



**Correction**

In the May 17, 2022 newsletter, the attached letter regarding the administrative workgroups stated that conflict-free case management would be completed by 9/30/2022. This is incorrect.

The stakeholder group working with BHDDH on developing and implementing conflict-free case management for the adult I/DD population agreed to align the DD process with the overall Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) process. The LTSS workgroup is developing the timeline and expects to release it soon. Once it is available, the timeline will be shared with the DD community. We will keep you posted and apologize for any confusion the error may have caused.

**DD Community Forum**

A DD Community Forum was held on May 11<sup>th</sup>. A recording of the forum can be found at <https://www.advocatesinaction.org/DDCommunityForums.php>.

Notes from the forum are attached at the end of this newsletter.

**Voice Your Thoughts on The Future of Self-Directed Services**

**Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**

**11:30 – 12:30 PM or 6:00 – 7:00 PM**

**RSVP: [Link](#)**

The Sherlock Center, in partnership with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, is facilitating listening sessions via Zoom about the \$2 million in transformation funds dedicated for Self-Directed services.

Come and learn more about the fund and have an opportunity to share your thoughts. We want to hear from you. What is working with self-direction? What type of support could help make self-directed services better for you?

There will be 2 sessions on Tuesday June 7. You can attend one or both of them.

If you cannot attend, please take the opportunity to share your thoughts via [this survey link](#).



## **Celebrating Olmstead: Working4INclusion**

**Tuesday, June 14, 2022**

**3:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

**[Register here](#)**

The AoD Disability Employment Technical Assistance Center's (DETAC) National Community of Practice (CoP) webinar, [Celebrating Olmstead: Working4INclusion](#), will be hosted **Tuesday, June 14, 2022, from 3:00-4:30 P.M. Eastern Time.**

Join the DETAC along with the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) and speakers from two state Protection and Advocacy entities, to celebrate the anniversary of the Olmstead Decision. The NDRN will share national trends for phasing out sheltered work in addition to highlighting the *Employment First* outcomes across the country. State expert speakers will showcase innovative and effective strategies at the state level to transition from a segregated work model to increasing competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Presenters will include the National Disability Rights Network, The Disability Law Program of Delaware, and Disability Rights North Carolina.



## **Guardianship and Independence**

Executive Director Kevin Nerney, explains guardianship of an adult with developmental disabilities during his recent appearance on the public service program, Law Matters. He outlines the process, the pitfalls and the recent change in legislation in Rhode Island and across the country.

In an informal Q & A format, the host/moderator facilitates discussion between attorneys Kevin Nerney, and David Bazar about the legal and practical aspects of housing, finance, relationships, and medical care, as well as viable alternatives readily available to assist and promote independence. Relevant anecdotes and open discussion about the costs to everyone involved, financial and emotional, provide facts and perspective on this timely issue.

**[Watch the discussion here.](#)**

## **Accessibility is Beautiful is Returning**

**Saturday, September 10th**

**2:00p-7:00pm**

**[Click Here to Register](#)**

**FREE Outdoor Festival Celebrating Rhode Island Accessibility  
The Steel Yard, 27 Sims Ave, Providence RI, 02909**

Accessibility is Beautiful 2022, will even bigger and better than last year if that is even possible. It will be held at the Steel yard, Providence RI and part of PVD Fest this year. We are excited to have even more food trucks, vendors, artists from all areas of art and businesses included. More details will be posted as we confirm.

This event will celebrate diversity and inclusion, help local business learn how to become accessible, & include individuals of all abilities. Hear from fellow business owners, community advocates, and legislators about ways to innovate your business for a more accessible future. Check out our marketplace, accessible tours, entertainment, artists and more. All businesses will get a FREE accessibility assessment and be entered to win a custom ramp for one lucky business.

[Click Here](#) to watch a video of the 2021 speeches and presentations. Speakers include Tina Guenette Pedersen, Senator Jack Reed, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Representative James Langevin, and Representative David Cicilline.

### **Presidential Service Awards**

RAMP has been selected to present the PRESIDENTIAL SERVICE AWARDS to individuals who are shining stars at community service. There are 4 levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold and the lifetime achievement award. Download the service log, fill in and return to [RAMPtina@yahoo.com](mailto:RAMPtina@yahoo.com) by August 1st, 2022. All individuals that meet the criteria and confirmed will receive their award at the Accessibility is Beautiful event Sept 10, 2022.

Community service hours need to be completed between August 1, 2021 thru August 1, 2022, See <https://presidentialserviceawards.gov/eligibility#volunteers> for eligibility, hours needed, and more information.



## **Your Feedback is Needed for a Survey** **about Transportation Options in Rhode Island**

The [Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council](#) is conducting a survey about the following publicly-funded transportation services in our state:

- RI Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) Fixed Route and Flex Bus
- The Ride Program- RIPTA ADA Paratransit and contracted services for the RI Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Non-Emergency Medical (NEMT) and Elderly Transportation Program (ETP), which are currently provided by MTM
- Local Van Services provided by Cities and Towns
- Rhode Island's Commuter Rail and Train Service

The information you provide will help the Coordinating Council better understand how publicly-funded transportation services meet the needs of ALL Rhode Islanders and identify areas for improvement in our state.

**[Click Here to Take the Survey](#)**

### **About the Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council**

The Coordinating Council is charged with better integrating and improving transportation programs that support individuals in need of specialized transportation assistance. It was created by the Rhode Island General Assembly in RI Gen. Laws § 39-18.1-5, which established a coordinating council consisting of state agencies responsible for meeting the needs of low-income seniors and persons with disabilities.

The following agencies are currently represented on the Council: RI Dept. of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH); RI Dept. of Health (RIDOH); RI Dept. of Human Services (DHS); RI Division of Statewide Planning; RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services (EOHHS); RI Office of Healthy Aging (OHA); RI Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS); RI Office of Veterans Services; RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA); and RI Dept. of Transportation (RIDOT).

**This survey is open to everyone. If you don't use any of these public transportation options, you can still take the survey to give your feedback on why they don't work for you.**

**Please share the link to the survey with anyone you know who uses any of these transportation options.**

The link is <https://tinyurl.com/HSTCCSurvey>

## **Contacting DD Staff**

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00  
for questions or support

**(401) 462-3421**

Para español, llame

**(401) 462-3014**

Send general questions to the  
AskDD email address.

[BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov)

Please do not email critical issues.

## **Sign Up for Our Email List**

If you aren't receiving email updates  
and newsletters from BHDDH, you can  
[sign up here](#) or on our website. Go to

<https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmentaldisabilities/events/newsandupdates/> to sign up or to see  
past quarterly newsletters and issues of DD News.



**SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER**

## **If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, BH Link is here for you**

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger. Visit the BH Link website at [www.bhlink.org](http://www.bhlink.org) or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

**CALL (401) 414-LINK (5465) If under 18 CALL: (855) KID(543)-LINK(5465)**

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY TRIAGE CENTER at 975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI

## **For Information on the Consent Decree**

For information on the Consent Decree and BHDDH, see <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>.

## **COVID-19 Information**

### **Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources**

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;  
Email [RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov)  
Website <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>  
*Includes a link to ASL videos*

### **RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)**

Website <https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/>  
Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email [callcenter@ripin.org](mailto:callcenter@ripin.org)

### **Advocates in Action – for videos and easy to read materials**

Website <https://www.advocatesinaction.org/>  
*Website offers BrowseAloud, which will read the website to you*



## Division of Developmental Disabilities - All Staff Contacts

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**Fax:** (401) 462-2775    **Spanish Line:** (401) 462-3014    **BH Link:** 401-414-5465

**To report abuse/neglect:**  
 (401) 462-2629

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## We have an announcement!

Dear Friends,

We are excited to announce the formation of the Rhode Island Self-Direct Coalition (RISDC). We will provide resources and guidance to individuals and families interested in Self-Direct Services. Self-Direction has many benefits, but unfortunately, navigating the system can be overwhelming and confusing. Therefore, we would like to encourage you to be a part of this coalition to help assist one another, so we can all work together to improve the lives of those that use self-direction.

We will be holding monthly informational sessions around topics of interest to those that Self-Direct. In addition, we will schedule speakers around a variety of topics to help keep us all better informed.

We will also provide workforce training and development for *Achievement Coordinators\**. We are in a workforce crisis, now is the time to appreciate and support these important individuals. Our goal is to form an Employment Hub for *Achievement Coordinators* to be partnered with individuals seeking to expand their workforce.

We will be a starting point for local businesses that are looking to hire employees. We will connect and align qualified applicants with developmental disabilities to job opportunities. In addition, we will increase awareness around the potential for self-employment.

We will provide education and awareness on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, self-advocacy, personal safety, and self-empowerment to promote a healthy, person-centered life.

We have all faced situations and obstacles that have left us feeling alone and frustrated. Our goal is to share correct information, avoid misinformation and improve the way self-directed communication is provided.

Thank you for your time. Feel free to reach out with any questions. Please email [info@risdc.org](mailto:info@risdc.org) to be placed on our email list. The website is just about finished, and we will have current and up-to-date resources available.

Let's work together to improve everyone's life!

All the best,

Claudia Lowe & Sheila Coyne  
Co-Founders

\**Achievement Coordinators*-formerly known as Direct Service Professionals (DSPs)



**Get Ready for  
Rhode Island's  
2022 Statewide  
Self-Advocacy  
Conference!**

**[Register here](#)**

## ***Reach for the Stars!***

Join us for this free, informative, FUN online event!!

**This year's Conference will be held:**

**Thursday, June 16th 10:00 am – 2:30 pm**

**Friday, June 17th 10:00 am – 2:30 pm**

*(There will be a one-hour break each day from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm)*

**The Reach for the Stars Virtual Dance Party will be held:**

**Friday, June 17th 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm**

### **Conference Schedule**

#### **Thursday, June 16**

10:00 am General Session  
11:00 am Workshop  
12:00 am One Hour Break  
1:00 pm General Session  
1:15 pm Workshop  
2:30 pm End of Day One

#### **Friday, June 17**

10:00 am General Session  
11:00 am Workshop  
12:00 am One Hour Break  
1:00 pm General Session  
1:15 pm Workshop  
2:30 pm End of Day Two



For updated information, keep checking the Conference page on our website:

**<https://www.advocatesinaction.org/2022Conference.php>**



**Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Services  
Community Forum Notes for Wednesday, May 11, 2022  
Zoom Online Meeting hosted by Advocates in Action**

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**See the video recording of this meeting at:**

<https://www.advocatesinaction.org/DDCommunityForums.php> [advocatesinaction.org]

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DD Director Kevin Savage and DD staff provided updates on the following topics:

1. Transformation fund
  - a. Phase 1 is to support provider agencies to stabilize the workforce and recruitment, retention, and training for DSPs (Direct Support Professionals).
  - b. Phase 2 is to find innovate ways to make community and employment more accessible for adults with I/DD
2. Statewide Workforce Initiative
  - a. Working in partnership with DLT and with Institutions of Higher Education.
  - b. Working on releasing an RFP to engage a professional agency to help with training, recruitment, and retention for DSPs.
3. Technology fund
  - a. Open to all individuals receiving services and have an ISP.
  - b. To purchase general technology (hardware, software) that can assist with goal in the ISP.
  - c. Request form is online. Work with providers/fiscal intermediaries to submit.
  - d. DD caseworkers will review the request.
  - e. First deadline is May 31<sup>st</sup> for review by committee in June. Deadlines and review will be quarterly, so next deadline will be August 31 with review done in September. Will be another tech fund forum in July – date TBD.
4. Rate review process
  - a. Working with Burns & Associates, a Division of Health Management Associates (HMA) to help design new payment methodology, determine new rates, and redefine or add services for adults with I/DD. Working with department, providers, participants, families, and other stakeholders. Goal is to finish prior to Dec. 1 so can have new rate model in the budget for next year.
  - b. Look for an upcoming video presentation in July explaining where we are regarding updates to service definitions.

- c. Public comment period for the full recommendations will be in September.
5. Caseload estimating conference
  - a. Have participated in 2<sup>nd</sup> round of this.
  - b. It standardizes how we set the budget for DD and lets legislative body be educated on the needs of those receiving services.
6. Conflict-free case management
7. Employment
8. Self-directed information
9. Transition to adult services
10. COVID
  - a. States will be given a 60-day notice before the public health emergency (PHE) ends. Once the PHE ends, there will be a 6 month transition period before some of the changes approved during COVID expire.
  - b. Enhanced SLA – day supports through SLA programs and day supports through family members
  - c. Hope is that people can also engage in community and employment.
  - d. Working with Medicaid to keep in place some of these initiatives.
11. Andrew McQuaide from the Sherlock Center @ RIC provided information on:
  - NCI Survey – National Core Indicators survey
    - Quality and outcomes to distribution of services.
    - 650 individuals have been randomly selected
    - Participation is voluntary and confidential
  - Employment and day survey
    - Individual experiences with work or daily life.
    - Survey being sent in them mail
  - Work incentives
    - Sherlock Center is hosting online Lunch and Learn sessions for those that are working or thinking about it
  - Self-Direct Learning Collaborative
    - Participating with National Center Learning Collaborative to improve self-direction
    - To have a voice in the SD fund created by the Consent Decree action plan.
  - Technology fund research project
    - To assess how the technology requested as part of the technology fund worked for individuals
12. Conflict-free case management

- a. Access to case management is a part of the federal Medicaid rules and needs to be conflict-free. This will include all who receive any long-term services and supports.
- b. Technical assistance agency is looking at this plan to ensure compliance.

### 13. Employment

- a. Jay MacKay provided the update that PSCEPP 3 is coming to end on June 30, but partnerships will continue with ORS and DLT to ensure employment opportunities and support

### 14. Self-Directed

- a. Working with Medicaid to continue to allow to have parents be paid as employees after the public health emergency ends.

### 15. Transition to adult services

- a. Parent/Student Provider chats have occurred over last 2 months – links to the videos for each are on the BHDDH/DD website.
- b. Transition Communities of Practice group had a quarterly meeting in April
- c. Resources for information for adult services for those coming out of school:
  - i. Roadmap, FAQs, timeline and how to apply and links to local and national organizations can be found at our website: [Transitioning To Adult Services | Dept. of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals \(ri.gov\)](#)
  - ii. Information is provided at the IEP meetings for those age 14 and over.
- d. Ways to be a stronger advocate for your child
  - i. Contact RIPIN (RI Parent Information Network) – they attend IEP meetings, have peer support, skill development and a call center
  - ii. Speak with teacher
  - iii. Contact Advocates in Action
  - iv. Build a network of trusted people

Director Charest joined the meeting and provided a few words of introduction and welcoming.

Iraida Williams, Director of LAZO, provided some information on this support brokerage organization.

### Q&A

- What programs are available for broadband/internet access?
  - This is not an allowable expense under Medicaid.
  - Federal government recognizes issue and is working towards accessibility

- The technology workgroup will get more information out
  - Resource library on the website
  - FAQs on how to connect and access
- What is turnaround time for requests?
  - Reviewed quarterly. First review is in June, with a cutoff date of May 31.
- Can I get a copy of documents to show to caseworker?
  - Depends on which documents. Caseworker can assist. If service definitions, will be available to all. Go to BHDDH/DD website:  
[www.BHDDH.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities](http://www.BHDDH.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities)
- Applying for services?
  - For more information, go to [www.BHDDH.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/eligibility-and-application](http://www.BHDDH.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/eligibility-and-application)
- What is the difference between self-directing and agency services?
  - Self-Directing – can choose own DSP and have control of who you hire and how to access services. Use a Fiscal Intermediary.
  - Agency – use agency staff for assistance with coordination
  - Hybrid – use funding for some self-directed services and some through a provider.
  - Can watch a video and find more information at [www.sdsri.net](http://www.sdsri.net)

Advocates in Action Reach for the Stars Annual Conference will be held on June 16 and 17<sup>th</sup>.