

ISSUES – PRIORITIES, May 2016

Section 298 Boilerplate Budget Language

The Arc continues to work with other statewide advocacy groups to assure the removal and replacement of the 298 boilerplate language that was in the governor's budget proposal in February 2016. The language essentially gave the public Medicaid behavioral health dollars to private health plans in Michigan by September 2017. Through the efforts of grassroots advocacy, the House and Senate have removed this language and a stakeholder group appointed by Lt. Governor Calley is working on the replacement for it.

TRANSITION

We initiated, through the Education Committee, a coalition which now includes the Michigan Department of Education, to identify, address and remove or change barriers to schools providing effective transition services relating to employment.

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

We continue working with others, including Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services, Inc. (MPAS) and the Lieutenant Governor, to get these bills passed in the House (HB 5409-5418) and Senate (SB 835-838) and to end these practices except in a real emergency. The Arc submitted testimony supporting the bills to the House Education Committee and attended the hearings held in April.

HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES RULE (Transition Plan)

We continue to monitor the plan and implementation here in Michigan to assure that services occur in integrated, inclusive settings which maximize choice and community participation. The Arc Michigan is also a part of the MDHHS DD Program Improvement Team which is monitoring the transition plan.

1115 WAIVER PROPOSAL (To replace current waivers)

We formed a coalition which met with the author of the proposal during the writing process. An expanded coalition, which we convene, wants to assure that nothing is lost which we currently value and that additional emphasis is placed on self-determination and ending the discrepancy which exists with what a person can get in one part of the state versus another.

SPEND-DOWN

The Arc Michigan is part of two coalitions, one to restore the GF (general fund) dollars to CMHSPs (Community Mental Health Services Programs) who had assisted persons on spend-down to become eligible for Medicaid, and therefore CMHSP supports and services. And, two, to change



the protected income levels down to which persons must spend to become Medicaid eligible (currently \$380 - \$405 per month). A white paper has recently been shared by the group on what spend down is.

LOW WAGE COALITION

The Arc is part of a coalition, Partnership for Fair Wages which, like most of the others, meets at our offices, to attempt to raise the wages of those most important to persons with disabilities, those who provide direct support. This would also end the terrible turnover, increase continuity and quality and become competitive with Wal-Mart and others. Currently wages will have to go up for many, just because of the increase to the minimum wage.

NOTICE OF LOSS OF MEDICAID UPON RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

The “system” is not recognizing that Disabled Adult Children “DAC” remain eligible for Medicaid (don’t lose Medicaid when they stop receiving an SSI check because of the Social Security Benefit). We have petitioned Lynda Zeller, BHDDS (Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Services) of DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services), and provided examples.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

We are working with MPAS, the DD Council and the Lieutenant Governor to assure the highest commitment from Michigan to Employment First, a national effort. Employment for persons served by our system is low and dropping in Michigan. The hours worked and wages earned are well below the national number.

INEQUITY OF SERVICES

The Arc Michigan continues, including in our 1115 comments and at the DD Practice Improvement Team, to raise the issue of the great disparity which exists in what persons and their families will be told, will experience in planning and will be provided, from one place to another in Michigan.

ISSUES WITH LICENSING

With licensing for AFC homes in a new Department, the issue of whether a person with disabilities’ own home needs to be licensed has come up again. We have taken the lead in working with DHHS to lean on LARA about the established principle that one’s own home need not be licensed for a person to receive services.

REBASING

Michigan has undertaken the rebasing of Medicaid dollars to make all regions “equitable”. It means reducing the number of dollars paid to certain counties or PIHPs, including Oakland and Macomb CMHs, and increasing the dollars going to other counties, for instance Wayne County. This represents an undoing of the former recognition and higher funding for places which had larger efforts in removing persons from the State Institutions. The Arc Michigan has called for a gradual leveling and attention paid, including more dollars for those entities “doing the right thing”, rather than allocating dollars despite performance.



CONFLICT-FREE CASE MANAGEMENT

The BBA, the ACA and other federal efforts have called for conflict-free case management. Basically, indicating that the roles of determining eligibility, assessing the person, developing a PCP and monitoring the delivery of services must be free of influence by a person or entity with a financial stake. An entity or person which provides direct services to a person should not have these other roles. The Arc Michigan is a part of the workgroup and is assisting MDHHS in determining guidelines to assure Michigan has Conflict-Free Case Management (Supports Coordination).

Partner Organizations

RWC Advocacy
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan
Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan
Mental Health Association in Michigan
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Developmental Disabilities Institute – Wayne State University
Michigan’s Developmental Disabilities Council
Children’s Mental Health of Michigan
Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services, Inc.

For Specific Issues

PHI
MALA
Provider Associations
Mental Health Board Association
Specific practitioners or agencies
Occasionally Michigan Department Staff

