

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

Division of Developmental Services

Quality Assurance and
Quality Improvement Activities

“A Network of Safeguards”

New Hampshire's DD System

- The Current DD System
 - In existence about 20 years [since 1981]
 - Completely community based for the last 10 years [institution closed in 1991]
- Prior to 1981
 - Laconia State School
 - Several local agencies established by parent groups

New Hampshire's DD System

- Built on the principle of local control
- Community system divided into 12 regions served by 12 regional entities called area agencies
- Three types of regional arrangements:
 - Area agency providing all services
 - Area agency providing most of the services and contracting out some others
 - Area agency providing some services and subcontracting most other services

New Hampshire's Area Agencies

- Non-profit organizations
- Designated by the DDS
- With independent board of directors
 - 1/3 rd of the Board is made up of people who receive services (individuals with disabilities and their family members)

System Financing

- Area agencies rely on the HCBC-DD waiver extensively for funding of their regional systems
- Area agencies are the only enrolled Medicaid providers under the HCBC-DD Waiver
 - New Hampshire's DD system is arranged as an Organized Health Care Delivery System
 - An individual or guardian may select any person, any agency, or another area agency as a provider. [He-M 503]
 - All providers must comply with the rules pertaining to the service(s)
 - All providers must operate within the limits of funding authorized.

NH DDS Network of Safeguards

State DDS Agency

- Statewide Adult Outcomes Report
- Residential and Day Certification
- Adult Protection Investigations
- Area Agency Redesignation
- Quality Assurance Network
- Medication Committee
- Training Guide and Resource Manual
- Statewide DD RNs
- Regulations
- Financial Audits
- Mortality Review
- Complaint Investigators Roundtable
- Psychotropic Med Review
- Statewide Business Managers
- Statewide Executive Directors
- Consumer Employment Survey
- Statewide Service Coordinators
- Statewide Forensic Coordinators

12 Designated Area Agencies

- Individual Service Agreements
- AA Complaint Investigations
- Service Coordinator Visits
- Medication Training and Authorization
- Medication Reporting
- Staff Training
- Biennial Plans
- Outcome Interviews
- Satisfaction Surveys
- Respite Coordinators
- Regional Peer Review
- Provider QA Monitoring
- Human Rights Committee
- Statewide Benefits Planners
- Family Support Coordinators
- Statewide Intake Coordinators
- Interagency Training Collaboratives

Individual

- Family
- Friends
- Guardians
- Social Relationships
- Rights Training
- Outcome Interviews
- Self-Advocates
- People First
- Community Connections
- Employment

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Adult Outcomes Surveys

- Beginning in 1996, the State DDS Agency, in close collaboration with each of the twelve Area Agencies, has conducted comprehensive individual interviews to gather information related to the following domains:
 - Individual Choice and Control
 - Health and Safety
 - Community Participation
 - Personal Growth and Accomplishments
 - Relationships
 - Satisfaction
 - Respect and Dignity

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Adult Outcomes Surveys *continued*

- Approximately 10% of all adults receiving Developmental Disability waiver services, their guardians, families or other significant individuals, are interviewed each year to determine:
 - Level of satisfaction
 - Local trends
 - Statewide trends
- Individual reports are provided to each person's team.
- Detailed, regionally specific reports are compiled and shared with each Area Agency's staff, Board of Directors and Family Support Council.
- A comprehensive statewide report is forwarded to the CMS/HCFA Region One Office with the annual 372 Report.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Area Agency Redesignation Process

- On a rotating four-year schedule, each Area Agency must apply and go through the Redesignation Process in order to be designated as the regional entity eligible to contract with the State DDS agency to provide supports and services to individuals with disabilities in their geographical region in accordance with RSA 171 A:2 and state rule He-M 505.
- A team from the State's Division of Developmental Services:
 - Reviews the Area Agency's policies and practices for compliance with federal and state regulations; and
 - Assesses the agency's financial practices and quality of service provision.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Area Agency Redesignation Process *continued*

- Information is gathered from multiple sources:
 - **Record reviews** at the Area Agency and DDS
 - **Interviews** with staff, Board of Directors, Family Support Council, Self-Advocacy groups, and sub-contracting agencies
 - **Forums** are held with consumers and family members
 - **Surveys** of consumers, family members, and collaborating agencies
- Comprehensive reports are produced which identify positive practices and make recommendations regarding continuous quality improvement which agencies routinely incorporate into their biennial plans.
- An Area Agency may be redesignated, conditionally redesignated, or denied redesignation.

Area Agency Successful Outcomes

- The area agency, through multiple means, demonstrates its commitment to individual rights and safeguards
- There is a high level of consumer involvement in all aspects of system planning, design and development
- Supports and services are flexible and represent the needs, preferences and capacities of individuals and families

Area Agency Successful Outcomes

- The area agency demonstrates through its coordination of services and supports a commitment to a mission which embraces community membership for persons with developmental services
- The area agency engages in ongoing inquiry regarding consumer satisfaction
- Recipients of services and supports are satisfied

Area Agency Successful Outcomes

- The area agency seeks to achieve continuous quality improvement in its operations and services
- The area agency promotes preventative services and supports which reduce the need or intensity of long-term care

Area Agency Successful Outcomes

- The area agency board of directors demonstrates effective governance of the agency management and functions
- The area agency is fiscally sound and manages resources effectively to support its mission
- The area agency complies with state and federal requirements

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Residential and Day Service Certification

- The Community Residence Certification Unit within the Bureau of Health Facilities, Office of Program Support determines initial and ongoing compliance with federal Medicaid regulations and state standards for day and residential services.
- This is accomplished through the use of on-site surveys and state office record reviews. Areas reviewed for compliance include:
 - Health and Safety
 - Medication Administration according to He-M 1201
 - Personal Rights
 - Fire Safety
 - Staff Qualifications and Training
 - Appropriate delivery of services as per the Service Agreement
 - Documentation Requirements

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Medication Committee

- The Division of Developmental Services has a multi-disciplinary Medication Committee, comprised of:
 - A representative of the NH Board of Nursing
 - An Area Agency Quality Assurance representative
 - A Provider Agency management designee
 - Two registered nurse-trainers representing Community Service Providers of developmental and mental health services
 - DDS' nurse coordinator and
 - Chaired by physician with expertise in Developmental Disabilities
- On a rotating basis, the Medication Committee reviews the practices and outcomes of Area Agencies and respective Provider Agencies statewide with regard to administration of medications by staff authorized under He-M 1201.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Medication Committee *continued*

- Each Area Agency is expected to submit a detailed report, including every dose administered, for each certified setting in which authorized staff administered medications.
 - Each Area Agency is required to review, evaluate and summarize regional error related trends.
- The Medication Committee's review of each Area Agency's report includes a performance analysis as well as identifying trends and best practices.
- The Medication Committee generates a formal response to each Area Agency.
 - For those agencies where negative trends have been identified, the Medication Committee requires that the Area Agency provide a corrective plan and or submit supplemental reports on progress to remediate identified issues.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Psychotropic Medication Review

- In December of 2000, the DDS in collaboration with Area Agencies and sub-contract providers developed and implemented a survey of all individuals receiving psychotropic medications within the DDS service delivery system.
- The outcomes for the 2000 Psychotropic Medication Review are:
 - Increased awareness and evaluation of trends in the use of psychotropic medications within the regional developmental services system and on a statewide level; and
 - Increased awareness of the importance of monitoring for psychotropic medication side effects, including appropriate reporting and intervention.
- A database was developed and submission of data collected is expected April, 2001. Analysis of this data, including regional and statewide trending will be complete by the December, 2001.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Mortality Reviews

- Since 1999, NH's DDS has begun to implement a quality assurance process for the evaluation of mortality for all individuals receiving residential services and or individuals whose death occurs in a certified day setting. Objectives for this process include:
 - Identification and promotion of best practices to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities receive optimal health-related supports;
 - Evaluation of how mortality relates to policy and program development through identification of factors in the quality of care and services for persons with developmental disabilities; and
 - Identification of indicators and or medical conditions that make individuals vulnerable to illness, accidents and death.
- The initial phase of data collection, including implementation of a mandatory reporting process began in 1999. Critical episodes of mortality have subsequently been investigated and evaluative reports have been generated and shared with service providers.

AA Quality Assurance Activities

Area Agency Complaint Process

- Each Area Agency has designated investigators who receive training provided by DDS and the Office of Client and Legal Services. Several Area Agencies have retained independent investigators charged with investigation and attempting to resolve issues to the satisfaction of the consumer and guardian.
- The investigator is expected to identify issues which underlie the incident reports, such as staff training and supervision, so that effective prevention and remediation steps can be taken.
- With the consent of the consumer and guardian, Area Agencies may use an informal problem-solving process, except in cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation issues which must be investigated formally.
- The Rights Protection Procedures He-M 202 have recently been revised to promote clarity and consistency of implementation.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

DEAS Adult Protection Investigations

- All complaints of Abuse, Neglect and or Exploitation must be formally investigated by the Area Agency and be reported to the Division of Elderly and Adult Services (DEAS).
- The Adult Protective System may conduct an investigation parallel to the Area Agency investigation.
- Area Agencies are required to assure consumers are protected pending completion of an investigation.
 - This is accomplished through the temporary reassignment of staff or a respite placement for the consumer.
- All reports must be provided to the consumer and or legal guardian for review and approval.
 - Consumers or legal guardians have the right to appeal decisions.
- All reports, whether or not resolved to the satisfaction of the consumer or guardian, are filed with the Office of Client and Legal Services for review by state officials.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Consumer Employment Survey

- Since 1996, data on consumer employment has been submitted to the DDS from all Area Agencies every six months. A report is generated which compares regional outcomes is compiled and distributed to Area Agencies and DDS staff.
- Key survey indicators include:
 - Total number of consumer's employed during the reporting period
 - Average hourly wage
 - Number of hours worked per week
 - Type of work
 - Age range of those employed
 - Disability level of those employed
- The information is used to identify Area Agencies where increased effort toward employment of individuals with disabilities is needed.
 - An Employment Specialist was hired by DDS in 2000 to assist Area Agencies in this regard.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Financial Audits

- On an annual basis, DDS collects and analyzes Area Agency and provider certified financial audits. As a result, an Annual Report of Financial Condition is prepared. This report represents the financial condition of the developmental services system. It assists the system in several important respects, including:
 - Serving as an early warning system for financially distressed developmental services providers;
 - Evaluating the economic impact of policy decisions that effect reimbursement or expenditures;
 - Assessing the overall financial health of the industry and critical statewide operating trends over a five-year period;
 - Establishing important objectives and specific criteria that can be used by DDS in contract negotiations;
 - Developing a set of industry standards and “best practices” that can be used by providers and DDS for “benchmarking”; and
 - Informing providers, legislators, and other interested parties.

NH DDS Quality Assurance

Day Service Reviews

- In addition to certification, DDS conducted focused reviews at each Area Agency on the provision of Day Services. This comprehensive review was designed to highlight best practices and trends as well as identify areas for improvement.

Contracts with Area Agencies

- On an annual basis, the DDS negotiates and contracts with the twelve designated Area Agencies for the provision of services and supports to individuals with disabilities and their families. Contracts are negotiated and funded in the context of the system's identified quality performance measures and established indicators with baselines for acceptable performance levels and relevant reporting requirements.

DDS & AA Quality Assurance

Statewide Meetings Between DDS and Area Agency Staff to Address System and Policy Issues

- Statewide Developmental Disability Nurses
- Quality Network
- Statewide Service Coordinators
- Complaint Investigators Roundtable
- AA Executive Directors
- AA Business Managers
- Forensic Coordinators
- Respite Coordinators
- Family Support Coordinators
- Benefits Planners

DDS & AA Quality Assurance

Introductory Training Instructional Guide & Resource Manual

- In recognition of the fact that a skilled workforce is an essential safeguard for people with disabilities, the **Introductory Training Instructional Guide & Resource Manual** was developed to provide all direct support caregivers with a basic awareness of concepts critical to the provision of personalized services.
- The outcome-based manual was released statewide in 1999. It is the product of a 5 year cooperative effort by the Community Support Network Inc., the Private Provider Network, DDS and all Area Agencies.
- The manual received approval for 2 credit hours through College for Life Long Learning.
- The training modules included are:
 - An Overview of Developmental Disabilities
 - A Quality Life in the Community
 - Personal Rights
 - Everyday Health and Safety
 - Helping People Learn Useful Skills
 - Understanding and Supporting Effective Behavior
 - Support Through Empowerment

DDS & AA Quality Assurance

Medication Administration Training and Authorization

- All staff and providers are required to complete medication administration training as outlined in NH's regulation He-M 1201 prior to the administration of medications to individuals receiving DDS services in certified settings.
 - He-M 1201 training is conducted by a qualified and DDS approved registered nurse-trainer;
 - Medication Administration Training consists of:
 - A minimum of 8 hours of classroom instruction;
 - Additional training regarding the specific needs of the individual;
 - Formal standardized written testing; and
 - Clinical observation by the nurse-trainer in the setting in which the medications will be administered.
- Ongoing supervision and quality assurance activities specific to medication administration are conducted by a registered nurse in order to assure continued competency in administration.
- This regulation and the accompanying curriculum have been approved by the New Hampshire Board of Nursing.

AA Quality Assurance Activities

Northern and Southern Interagency Training Collaboratives

- The mission of both Training Collaboratives is to provide meaningful, cost-effective training opportunities to enhance the knowledge, skill and abilities of people in direct support roles and therefore improve the quality of services to individuals and their families. Membership of the Collaboratives is made up of representatives from all Area Agencies. Funding is provided by the DDS and supplemented by registration fees.
- Examples of Training Collaborative activities and sponsorships include:
 - Supervision and Leadership Series, NH Community Technical College
 - Introduction to the Gentle Teaching Approach
 - Techniques for Teaching Effective Meeting Skills
 - Effective Human Relations
 - Difficult People, Tormentors or Teachers
 - Financial Support for Agency Nurses to attend the National DDNA Conference
 - Successful Aging for People with Developmental Disabilities
 - What is Self-Determination Really?
 - Training of Trainers in Human Development and Sexuality
 - Magic of Conflict
 - Helping People Have a Life of Their Own

AA Quality Assurance Activities

Area Agency Biennial Plan

- In accordance with RSA 171-A:18 and State rule He-M 505, Area Agencies are required to submit to the Division of Developmental Services Biennial Plans which outline goals, objectives, and activities for a two-year period coinciding with the legislative biennium.
- Biennial Plans operate as working documents which are used to set agency direction and evaluate ongoing performance of agency's activities.
- Area agencies incorporate the results of other planning initiatives, such as Family Support Plans or Family-Centered Early Supports and Services Self-Assessment and Action Plans.
- Area Agency Plans include the following core components:
 - Agency's mission statement.
 - An explanation of the planning process.

AA Quality Assurance Activities

Area Agency Biennial Plan *continued*

- Participants in the planning process. Stakeholders include consumers, self-advocacy groups, Boards of Directors, Family Support Council members, families and guardians, agency staff, Division staff, subcontract agencies, local affiliates and community representatives.
- Identification of the key issues with a priorities list of goals, objectives, activities, projected timeframes, and responsible persons.
- Topic areas include:
 - Consumer Directed Services; Service Provision and Monitoring Through Outcomes; Development of Self-Advocacy; Individual Safeguards; Strategies to Expand Individual and Family Supports and Services; Wait List Management Strategies; Workforce Development and Training; Interagency Collaboration Regarding Individuals with Dual Diagnosis; and Cost Effectiveness.

AA Quality Assurance Activities

Reviews by Service Coordinators

- The service coordinator, who is approved by the individual, facilitates the development of a Service Agreement that reflects individualized choices and is based on State standards. Service Agreements are modified as necessary to ensure continued quality service.

Local Area Agency Surveys

- Many Area Agencies and Provider Agencies have internal quality assurance processes which supplement NH's overall quality assurance activities.
- Staff, individual and family surveys are completed periodically to assist in planning and monitoring of services.

Quality Assurance Activities

People First & Self-Advocacy Groups

- Established in 1991, People First of New Hampshire is a statewide organization of individuals with disabilities working together to become empowered directors of their own lives.
- Members seek to increase autonomy by exploring and gaining competence in the process of informed decision-making.
- Self-advocates learn about personal rights and responsibilities and gain confidence to speak out about what they need and believe in; to that end, have produced Client Rights videos for their members and the greater service provider community.
- Initial funding for People First came through a Developmental Disabilities Council grant, DDS has funded the organization directly since 1995.

Quality Assurance Activities

People First & Self-Advocacy Groups *continued*

- A DDS staff member is assigned to the group as a liaison to facilitate activities and ongoing communication.
- The DDS management team meets with the Board of Directors of People First quarterly to exchange information related to issues important to self-advocates.
- The input of organized groups of self-advocates is sought in the formulation of system regulating standards as well as to the Area Agency Redesignation Process.
- In addition to the statewide organization, many regional local self-advocacy groups are at various stages of development. Some have been active for years, while new groups continue form.

Quality Assurance Activities

Statewide Direct Support Leadership Series

- The DSP Leadership Series began in 1996 to expand career opportunities for NH Direct Support Professionals. It was developed in collaboration with the NH Developmental Disabilities Council, CSPAN, and The Direct Support Professional Organization. The Series is comprised of eight day-long sessions conducted over a six month period.
- Twenty-five people are selected for each class through a nomination and application process.
- The DSP Leadership Series curriculum has been evaluated by The NH College of Lifelong Learning and awarded three credits.
- Trainings include:

Developing a Personal Mission	Teambuilding
Stress Management	History and Future of services in NH
Organizational change	Communication and Negotiation Skills
Supporting Self-Determination	Community development and politics