

THE PA WAITING LIST CAMPAIGN

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Take the Waiver – Please!

If you are offered a waiver by your Support Coordinator – you are strongly advised to apply and take it!

There are two waivers for people who need mental retardation services in Pennsylvania. They are:

- Person and Family Directed Support Waiver
- Consolidated Waiver.

We understand that there might be some reservations about being in a waiver. However, the reasons why you should apply far outweigh the reasons why you would refuse the waiver.

Here are some real reasons why you should apply:

- Waivers provide nearly 90% of the funding for people today. So if you need funding this is the main source.
- Waivers provide a larger source of funding for people living at home or in the community than any other funding source. Family Driven/Family Support Services provides very limited funding and may not be available in your county. You would not be able to get a day program and all that goes with it on a consistent basis through these funds.
- You do need Services and Supports.
- Your Support Coordinator and you filled out a PUNS form. You both indicated on that form that you were in the Emergency category.
- Thinking that someone needs it more than you is noble but perhaps not realistic. If you need services, apply for a Waiver.
- You might have to wait years before a waiver is offered to you again because funds are limited.
- If you need supports and services and have not been offered them, call your Support Coordinator today and ask to begin the process.

If your Supports Coordinator offers your son or daughter the waiver, take it. Please apply!

High School Graduate Information

Approximately 800 young adults will soon be making the transition from educational programs to adult programs. If your son or daughter is graduating this year, you should have been offered a waiver so that your young adult could transition into available community services or supports.

There is a considerable amount of misinformation being circulated and we'd like to clear this up. While employment is a priority for graduating students, it is NOT the only option available. Remember that your son or daughter's program is developed in the Individual Support Plan. If he or she needs other types of day supports, they should ask for what they need. You should not be refused waiver funding based on an individual's inability to be employed. A wide variety of day supports are available through both Waiver programs.

<http://www.pawaitinglistcampaign.org>

**WE CAN. WE WILL. WE MUST.
END THE WAIT!**



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MAY 01 2008

Dear Colleague:

As you know, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) required that Pennsylvania adopt a standardized universal screening process for all Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) Waiver participants. After an extensive review of available assessments/tools, the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)[®] was selected.

The SIS was developed by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), a leader in the field of mental retardation and the oldest organization in the world dealing with intellectual disabilities. The SIS is unlike other assessments in that it does not measure an individual's deficits, but rather, focuses on the supports needed for the individual to live an Every Day Life. It complements our Individual Support Plan (ISP) planning process as it addresses what is important to and for the individual.

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is committed to meeting the needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities consistently and equitably in all areas of the Commonwealth. To ensure that the administration of the SIS is conflict free, ODP contracted with Ascend Management Innovations to implement the assessments in Pennsylvania. Ascend has extensive national experience in the health care field and conducting statewide assessments, and we are fortunate to have them as our contractor.

While the SIS is currently being used in other states as a budgetary assessment tool, ODP pledges that the SIS will not be used in a formula to produce a budget amount in Pennsylvania. ODP also pledges that the SIS will not be the sole source for gathering information about the support needs of people with intellectual disabilities. It will be used in collaboration with all other sources of information gathered for each individual as part of the ISP planning process.

Thank you for your support, efforts, and dedication as we implement the SIS across Pennsylvania. It is our common goal to provide quality services to all individuals to ensure that they may lead an Every Day Life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin T. Casey".

Kevin T. Casey