-time funds, or to allow AHS to administer these funds directly on behalf of the individuals and families seeking short term relief. AHS has not accepted either compromise. The Department of Developmental Services has no specific plan at this time for how it intends to use the \$7.5 million in end-of-the year funds.

Please see Supporting Documents:

Developmental Services State Standing Committee - Letter to Secretary Cohen

Vermont Care Partners (VCP) - Letter to Commissioner Wehry

Commissioner Wehry - Response to VCP