

DATE: 4.1.2020

Hi All,

Today's update is as follows:

**Temporary Housing:** OPW is welcoming the ability for our vacant Day Hab, Respite and other sites to be developed as needed temporary housing. The rate structure is being completed as discussion continues about the population who would be given priority usage of these community resources. The first priority is for people who are returning from a hospital stay and recovering from the virus. The second group is for others who are not in need of hospitalization but also tested positive and shouldn't return to their certified residence due to the inability to be quarantined effectively (such as the lack of a dedicated bathroom). A third group are those who need an emergency respite placement not due to virus; an alternate respite site would accommodate that population. The Regional Offices will be the gatekeepers for these "stabilization centers." As the guidance is coming, we await both the programmatic and fiscal parameters. Of course, this only works with sufficient staffing and the ability to provide the incentive they need/deserve to help work in these steps-down units. Leaving it there.

**Day Hab Waiver Update:** the work with CMS is continuing daily, and they are close to a final agreement, they say. Tomorrow looks like the final submission to CMS; we understand that CMS Directors from all over the country are working with the States, so a good deal of education (about the State, the waiver contents, etc.) comes along with this renewal and thus, more time prior to approval. Nothing more to share.

**Fiscal Update:** as we hear the NYS budget process is moving to completion by tonight or tomorrow, we remain on hold. Again, both of the 2% increases for Direct Support are still in there and waiting for release. Kevin V is also formulating the added increase to the Residential rate structure we have heard about, with the addition of 6 hours per day for those Residential providers that do not have Day Hab associated with the folks in that residence. Again, let's wait for the funding formulas to see the devil in the details.

**Criminal Background Checks:** there is some movement, but only with certain categories of staff. If a staff person is employed in one agency, they may be able to work in a different agency through a streamlined process and turned around, in one day they say, by the Justice Center. The second category of staff that can have expedited screening will be those who have worked in other "O" agencies through a similar process. The third category is for new hires who may be able to work under supervision after they clear the SEL check. More to come with an ADM shortly.

**Recoupments:** an exasperating topic area. We still haven't been able to get DOH to budge on this. The Governor's office reiterated their position on this call that they cannot stop the cycles once the data is loaded into the system. The cash flows, the extra pay for staff, the dire need and our own spending on supplies...they hear us, but...

I'll leave it at frustrating.

Membership phone call tomorrow at 10:05 AM.

Next OPWDD call on Friday.

One final mention, on this and the previous calls, both Parent organization reps and Self Advocacy were on the phone, which is a good thing. We then, are not the only ones voicing our concerns loudly. They also hear how limited their response has been to it all.