

Developmental Disabilities in Washington: Increasing Access and Equality

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) provides services such as housing, medical care, personal care, and job training, either directly or by contracting with businesses. In 2013, a performance audit was conducted on the DDA by the State Auditor's Office.

The most notable challenge for our state is the No-Paid Services Waitlist, which shows the disparity in services for people with DD who are eligible for them. Currently, more than 14,000 people are eligible for services from the state, yet receive nothing due to lack of funding being allocated.

DDA Audit Findings: No Paid Services Waitlist

In addition to these people sitting on a waitlist, an estimated 46,200 people could also be eligible, but have never requested services, for a number of different reasons. To better balance the funding inequity and reduce the waitlist for services, the State Auditor's office recommended the following:

The Legislature set policy that directs the Developmental Disabilities Administration to develop strategies to maximize cost-effective service options. Strategies may include:

- Reducing the number of Residential Habilitation Centers.
- Expanding crisis stabilization and emergency respite services in the community, relying less on Residential Habilitation Centers for these services.
- Providing resources to build peer support networks in the community to aid clients and their families with such needs as transportation, respite, and day activities.

The Legislature set policy to reduce the number of eligible people awaiting services:

- Set targets for how much to reduce the waitlist and by when. Three funding scenarios are provided to reduce the waitlist over six years.
- Direct DDA to develop strategies and a budget proposal for prioritizing the people waiting for services by their needs. The proposal should include funding for case resource managers for people on the waitlist and for collecting information on them.

Suggestions for improving waitlist management:

- Expand data gathered during initial application for services: types of services needed, how urgent the need is, level of support required.
- Reduce case manager caseloads to 45-to-1.
- Reinstate case managers for waitlist clients.
- Simplify the process to find and connect people who are eligible for Medicaid Personal Care.

This information is from the State Auditor's Office Performance Audit, Report No. 1009938. To read the full report, visit www.sao.wa.gov and search "1009938".



ACTION PLAN

Advocacy on this issue has led to legislation being introduced in response to the audit.

This includes bills to require long term planning for developmental disabilities services based on results of the audit (SB 6122, HB 2432) and a bill to get people from the waitlist into services by restructuring the waiver system (SB 6387).

If you want to voice your opinion on this issue, you can use the Legislative Hotline (800-562-6000) to have a message sent to all three of your legislators and the Governor.

Want to learn more about current bills on issues of interest to you and your family? Visit The Arc of Washington State website: capwiz.com/arcwa/issues/bills

Why Should I Apply for Eligibility to the Developmental Disabilities Administration?

There's a good chance you've heard lots of reasons for not applying to the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)... no funding, no services, long waiting lists. While some of these situations may be true at one time or another, there are many more reasons why it's a good idea to apply for DDA eligibility.

1. Entering the DDA system may lead to other opportunities.
 - Medicaid Personal Care. MPC provides in-home services to assist with daily needs, such as bathing, toileting, cooking and eating. Although DDA eligibility is not a requirement, DDA can help determine MPC eligibility and refer for services if eligible.
 - The Developmental Disabilities Life Opportunities Trust. DDLOT is a special needs trust that allows saving for the future without jeopardizing government benefits. It's only available to DDA eligible individuals. Visit www.ddlot.org for more information.
 - Affordable housing. DDA eligibility is tied to some unique opportunities for affordable housing for adults, as well as families with DDA eligible children.
2. DDA eligible individuals who are not receiving paid services receive valuable information and updates on services and resources through a yearly mailing from Informing Families, Building Trust.
3. Eligibility puts you a step ahead in the event there's a crisis and your family member needs more support than what you're able to provide. Even if you don't experience a crisis, s/he is already in line for services if funding becomes available.
4. Documenting unmet need helps everyone. When you apply for services and are denied due to lack of funding, you provide data that gives the state a true picture of the numbers of eligible people with unmet needs. This helps advocates make a case to the legislature for the necessary funding.

How Do Waiting Lists Work?

Funding for new enrollments in non-entitlement programs depends on the legislature, which means the wait time can be long and frustrating. However, for all the reasons listed, it's important to obtain DDA eligibility and request the services your family member needs.

Depending on the type of service you request, openings are filled by date of request or level of need.

- Individual and Family Services openings are filled according to the date you make a request and other factors.
- Access to emergency IFS funding is only available to eligible clients on this waitlist.
- Home and Community-Based Waiver openings are filled according to level of need and other factors. Individuals who request a waiver service are placed on a Waiver Enrollment Database.

For information on eligibility, visit dshs.wa.gov/ddd or call: 360-714-5000.

What Disability Services Are Available?

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) offers a variety of community-based in-home and out-of-home services for children and adults. Some programs are federal entitlements, which means that if your family member meets all eligibility requirements, the service must be provided. Other programs are provided under a Medicaid Home & Community Based Services waiver or through state-only funding. Enrollment in HCB waiver and state-only programs is limited.

Below are some of the most requested services. Call your local DDA office (360-714-5000) or visit <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ddd> to ask about a specific service and its eligibility requirements, or to find out about services not listed below.

ALL AGES: Individual & Family Services, Medicaid Personal Care (MPC), Basic Plus / Core Home / Community-Based Waivers

CHILDREN: Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT), Medically Intensive Children's Program (MICP)

ADULTS: Employment & Day Programs, Supported Living Services, Adult Family Home

What is Medicaid Personal Care (MPC)?

MPC is a program for people on Medicaid who need help with “activities of daily living” (ADLs), which are things like eating, dressing, bathing, or moving around (mobility.) The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has contracts with caregivers who they can pay to provide MPC services. MPC services are usually in your home and can sometimes be in other places in the community.



How can I find out if I/my family member can get MPC?

- If you/your family member has Medicaid Provider One medical coverage (it used to be called Medical Coupons) and has a DDA case manager, call and ask to apply for MPC.
- If you don't know if you/your family member has a DDA case manager, call DDA at 714-5000. Tell them you don't know if you have a case manager, but you want to apply for MPC. They will see if you/your family member has already been found to be an eligible DDA client but doesn't have a caseworker. If so, they will put you through to the “No Paid Services” voicemail. Leave a message asking to apply for MPC, and be sure to say your name and how to contact you. They will call you to set up an assessment appointment.
- If you/your family member is not a DDA client but is on Medicaid Provider One medical coverage and needs help with ADLs (see above) s/he still may be able to get MPC. Call DDA at 714-5000 and ask to apply for MPC. (Even if you/your family member is not a DDA client, this is still the agency to call.) They will ask you some questions to decide about setting up an assessment appointment.

What happens at the assessment appointment?

A DDA case manager will come to your home and ask you questions to find out how much help you/your family member needs with activities of daily living (ADLs). This takes 2-4 hours. Based on your answers, the computerized assessment program they use tells how many MPC hours you/your family member can have each month. For more details on the MPC assessment and the kind of questions they ask, see: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ddd/CAP.shtml>.

If eligible for MPC hours, how do I find an MPC provider who is contracted with DDA?

DDA will explain the steps to you. Some agencies contracted with DDA to provide MPC services include:

- Cascade Home Care: 360-647-9087, www.cascadechristianservices.org/programs/home-care
- Catholic Community Services: 360-738-6163
- Visiting Angels: 866-522-6435, www.visitingangelswa.com

Are there other resources to help find MPC caregivers?

The Home Care Referral Registry is a free service (360-707-2368) that keeps a list of caregivers in your area. Also helpful is the Choosing Caregivers Guide: <http://arcwhatcom.org/documents/ChoosingCareGiversGuide03-12.pdf>



How can family members or friends become MPC providers and be paid to care for my family member?

Call your case manager or DDA at 714-5000, and they will tell you the steps a friend or family member needs to take to become an MPC provider.

Can parents be MPC providers?

If your child is 18 or older, you may become contracted as an individual provider or parent provider. Parent provider trainings are scheduled in Bellingham for April 9, July 9, and October 8, 2014. To register, contact the Training Partnership at (866)371-3200.

Source: www.co.whatcom.wa.us/health/children/background_structure_whatcom_taking_action.jsp#handouts

Community Events



WCEL Dinner & Auction "Celebrating Children...Creating Futures"

5:30pm, Saturday, March 15
Bellingham Golf & Country Club

For information or to purchase tickets, call 671-3660 ext. 100.



Parent to Parent Support Group

Monday, February 10
7pm – 8:30pm

WCEL, 2001 H Street, Bellingham

Join other parents of children with developmental delays, disabilities, and ongoing health care needs in a comfortable, confidential setting for mutual support. On-site child care available for those who RSVP: (360) 255-2056 ext 1.



6th Annual FACES Auction & Dinner

5:30pm, Saturday, April 19
Bellingham Golf & Country Club

This exciting event helps fund the FACES Northwest therapeutic recreational day camp in July and August for children and young adults with autism from ages 5 through 21. Visit www.facesnorthwest.com to purchase tickets.



2014 Season Kicks Off Soon!

TOPSoccer is an adaptive soccer program for children with physical and/or intellectual disabilities ages 4-19. The Whatcom County Youth Soccer Association partners with St. Luke's Foundation to provide this program.

The 7th season of Whatcom County TOPSoccer will kick off on Wednesday, April 23. The six week season will have all training sessions conducted at the Sportsplex Ice & Indoor Soccer Arena. The sessions will be each Wednesday broken into two time slots from 5:30-6:30 or 6:45-7:45 PM, depending on the age and number of participants. Registration will begin next month.

Autism 200 Series

Autism 200 is a series of classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism. Faculty from Seattle Children's, the University of Washington and community providers teach the classes via teleconference. Each class is open to the public and includes time for questions. Locally the classes are presented at Western Washington University Communication Sciences and Disorders AIC Building, 516 High Street, Bellingham.

PLEASE NOTE: You must RSVP in advance. Contact Jessica: bowerj2@students.wvu, (509) 638-8980.

Autism 202: Navigating Insurance Benefits – What You Need to Know About Health Insurance Benefits for Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Autism

7:00pm-8:30pm, Thursday, February 20

Instructor: Arzu Forough, founder and CEO, Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy

Autism 203: The DIR/Floor Time Model – A Treatment Philosophy for Parents and Professionals That Fosters Relationships to Support Engaging and Relating the Foundation for Social and Emotional Development

7:00pm-8:30pm, Thursday, March 20

Instructor: Rosemary White, OTR/L

Autism 204: The Ins and Outs of ABA

7 to 8:30 p.m, Thursday, April 17

Instructors: Shane Herriot-Miramontez, PhD, BCBC-D, and Heather W. Suarez, MEd, BCBA

For information, visit *The Seattle Children's Autism Center's website:* www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics-programs/autism-center/resources.

Parent Research Study on Whatcom County Services

Does your child have medical conditions, developmental delays, and/or behavior issues that cause you to visit more than one doctor or therapist? If so, we need your help to find out how well our system of care is working for kids and families, and how we can serve families better. We want to learn more about the services and supports in Whatcom County, so we're inviting the true experts, you the parents and families, to participate in a research project.

Your participation might include a phone or in-person interview, or a focus group with other families. We will talk with you to find out what works best for you. If interested, please contact Monica: (360) 715-0170, ext 303, monicab@arcwhatcom.org.



“Getting Started, Making Connections”

What Families of Young Children with Developmental Disabilities Need to Know

6-8pm, Wednesday, February 19

**St. Lukes Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham**

Do you have a young child that has been involved in early intervention services, has developmental delays, or special healthcare needs? Come and connect with other parents and get to know the community resources that are available for your child and family. Topics will include early intervention, special education, Medicaid waivers, health insurance for children, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). You will also have the opportunity to meet local agencies who can provide assistance and support to your family.

This event is sponsored by The Arc, Parent to Parent, Taking Action / SEAS, and the Whatcom Infant and Childrens Council (WICC). For families needing special accommodations, please RSVP by February 10. **Childcare is available** if you RSVP by February 14: 715-0170 ext. 303, monicab@arcwhatcom.org.



EXCITING OPPORTUNITY! **Down syndrome Outreach Seeks Coordinator**

The Arc of Whatcom County has an opening for a Down syndrome Outreach (DsO) Coordinator. The mission of DsO is to advocate for the rights, promote the potential and abilities, and create a supportive and inclusive community for people with Down syndrome and their families.

This is a part-time position and will include the following responsibilities:

- Provide support to families with individuals with Down syndrome
- Coordinate family support events
- Meet with newly diagnosed families with Down syndrome and families new to Whatcom County
- Offer information on resources
- Collaborate with agencies serving children with special health care needs to ensure families of children who have Down syndrome are adequately served

Qualifying candidates must be a parent, sibling or family member of an individual with Down syndrome. Applicants must submit a letter of interest and resume by February 18. Email: admin@arcwhatcom.org or mail to: The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center, 2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham, WA 98225.

“Empower Yourself, Empower Someone Else”

March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



In 1987, The Arc of the United States successfully advocated for March to be declared National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month by President Ronald Reagan. There is no doubt that we have made tremendous strides to promote and protect the rights of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) to live, learn, work and play as valued and contributing members of their communities. The real strength of our message comes straight from the individuals we serve. No matter how effective our organization's advocacy efforts may be, no one is as powerful an advocate for people with I/DD as a person with I/DD.

So, this year during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, The Arc would like to empower all individuals with I/DD to appoint themselves as their own advocates. Becoming a self-advocate simply means protecting one's own self-interests, demanding respect, reaching out for the services and supports needed to fully participate, and simply making others aware of what it means to be a person with I/DD. When you empower yourself in this way, you can then empower others to join in the cause with you.

We encourage all self-advocates, as well as their families and friends, to pick at least one idea from the list below and make that your personal effort to raise awareness, respect and inclusion during March. Thank you!

How can YOU make a difference?

- **Jump in and get involved!** Contact The Arc of Whatcom County (360-715-0170, admin@arcwhatcom.org) to volunteer or donate. The Arc provides the services and supports essential to people with I/DD and their families. But as a small agency with limited funding, The Arc needs the help of the community to reach the thousands of families in need.
- Spread the word. **Post on Facebook** about the issues facing people with I/DD that are most important to you. Talk about your personal experiences or the experiences of someone you know and love. Tell the world what you would like to see change! (Or go “old-school” with a good, old-fashioned letter to the editor of your local newspaper explaining to your community why they should care about I/DD.)
- Get a group of co-workers, friends and/or neighbors to **attend the The National Sprout Film Festival**. The Arc is hosting the festival in May in Bellingham. The festival showcases inspiring, beautiful films featuring individuals with developmental disabilities. (Details to be announced soon.)
- **Talk to your employer** about their practices for recruiting and hiring people with I/DD. Many employers don't realize just how much an employee with I/DD can contribute to the workplace. Tell them.
- **Support businesses that employ people with disabilities** and make sure they know you noticed.
- Since many people with disabilities rely on publicly funded services to fully participate in their communities, policy makers need to understand the importance of continued services in the face of budget cuts during tough economic times. **Contact your state and federal legislators** and share your experiences. Let them know you expect them to enact public policy to assist people with I/DD.

Have You Taken the Pledge?

Spread the Word to End the Word is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics, Best Buddies International and supporters to raise the consciousness of society about the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the word "retard(ed)" and encourage people to pledge to stop using the R-word.

The campaign, created by youth, is intended to engage schools, organizations, and communities to rally and pledge their support.

Most activities are centered annually on the first Wednesday of March (March 5th), but people everywhere can help Spread the Word throughout their communities and schools year-round thru pledge drives, youth rallies and online activation.

Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. However, much of society does not recognize the hurtful, dehumanizing and exclusive effects of the word "retard(ed)."

It is time to address the minority slur "retard" and raise the consciousness of society to its hurtful effects.

Want to help end the r-word?

March is a great month to hold a local pledge event at a local school, business or community event. Set up a laptop or tablet to encourage people to sign the www.r-word.org pledge page on the spot and/or create a banner for people to sign on the spot. It's that simple! (Need help? Contact Amy at The Arc: 715-0170, ext 309, amym@arcwhatcom.org)

**Language affects attitude. Attitudes affect actions.
Make your pledge to use respectful people first language.**

ACCEPTANCE
Be a fan of
RESPECT
FRIENDSHIP
INCLUSION
UNITY

www.r-word.org



The Arc

*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

The Parent Coalition

The Arc of Whatcom County provides leadership support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians. The goal of the Parent Coalition is to enable persons with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians to become effective and involved in accessing services.

*The Parent Coalition newsletter
is published monthly by:*

The Arc of Whatcom County

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Stay Connected

Online Community Calendar: Visit
The Arc's online calendar: www.arcwhatcom.org/events.

Facebook: Visit our FB page: www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom for the latest information and events.

E-alerts: The Parent Coalition emails updates on legislation, workshops and upcoming activities. To sign up, visit www.arcwhatcom.org or email monicab@arcwhatcom.org.



PARTNER AGENCY

*The Parent Coalition is funded by grants from the
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the United Way and your generous donations.*

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DID YOU KNOW?

More than 14,000 people are currently eligible for services from the state, yet receive nothing due to lack of funding being allocated.

In addition to these people sitting on a waitlist, an estimated 46,200 people could also be eligible but have never requested services.

See page 1 for more details and page 2 about the importance of getting enrolled with DDA.



The Arc of Whatcom County
Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Bellingham, WA 98225

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Event Calendar

February 2014

10 Monday 7-8:30pm
Parent to Parent Support Meeting
WCEL, 2001 H Street
Contact Christine: 255-2056, ext 1

11 Tuesday, 11am-1pm
WICC Advisory Board Meeting
St. Lukes Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway
Contact Monica: 715-0170, ext 303

14 Friday, 12-1:30pm
Autism Support Group
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Contact Monica: 715-0170, ext 303

15 Saturday, 6-7pm
People First Meeting
114 W Magnolia Suite 106
Contact Susan: 738-2060

17 Monday, 6-8pm
Spin Dance
Senior Center, 315 Halleck Street
Contact Amanda: 778-7000

19 Wednesday, 6-8pm
"Getting Started" Event
(see page 5 for details)

20 Thursday, 7-8:30pm
Autism 202 Series
(see page 4 for details)

22 Saturday, 10am-12pm
The Arc of Whatcom County Board of Directors Meeting
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Contact Christine: 715-0170, ext 305

24 Monday, 4:30-6pm
DD Advisory Board Meeting
St. Lukes Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway
Contact Jessica: 676-6724, ext #32014

NOTE: All listed events are in Bellingham unless otherwise noted. More events are listed on The Arc's community calendar: www.arcwhatcom.org/events.

Join The Arc on March 29: A Day for Awareness

This year in honor of national Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, The Arc is launching a campaign to encourage all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their friends, family members and organizations to get out in public on March 29 to help raise awareness

Throughout March, The Arc's national office will promote this one-day movement as a way to harness our collective power to gain allies, foster understanding, dispel myths and encourage people without disabilities to recognize that we're not so different after all.

For more ideas on celebrating and honoring DD Awareness Month, see pages 6 and 7.

Want to help host a local event? Contact Amy at The Arc of Whatcom County: (360) 715-0170, ext 309, amy@arcwhatcom.org.