

Dear SD Participants and Family Advocates,

SDAN learned on June 14 that DDA is proposing serious new limitations on Self-Directed Services in Amendment 2 of the current HCBS Waivers that govern both self-direction and traditional services. **Below we list actions we hope you will take.**

If Amendment 2 is submitted as currently written and approved by the Federal Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services, SD participants will be unable to access staff supports or transportation funding for any activity specifically designed for people with disabilities.

This means there would be no supports for most Special Olympic activities, for classes at the Hussman Center for Adults with Autism, for programs at the Farring Baybrook Recreation Center, and for so many other activities that have evolved to meet the special needs of people with DD.

DDA has noted that this proposed change is a response to the CMS Community Settings Final Rule. SDAN and most other advocates we have consulted believe that DDA's proposed restrictions represent an over-reaction to the CMS inclusive settings rule. In fact, few, if any, of the newly prohibited programs are "institutional" in nature and all of them are designed to develop skills that improve community integration opportunities.

We also find this new proposal especially troubling since we have been meeting regularly with DDA administrators to submit our input on various aspects of the Waivers. DDA also conducted numerous public information sessions on Amendment 2 in June but never hinted at this proposal. SDAN and other advocacy groups were blind-sided by this proposed amendment, and we believe it is an affront to participants, to advocates, and to CMS's requirement for genuine stakeholder input.

We do know that while this new restriction would affect some individuals in traditional services, **it would affect most, if not all, SD participants.** DDA has allowed only 30 days for stakeholders to submit input on this proposed change,

which means that **all stakeholders have until Sunday July 14 to submit their formal response to DDA.**

We have spent the last three weeks seeking clarification from DDA and consulting professional advocacy organizations in order to develop a coordinated response to DDA's proposal. **SDAN proposes that this restriction be removed altogether from Amendment 2 and that the underlying issues be re-considered in the next amendment --with appropriate stakeholder input.**

We ask that you take the following simple actions to preserve and protect Maryland's remarkable SD program.

1. Please examine the changes in the definitions that will appear in all HCBS Waivers (Community Pathways, Community Supports, and Family Supports). See documents linked here labeled "Definition Changes" and "Full Amendment 2 Power Point" and link to DDA Website Page for Amendment 2 below.

2. After examining these definitions, please consider how these changes might affect your program or the program of someone you know. See linked labeled "Sample Letter" for help writing if you need it.

3. Submit your input to DDA ASAP at the email address wfb.dda@maryland.gov, but NOT LATER THAN Sunday, July 14. Your letter need not be formal but should include your contact information; should show how this proposal would affect your or your family member's program; and should note your opposition to (or support of) the definition changes. Please cc SDAN at carolc@marylandsds.org and at carol@custerll.com

4. Contact everyone you know who may be affected by or concerned about this rule, including other DDA programs that provide the affected services. Many individuals and organizations are unaware of this impending change. Feel free to share this email.

5. Contact your local legislators and share your concerns-- and this email -- if you like. To find out who represents you, visit the link below and click the box on the

top right hand corner of that page.

<http://www.mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmmain.aspx?pid=legisrpage>

6. Respond to SDAN to request more resources, including sample letters for input and links to other grassroots advocacy groups. Watch for our complete comments on Amendment 2 coming out in the next couple days.

For more information on all the changes in Amendment 2, check out the link below.

<https://dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/DDAWaiversAmendment2-2019.aspx>