

E-News Update

November 26, 2013

Highlights of NJACP's Annual Conference

NJACP held its 30th Annual Conference, "Turning Obstacles into Opportunities: Stability and Growth in Fee for Service", on November 21 and 22 at its new venue, the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. Over 400 NJACP members and vendors attended the conference, which included 20 educational sessions, a keynote address, networking reception and luncheon. NJACP would like to thank the NJACP Member Resources Committee, Board members, attendees, vendors, sponsors and speakers who participated and made the conference a success. Below are highlights from the conference.

➤ Joe Macbeth Delivers Keynote at Annual Conference Luncheon

Joe Macbeth, Executive Director of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), provided the keynote address, "Direct Support Professionals Making the Difference: A Good Afternoon or a GREAT Life?", for NJACP's Annual Conference. Joe addressed attendees at the luncheon, held on Friday, November 22, about what makes a professional a professional in the world of direct support professionals (DSP's). The discussion focused on moving stories from the "field" about DSP's being skilled and ethical and ways that DSP's can become empowered, competent and valued in a system that is constantly changing. Joe focused on how DSP's provide the foundation for the environment that fosters independent living for people and creates and sustains active lives in the community. Valerie Sellers, NJACP CEO commented "*Without the hard work of DSP's, community living would not be possible. In my 7 months as NJACP CEO, I am honored to have the privilege to support the goals of such a critical industry and have developed a deep appreciation for the important work that DSP's do and the impact they have on people's lives.*"



➤ **Thursday's Networking Reception Features Next Speaker of the NJ Assembly and Advocate of the Year Award Winner**

Thursday evening at NJACP's Annual Conference provided an opportunity for members to network and for NJACP to recognize the forward movement of public policy for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New Jersey with the Public Leadership Award and Advocate of the Year Award. The Public Leadership Award was presented by Legislative and Policy Co-Chairs, Karen Elliott and John Winer, to Assemblyman Vincent Prieto (D-32) in recognition of his leadership and commitment to ensuring agencies and people have increased funding for community services and supporting the enactment of the first cost of care increase for providers in five years during the State Fiscal Year 2014 budget process. Assemblyman Prieto attended with his wife, Marlene and Chief of Staff, Steve Cattuna, and his wife, Sue. The Assemblyman is currently the Assembly Budget Chairperson and will be appointed in January as the next Speaker of the Assembly. In his comments, Assemblyman Prieto acknowledged attendees for the important work they do every day and stated that he looks forward to working with us in the future to ensure adequate supports and services for the most vulnerable.

NJACP presented the Advocate of the Year Award to the Community Living Education Project (CLEP). The CLEP Team facilitates the successful movement of individuals currently in developmental centers to community-based residences through educational forums, one-to-one counseling and produces resources to distribute to individuals, parents and families. Dr. Dave Wright, CLEP Project Director, accepted the award on CLEP's behalf, accompanied by fellow team members, Natalie Trump, Sheilah Garry, and Ann Martinelli. Karen and John thanked them for their efforts to help people prepare for community living and their support of NJACP's goal of community inclusion.



➤ Congratulations to NJACP's Leadership Award Recipients

NJACP awards annual Leadership Awards in recognition of excellence within the workforce and demonstration of exceptional achievements and quality contributions in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. NJACP proudly presented 2013's Leadership Awards at Friday's luncheon to:

- Jamie Douglas, Eden Autism Services
- Amber Navara, Alternatives, Inc.
- Candace Femano, 21 Plus, Inc.
- Ebony Pou, Devereux NJ

Vicky Calabro, NJACP President, remarked, *"We are grateful to have such dedicated and committed people delivering services each and every day through our members agencies. I was moved by each recipient's story and how each reflected the values of community living in their dedication to the people they serve"*.



➤ Thank You

NJACP would like to extend a special thank you to the NJACP Members Resources Committee, chaired by Mary Norris and Donna Clinger, for their efforts to make the conference a success. The conference would not be possible without their attention to detail and the passion for ensuring each member has a positive conference experience.

NJACP would also like to thank the [conference sponsors](#) and [vendors](#). Their support is invaluable and we encourage all members to utilize their products and services.

➤ Annual Meeting

NJACP also conducts business at the Annual Conference by holding the Annual Meeting attended by all NJACP members present. Members approved the [Slate of Candidates](#) nominated for 2014's Officers and Board Members. The Officers and Board represent NJACP and work hard all year to ensure members receive the association benefits they need to deliver quality services. Congratulations to the slate and we look forward to January's Monthly Membership meeting, to be held on January 15, 2014, to officially vote and install the NJACP 2014 Officers and Board. Click [here](#) to learn more about [NJACP Board members](#)



NJACP looks forward to seeing all our members at next year's conference!

[Please click here to view more photos from the 2013 Annual Conference..](#)

DDD Holds Leadership Meeting

DDD held its leadership meeting with the three provider associations with discussion focusing on a number of issues:

- The Adult Medical Day Care (AMDC) community has reached out to DDD to inquire about training its staff to care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It was suggested that the basic orientation staff receive within the DD community would be appropriate training. Additional items that should be included in the training will be provided to Liz Shea for further discussion with representatives of the Adult Medical Day Care community. It was also discussed that staff from group homes will not release information necessary to provide care to an individual to AMDC staff due to concerns related to HIPPA. Creating a business associate agreement may resolve that problem.
- "Lead Agency" contracts with individual agencies will not be continued upon their expiration. DDD is developing an internal training to show what new training will look like and what will be mandatory for the CCW and Supports Program. The rationale for eliminating such contracts is that it creates an unlevel playing field among agencies with some receiving additional funding to provide the training. Moving forward, each agency will have to provide its own training or arrange with another agency to provide training. The funds that have been distributed to specific "Lead Agencies" will now be redistributed among all of the agencies via the "rate" that is being developed under fee-for-service.
- The issue of vacancies was discussed. Other than one or two cases, all have been addressed on a case-by-case basis. Any outstanding issues related to vacancies should be reported to Carrie Conger and will ultimately be reviewed and addressed by Liz Shea. It was further noted that DDD is working hand-in-hand with Medicaid to make the eligibility process more efficient. While it is a longer-term issue, it is a priority for DDD.
- Lengthy discussion took place regarding the Behavior Management Committees (BMCs). They are problematic in large part because they are often comprised of people that do not have the necessary knowledge or credentials to review and approval individual plans. Currently there is no standard for BMCs. It was noted by providers that there is a significant shortage of "qualified" behaviorists and providers would welcome more qualified individuals to have on their staff. DDD agreed that Circulars must be updated and reviewed further to change/update requirements. There was agreement among providers and DDD that there should be credentials for behaviorists. Next steps will be discussed at future meetings.

- Concerns were raised regarding the use of electronic health records. Apparently some licensing staff will not accept electronic records for the DDRT or emergency forms, despite the fact that the information being collected is the same, however, not in the same format. Liz Shea will work with Licensure to issue a joint letter indicating information from electronic health records will be acceptable. If there are forms where it may not be acceptable, DDD will provide an explanation.

Rate Setting

- DDD arranged for self-advocates to meet with the rate setting team to discuss the new process for financing supports and services. There was excitement and support for the opportunity individuals will have to choose their own support coordinator and case manager.
- Training was provided last week regarding claims processing associated with the new fee-for-service system. The training was videotaped and should be posted on the DDD website shortly.
- Approximately 180 providers submitted staffing data for the rate-setting impact analysis rather than the 300 that had been expected. As was explained, a methodology will have to be developed to conduct an analysis for agencies that did not submit their staffing data. Those members of NJACP that have not submitted their staffing information will be notified. The next steps involve further discussion regarding outstanding issues followed by conference calls with the Advisory and Financial Workgroups. CMS will be provided with the methodology being used however they will not be provided the actual draft rates. It is anticipated the new rates will be used in late spring for the new graduates.

Moving forward, Leadership meetings will be held monthly with providers using one meeting to raise issues that are of interest and/or concern with membership.



NJACP office will be closed Nov. 28 & 29 for Thanksgiving holiday.