



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR

## MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND BRAIN INJURY COMMISSION

### SYSTEM REDESIGN PROGRESS REPORT

January 20, 2005

The Honorable Governor Thomas Vilsack  
Office of the Governor  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Michael E. Marshall  
Secretary of the Senate  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Margaret A. Thomson  
Chief Clerk of the House  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Acts 804th G.A. ch. 1090 § 35(1)*

#### BACKGROUND

Iowa has embarked on a major redesign of our system of services for persons with mental health needs and other disabilities. The vision is to transform our system to one that reflects choice, empowerment, and community -- where individuals receive necessary, high quality services and supports on an equitable, timely and convenient basis, enabling them to live, learn, work, recreate and otherwise contribute in their chosen communities. The Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Developmental Disabilities and Brain Injury Commission (MHMRDDBI Commission) is leading this redesign.

New law requires the Commission and the Iowa Department of Human Services to report progress on redesigning adult and child systems twice a year in January and July (House File 2537, Division II, Section 35(1), signed into law April 29<sup>th</sup> 2004 and effective July 1, 2004). This is the January 2005 progress report on system redesign. A report on progress during the first half of 2004 was filed July 16, 2004.

Also in January 2005, the Commission will file its annual and biennial report of activities and recommendations for legislative change, as required by Iowa code 225C.6. That report will be issued separately.

#### WHERE WE ARE NOW

The Commission began the redesign of the adult system in January 2003 and the design of the children's system in October 2004. Both processes have engaged consumers and key stakeholders in developing, championing,

and implementing the redesign. The Commission submitted their recommendations for the adult redesign in January 2004. The General Assembly passed legislation that supported the redesign, but have not yet made statutory changes that implement the recommendations.

## **REDESIGN BENEFITS FOR ADULTS WITH MH/MR/DD/BI NEEDS**

Once implemented, the adult system redesign proposals will provide the following benefits for the adults it serves:

- More individual self-direction (through better information and outreach, service coordination, and funding distribution based on standardized functional assessment of needs)
- More services in local communities (through universal initial service coordination and crisis services, core services, residency instead of legal settlement, funding distribution based on uniform assessment of needs, reassessment of institutional funding and roles)
- More people with MH, DD, and BI eligible (through standardized functional assessments and standardized financial eligibility)

## **PROGRESS ON ADULT SYSTEM REDESIGN**

The Adult System Redesign report is on the Iowa DHS website under "publications" dated January 23, 2004. The web site is [www.dhs.state.ia.us](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us). The report recommends that several aspects of the current system for delivering adult disability services be changed to provide better access to services, fund core services to more people statewide, equalize county funding obligations, and distribute funds on a more equitable basis. It is a blueprint for system changes in the coming years.

The Commission, the Department of Human Services, and county MHDD administrators (Central Points of Coordination, or CPCs) have taken several actions to meet these legislative directives and to further the redesign goals set out in the report. In April, the Commission created small work teams to plan how to implement the report's recommendations and to collect and analyze data in support of cost projections. The teams are composed of DHS staff (statistical, fiscal, and policy), CPC staff, and provider agency staff. The teams are working on Functional Assessments, Core Services, Case Rates, Transitions to Residency, Universal Access, Resource Centers, and Mental Health Institutions. They are resolving both technical and legal barriers to county/state data sharing.

The Commission will use data and cost estimates provided by the teams to support legislative proposals in future legislative sessions. To the extent possible, this work also informed Department of Human Services' budget proposals for the SFY 06 budget. The Commission encourages changes in the State Payment Program to require that it cover all services for all state cases consistent with the management plans of counties of residence.

## **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS FOR 2005 SESSION**

The Commission will be calling upon the General Assembly to pass a System Redesign bill this legislative session. It will be presented as part of the Department of Human Services Bill, and will have three components: change in the way county property taxes are levied to support mental health and developmental disability services; a transfer of case management responsibility for individuals with disabilities from "state case" legal settlement status to management by the county where the individual lives; and money to support further development and implementation of uniform functional assessment tools and processes for all Iowa adults with mental illness, mental retardation, developmental disability, or brain injury.

## **BENEFITS OF SYSTEM DESIGN FOR CHILDREN WITH MH/MR/DD/BI NEEDS**

- More will be able to live with their families (through better family support, information and outreach, service coordination, and funding distribution based on standardized functional assessment of needs)
- More will be healthy (through better family support, information and outreach, service coordination, and funding distribution based on standardized functional assessment of needs)
- More will be successful in child care settings and schools (through coordinated services and funding, workforce training, information and outreach, service coordination, use of technology, and outcome measures)
- Youth will be better able to advocate for and care for themselves (through better child focus, family support, information and outreach, service coordination, attention to successful transitions, and outcome measures)

### **PROGRESS ON SYSTEM DESIGN FOR CHILDREN WITH MH/MR/DD/BI NEEDS**

By May 2004, the Commission decided that they should knit together a statewide system of care focused on the children with developmental and behavioral needs and their families. This is a broad effort involving families of children with disabilities, private primary health care and day care providers, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Public Health, and other key constituencies.

Two hundred eighty six people attended the "Touch the Lives of Children with Disabilities Conference" on October 21, 2004 to share their insights on designing a system of care. The Oversight Committee has analyzed that feedback, and is continuing to collect insights from multiple in-state audiences about their needs and concerns. The Committee has identified four focus areas (child focused/family driven, access, services, and transitions) and is poised to begin workgroups comprised of all interested family members and professionals to work toward desired outcomes in the focus areas. About a dozen key initiatives are already underway in Iowa that will improve the lives of children with disabilities and their families. The Children's System Design is linking its efforts to these existing efforts. The Commission hopes to produce recommendations for a statewide system of care for children with disabilities by the end of 2005.

In addition, the Oversight Committee has begun assembling information about the current public funding available to support children with disabilities and their families, and about the programs those funds support. By spring, they hope to publish a report that captures a snapshot of Iowa's current system of care.

Further information about System Design for People with Disabilities is available on the Department of Human Services web site under "mental health and disability services", [www.dhs.state.ia.us](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us).

Respectfully,



Michael Bergan  
Chair, MH/MR/DD/BI Commission

MB/BF:bf

CC: Legislative Services Agency  
Caucus Staff