

Newsletter

Keeping Our New Mexico Families Informed September 2020

What ABLE Means to Me

*By Pshon Barrett, Esq.,
2020 ABLE National Resource
Center Ambassador*

I have followed disability issues for many years due to a professional and personal interest in the subject. I was thrilled when the ABLE Act was signed into law in 2015 because I knew that it would provide a much-needed savings vehicle for people with disabilities and their families without the financial limitations placed on the receipt of public assistance, but more importantly, enhance the lives of people with disabilities by providing an

opportunity for them to achieve greater financial and personal independence.

As I watched other states adopt their ABLE programs, I anxiously waited for Mississippi to formulate its ABLE plan, which became effective in June 2019. I had the privilege to be a part of the press conference at the Mississippi State Capitol as ABLE was being launched in Mississippi. However, it wasn't until after I opened my MS ABLE account that I learned that I could have opened my account earlier in another state's program before Mississippi's program was established. Therefore, because of my lack of knowledge about an important aspect of the program, I missed out on several years of the opportunity to save and grow my own account.

As a full-time employee with an ABLE account, I think that one of the most attractive advantages that my state, Mississippi, provides to state residents is that contributions to an ABLE account are tax-deductible for individuals or others who contribute to a

person's ABLE account. This provision gives contributors a tangible incentive to save and to assist others. If you are considering opening an ABLE account, ask your ABLE program directors about the tax advantages associated with ABLE accounts. ABLE accounts provide a unique advantage over a regular savings or investment account due to the fact that funds grow Federal tax-free, and most states provide a range of investment options suitable to a person's life situation or risk tolerance level. The longer I invest in my ABLE account, the more I'm sure I will appreciate this benefit.

As a person who is blind, I have really enjoyed privately and independently accessing my ABLE account without needing assistance from a sighted person. The MS ABLE website was designed to work with screen-reading software which means that I can check a balance, view and conduct transactions, and other functions on the website. With the exception of a couple

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ABLE New Mexico Presentation Available

Do you know a person or an organization who would be interested in an ABLE New Mexico presentation?

Contact **Denise V. Balderas, ABLE New Mexico**

Coordinator, at
denise.balderas@state.nm.us
or call (505) 363-0361 or (505) 955-1151 for more information.

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of small access issues, I have been able to fully use the website as it was intended. This means that I can interact with the online features of my account without relying on someone to read to me, thereby giving another person access to personal financial information.

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the employment rate—and therefore the economic status of people with disabilities—has not seen an appreciable increase. Too many of our fellow members of the disability community are still having to choose between living in poverty and relying on public assistance or venturing into the world of work and grappling with inadequate transportation and healthcare as well as technological, architectural, and attitudinal barriers. For some, that risk is justifiably too great. For others, an ABLE account can provide the financial security and assets that are needed to independently pursue a vocation that would not be possible without the funds to pay for housing, training, and transportation. Until you have lived with a disability, you do not realize all the hidden costs associated with disability. People who have achieved some level of success know from experience that no Government agency

or employer will or should be expected to pay the cost of needed technology, personal assistive devices, attendant assistance, transportation, home modifications or additional health care expenses.

During these times of economic and job insecurity caused by the health crisis of COVID-19, it is more important than ever that the disability community begins to brace for the possibility that the assistance benefits and programs on which we have relied may be altered or diminished, thereby increasing our necessity to rely on private funds to fill in the gaps. As our society has tried to adapt to the many economic and social changes brought on by COVID-19, the disability community has been especially hard hit due to a decline in available transportation, the need for assistance (which is difficult to get while physically distancing), increased social isolation, and the increased reliance on internet platforms (which may be inaccessible to people using screen-reading software or other specialized access methods). Due to the broad definition of Qualified Disability Expenses (QDE) under ABLE, people with disabilities can use ABLE funds to pay for basic living expenses during these very difficult economic times.

As we reflect on the

early stages of ABLE implementation, there are efforts to improve and strengthen the legislation and efforts to improve the administration of state programs. Therefore, it is incumbent upon ABLE accountholders and potential accountholders to promote this benefit and take full advantage of what it has to offer. ✚



“ABLE Eligibility and Interplay with Public Benefits” Video

ABLE to Save is a nationwide awareness campaign led by the ABLE National Resource Center (ABLE NRC) to provide information about Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts, which are a new financial savings tool for individuals with disabilities. ABLE accounts are now available across the country for qualified individuals with disabilities to save money without jeopardizing their eligibility for public benefits.

ABLE NRC invites potential ABLE participants, their families, the financial community, and all other ABLE stakeholders to attend a free webinar focusing on eligibility for ABLE accounts and their interplay with public benefits.

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This webinar discusses the eligibility criteria for an ABLE account. It also addresses the impact of ABLE accounts on public means-tested benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid. This webinar is moderated by Chris Rodriguez, Former Director, ABLE National Resource Center, and includes a panel of ABLE-related stakeholders and experts, including:

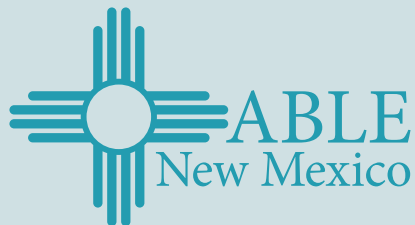
- Marty Ford, Senior Executive Officer, Public Policy, Arc of the United States
- Kathleen McGrath, Former Pennsylvania State ABLE Program Director
- Rob Percival, Sr. Vice President, Strategic Products, Ascensus College Savings

The webinar addresses questions such as:

- Who is eligible to open an ABLE account and how is eligibility proven?
- How does the Social Security Administration regard assets in an ABLE account for purposes of eligibility and payments?
- How are Medicaid benefits impacted by ABLE accounts?
- What is the Medicaid “payback” provision in the ABLE Act?

<https://youtu.be/oNwBFqpyJQ0> 

ABLE New Mexico Now Has 522 Active Accounts! Go, New Mexico!



ABLE New Mexico YouTube Video

“Saving for the Future of
Your Child with a Disability”

<https://youtu.be/5KzieaoyKSQ>

COVID-19 Guidance and Directives

By Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director, Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), New Mexico Department of Health

Guidance and directives issued by DDSD are required to be followed by agencies and individuals served by the home and community-based (HCBS) Medicaid waivers. The following are several important directives that must continue to be followed and are published again here for your information.

New Mexico's Public Health Order

All individuals who receive services administered through DDSD must follow the Public Health Order that states “all New Mexicans should be staying in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services. When New Mexicans are not in their homes, they must strictly adhere to social distancing protocols and wear face coverings to minimize risks. These sacrifices are the best

contribution that each of us can individually make to protect the health and wellbeing of our fellow citizens and the State as a whole. In accordance with these purposes, this Order and its exceptions should be narrowly construed to encourage New Mexicans to stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities.”

As stated in DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #27 issued on July 31, 2020, to be clear, it is the position of DDSD that individuals receiving services administered by DDSD (DD Waiver, Mi Vi Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, and State General Fund services) should stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services as per the Public Health Order.

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Should individuals and/or their guardians choose to leave their home and access the most essential activities and services, they assume the same risk of contracting COVID-19 as all others in New Mexico assume that risk (please see the most recent Public Health Order under Additional Information section).

Outdoor Family and Guardian Visitation

Beginning August 1, 2020, outdoor visitation may begin for Family Members and Guardians for individuals in Supported Living and Intensive Medical Living Services. Indoor visitation is not permitted at this time.

Therapy and Behavior Support Consultant Requirements

For conducting essential healthcare face-to-face clinical session using COVID-19 Safe Practices, beginning August 1, 2020, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Behavior Support Consultants may resume face to face therapy (clinical sessions) in the home. Therapists and Behavior Support Consultants must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices (under Additional Information section). Clinical sessions must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance with the Provider.

Planning Meeting Requirements

It is the expectation that DD Waiver Interdisciplinary teams (IDTs) and Medically Fragile Waiver teams meet to discuss and plan for COVID-related needs and changes to service delivery. The same expectation applies for Supports Waiver and Mi Via Waiver participants and their identified supports. Consultants and Community Supports Coordinators, along with any other support the participant chooses, should discuss and make changes and or requests, as appropriate.

State of New Mexico COVID site <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>

COVID Safe Practices <https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-safe-practices/>

Public Health Orders and Executive Orders

<https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>

DDSD's COVID site <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>

CDC COVID site <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Provider Agency Nurse Visits

Beginning August 1, 2020, Provider Agency Nurses may resume face-to-face visits in accordance with DD Waiver Standards. It is required that the notes resulting from these visits must be entered in Therap in accordance with March 20, 2020, Guidance Document. Provider Agency Nurses must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices.

For additional information, see the following sites:

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WHEN WEARING A FACE MASK

Masks make communication difficult for the Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing



Speak slowly, clearly and at a normal volume



Make sure hearing aid users have them on



Rephrase remarks when not understood



Keep background noise in the room to a minimum



Take turns when speaking



Face each other (at least 6ft apart)



One-to-One Friendships



Supported Employment



Leadership Development



Independent Living

ABOUT BEST BUDDIES...

Best Buddies® is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Best Buddies was founded in 1989 by Anthony K. Shriver, and has grown to nearly 2,900 school chapters, positively impacting more than 1.25 million individuals in each of the 50 United States, and in 54 countries around the world.

LOCAL IMPACT...

In New Mexico we have 43 chapters in middle school, high schools and colleges. We also have an Adult Friendship Program (Best Buddies Citizens), and an Ambassadors program that helps our participants learn leadership skills and self-advocacy. Our jobs program has helped 14 individuals find employment opportunities and has fostered support with over 60 employers.

We currently have over 11 schools on a wait list to open chapters and over 20 adults who are seeking friendship and employment support.

INCLUSION IN A VIRTUAL WORLD...

Many people with IDD have been profoundly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Cut off from school or community relationships, they can be particularly vulnerable to the emotional and logistical difficulties of social isolation. People with IDD are overlooked during times of public emergency, as they are often not in a position to advocate for themselves.

Best Buddies is rapidly adapting to ensure that supportive friendships and opportunities for inclusion remain available. Through the use of digital platforms such as Zoom, FaceTime, and other social media outlets, we're implementing virtual events to prove that social distancing doesn't mean social isolation. None of this would be possible without the help and financial support of our sponsors.

Our supporters donate the funds needed so that everyone can have a best friend.



The Kennedy Shriver Commitment

For more than half a century, the Kennedy Family has been at the forefront of global efforts to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Starting with family matriarch Rose Kennedy, the Kennedy's have always been strong proponents of helping individuals with IDD, who for years were shut away, powerless to change society's negative perception of them.

President John F. Kennedy founded the first President's Committee on Mental Retardation. He also welcomed a person with intellectual disabilities to the White House, thus becoming the first head of state anywhere in the world to receive a person with IDD as an official guest.

His sister, the late Eunice Kennedy Shriver, was the founder and driving force of Special Olympics. Mrs. Shriver also served as a board member of Best Buddies International, in continued support of her son Anthony's efforts, to enhance the opportunities available to people with IDD. Her husband, the late Sargent Shriver, first Director of the Peace Corps, was also an active supporter of Best Buddies for many years.

Influenced by his family's commitment to the issues of IDD, Anthony Kennedy Shriver founded Best Buddies International in 1989 at Georgetown University. Under Anthony's leadership, Best Buddies has expanded its programs across the United States and Internationally.

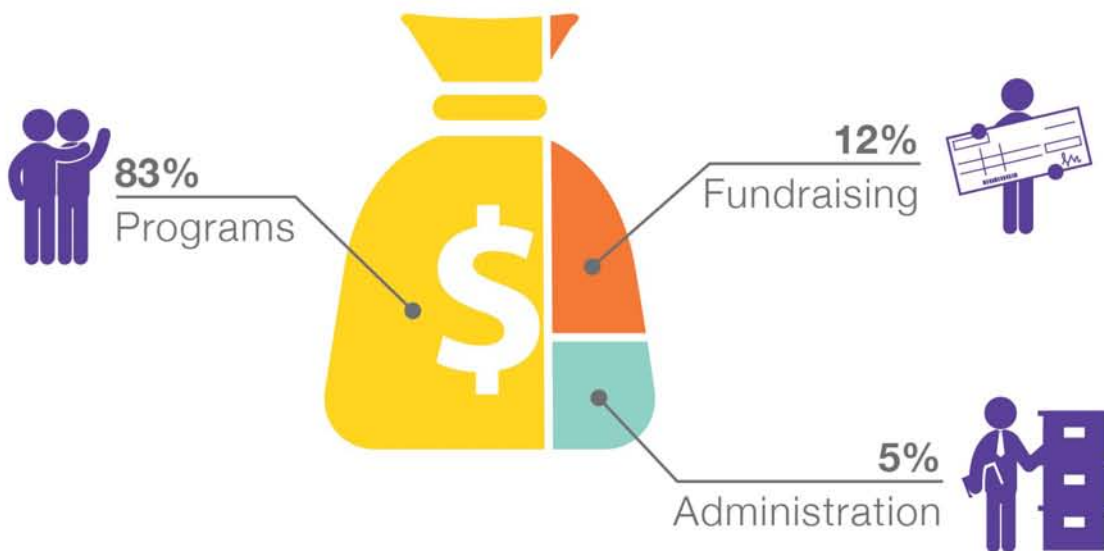


President Kennedy welcomes a person with IDD to the White House



President Kennedy presents a pen to sister Eunice Kennedy Shriver after signing Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Bill. - The White House, October 1963.

Where the Money Goes



Contributions to Best Buddies are judiciously spent, with the majority of these funds directly applied to the enrichment of the organization's programs.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTS DIVISION NEWSLETTER

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COVID-19 Status Report – New Mexico

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, DDSD has tracked testing, confirmed cases, and deaths of those in the Medicaid waiver programs and the State General Funded program.

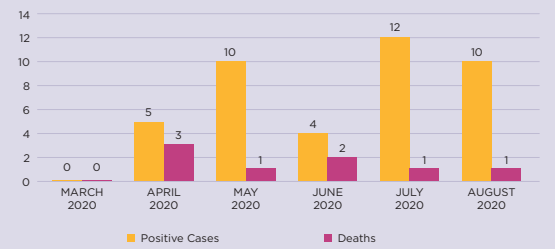
Through August 31, 2020, of more than 5,200 individuals receiving services, 40 have tested positive for COVID-19 and eight have died. The following graph shows the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 and who have died as result of COVID-19 each month. The tables summarize the distribution of people who tested positive for COVID-19 by region, waiver, and type of service (for DD Waiver only). Case Fatality and Infection Rate cannot be accurately calculated due to the small numbers.

Every death due to COVID-19 is a tragedy impacting family, friends, and support staff, DDSD joins the community in mourning each of these losses and sends condolences to each person impacted by these deaths. The NM Department of Health actively investigates individuals who test positive for COVID-19, which includes contact-tracing of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals who have had contact with the person who tested positive. NMDOH also does case monitoring of individuals who tested positive for COVID-19. Every New Mexican must work together to stop the spread of COVID-19. Stay home and Stay Safe!

For more information, see the Department of Health’s COVID-19 resource site at <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>.

For more information about DDSD’s COVID-19 response, see: <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>.

COVID-19 CASES AND DEATHS BY MONTH



REGION

Metro	10
Northeast	1
Northwest	14
Southeast	4
Southwest	12
Total	41

WAIVER

DD Waiver	33
Mi Via Waiver	8
Medically Fragile	0
State General Fund	0
Total	41

DD WAIVER SERVICE

Supported Living and IMLS	20
Customized In-Home Supports	1
Family Living	12
Grand Total	33

RESEARCH ON COVID-19'S IMPACT ON THE I/DD POPULATION

Submitted by:
Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

There is very little research on the impact of COVID-19 on the Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) population.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "(d)isability alone may not be related to higher risk for getting COVID-19 or having severe illness. Most people with disabilities are not inherently at higher risk for becoming infected with or having severe illness from COVID-19. However, some people with disabilities might be at a higher risk of infection or severe illness because of their underlying medical conditions. All people seem to be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 if they have serious underlying chronic medical conditions like chronic lung disease, a serious heart condition, or a weakened immune system." The CDC also states, "If you have one of the disability types listed below, you might be at increased risk of becoming infected or having unrecognized illness. You should discuss your risk of illness with your healthcare provider.

- People who have limited mobility or who cannot avoid coming into close contact with others who may be infected, such as direct support providers and family members
- People who have trouble understanding information or practicing preventive measures, such as hand washing and social distancing
- People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness."

For more information, see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>.

Two studies published in the journal, *Disability and Health*, by researchers at Syracuse University in New York report on the impact of COVID-19 among people with I/DD.

The first article, studied people with I/DD in group homes in New York and whether people with I/DD may be at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19. This article states, "COVID-19 appears to present a greater risk to people with ID/D, especially those living in congregate settings. A full understanding of the severity of this risk will not be possible until US states begin publicly sharing all relevant data they have on COVID-19 outcomes among this population." See <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S193665742030100X> (June 2020).

The second article, studying 30,282 patients with COVID-19, including 474 with I/DD reports that, "(t)hough of concern for all individuals, COVID-19 appears to present a greater risk to people with IDD, especially at younger ages. Future research should seek to document COVID-19 trends among people with IDD, with particular attention to age related trends." See <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1936657420300674?via%3Dihub> (July 2020).

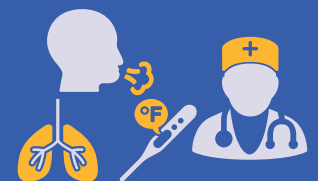
Anyone that may be at a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 should take actions to reduce the risk of getting sick.



Have Necessary Supplies Ready



Take Everyday Steps to Prevent Germs



Have a Plan if You Get Sick

COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND DIRECTIVES

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

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As stated in DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #27 issued on July 31, 2020, to be clear, it is the position of DDSD that individuals receiving services administered by DDSD (DD Waiver, Mi Vi Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, and State General Fund services) should stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services as per the Public Health Order. Should individuals and/or their guardians choose to leave their home and access the most essential activities and services, they assume the same risk of contracting COVID-19 as all others in New Mexico assume that risk (please see the most recent Public Health Order under Additional Information section).

Outdoor Family and Guardian Visitation

Beginning August 1, 2020 outdoor visitation may begin for Family Members and Guardians for individuals in Supported Living and Intensive Medical Living Services. Indoor visitation is not permitted at this time.

Therapy (OT, PT, SLP) and Behavior Support Consultant (BSC) Requirements for conducting essential health care face to face clinical session using COVID-19 Safe Practices Beginning August 1, 2020 Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Behavior Support Consultants may resume face to face therapy (clinical sessions) in the home. Therapists and Behavior Support Consultants must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices (under Additional Information section). Clinical sessions must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance with the Provider.

Provider Agency Nurse Visits

Beginning August 1, 2020 Provider Agency Nurses may resume face to face visits in accordance with DD Waiver Standards. It is required that the notes resulting from these visits must be entered in Therap in accordance with March 20, 2020 Guidance Document (please see the attached document). Provider Agency Nurses must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices.

Planning Meeting Requirements

It is the expectation that DD Waiver Interdisciplinary teams (IDTs) and Medically Fragile Waiver teams meet to discuss and plan for COVID-related needs and changes to service delivery. The same expectation applies for Supports Waiver and Mi Via Waiver participants and their identified supports. Consultants and Community Supports Coordinators, along with any other support the participant chooses, should discuss and make changes and or requests, as appropriate.

For additional information, see the following sites:

- State of New Mexico COVID site
<https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- COVID Safe Practices
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- Public Health Orders and Executive Orders
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- DDSD's COVID site
<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>
- CDC COVID site
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WHEN WEARING A FACE MASK

Masks make communication difficult for the Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing



Speak slowly, clearly and at a normal volume



Make sure hearing aid users have them on



Rephrase remarks when not understood



Keep background noise in the room to a minimum



Take turns when speaking



Face each other (at least 6ft apart)

COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Submitted by:
Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The following web resources have information about COVID-19 for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

Advocacy and National Organizations

- Center for Public Representation <https://www.centerforpublicrep.org/covid-19/>
- Institute for Community Inclusion <https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/>
- NCAPPS (National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems) <https://ncapps.acl.gov/home.html>
- SARTAC (Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center) <https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/>
- TASH <https://tash.org/tash-covid-19-response-and-re-sources/>
- The ARC <https://thearc.org/covid/>
- UNM Project ECHO COVID 19 Response <https://echo.unm.edu/covid-19>

Federal Government

- CDC COVID site <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

- CDC site about People with Developmental and Behavioral Disorders <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-developmental-behavioral-disabilities.html>
- NY State OPWDD <https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance/covid-19-guidance-documents>
- U.S. Office for Civil Rights <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/index.html>

State of New Mexico Government

- COVID Safe Practices <https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-safe-practices/>
- DDS's COVID site <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>
- Early Childhood Education and Care Department <https://www.nmeccd.org/>
- Public Health Orders and Executive Orders <https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>
- State of New Mexico COVID site <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>

Tips For Families and Caregivers



Know what medications your loved ones take and try to help keep a supply on hand.



Monitor food and medical supplies and create a back-up plan. Have a supply of non-perishable foods to minimize store trips.



If you know someone living in a care facility, monitor the situation and ask about the facility's outbreak plans and protocols.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC VISIT VERIFICATION (EVV) Scheduled for January 1, 2021

Submitted by:
Marc Kolman, Deputy Director and Melanie Buenviaje, HSD/MAD/Exempt Services Bureau

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) is a telephone and computer-based system that electronically verifies direct care worker visits for personal care and home health care services. EVV is required by the 21st Century Cures Act enacted in 2016.

Services that will be included in this phase of EVV implementation are:

- DD Waiver: Customized In-Home Supports and Respite
- Mi Via: Homemaker, In Home Living Supports, and Respite
- Supports Waiver: Personal Care and Respite
- Medically Fragile Waiver: Home Health services will be included in a later phase in 2023.

The state plans to implement EVV for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, Mi Via Waiver, and the Supports Waiver by January 1, 2021. The Department of Health and Human Services Department are working closely to ensure an EVV system that is flexible, integrates with existing provider EVV systems, and is adaptable to our self-directed/participant-directed programs.

The selected EVV vendor is FiServ who will work closely with providers of Personal Care Services to assure implementation is complete by the effective date of January 1, 2021. AuthentiCare® is Fiserv's EVV solution that will be implemented in New Mexico. Fiserv, established in 1984, has extensive experience with EVV implementation, providing EVV systems in numerous states, including New Mexico for the agency-based provider services. Additional information, including systems requirements and trainings is forthcoming.

Additional information, including Fact Sheets, are available at DDSD's website at:

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/>.

Extensive information is also available from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) at:

<https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/hcbs/guidance/electronic-visit-verification/index.html>.

NOTICE OF OPENINGS ON THE ACQ

Submitted by:
Wendy Corry of Corry Consulting

The Advisory Council on Quality Supports for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (ACQ) advises the New Mexico Department of Health on the systems guiding the provision of services and supports that assist people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) of all ages and their families to be fully included in New Mexico communities.

There are openings available in the following categories:

- People with I/DD and/or members of their families. The ACQ supports the participation of members of the ACQ with I/DD and family members in accordance with the NM State Mileage and Per-Diem Act. (3 vacancies)
- Provider Agency Representative (1 vacancy)
- Self-Advocacy Organization and Network (2 vacancies)

The ACQ holds 6 public meetings each year. The ACQ will consider applications at their next ACQ meeting on Thursday, October 8, 2020. The ACQ wishes to expand the geographical representation of members. Therefore, **nominations will only be considered for people who live outside the Albuquerque/Santa Fe/Metro area.** People who live in the Metro area will not be considered at this time. Selected individuals' names and qualifications will be recommended to the Office of the Governor for appointment. Each term is for a 3- year period. People interested in being considered for election and subsequent appointment to the ACQ should email a résumé and a letter of interest to Wendy Corry, DDSD ACQ Administrator, by Thursday, September 24, 2020 at wendy@corryconsulting.com or call at 505-238-0047.

Thanks in advance for your interest in joining this vital team!

SCHOOL SUPPLIES SUPPORTING NAVAJO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Submitted by:
Dr. Jacoba (Kotie) Viljoen, Aspiration Risk Management Coordinator,
SAFE Clinic Coordinator, & Nurse Consultant

Clinical Service Bureau (CSB) started the third annual school supply drive to support Navajo Elementary School in Albuquerque. In the past, CSB, with the support of other divisions such as DHI and Public Health, was able to donate critically needed supplies for students and teachers. We hope to have similar results this year amidst the COVID-19 hardship that is felt by everyone.

Navajo Elementary is located in Albuquerque's South Valley. They first opened in 1967 and was originally "a school with no walls." Navajo Elementary School serves 560 students in grades Prekindergarten-5. Minority enrollment is 95% of the student body (majority Hispanic). Navajo Elementary is a committed Title I School that works to utilize cooperative learning and experiential learning to create 21st-century learners as they prepare students for future success in college, careers, and beyond. Some of their highlighted programs are Dual Language that follows a 90/10 model, proud Community School Initiative (CSI) school working to become a true Community School, and is committed to their curriculums, mindset, and adopted work ethics.

The included photos demonstrate our commitment to assist this school to continue with their efforts.



Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil

by Joshua T. Dickerson

I woke myself up
Because we ain't got an alarm clock
Dug in the dirty clothes basket,
Cause ain't nobody washed my uniform
Brushed my hair and teeth in the dark,
Cause the lights ain't on
Even got my baby sister ready,
Cause my mama wasn't home.
Got us both to school on time,
To eat us a good breakfast.
Then when I got to class the teacher fussed
Cause I ain't got a pencil.



HAPPY 30TH BIRTHDAY TO THE ADA!

Submitted by:
Casey Stone-Romero, Community Inclusion Manager

July 26, 2020 marked the very important 30th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, commonly known as the ADA. President George Bush signed the landmark civil rights legislation on July 26, 1990, which was introduced by U.S. Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa. The ADA guarantees people with disabilities rights related to employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, telecommunications and requires the removal of architectural and communication barriers and requires reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

In New Mexico, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued a Proclamation on July 17, 2020 celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the ADA and designated July 26, 2020 as "Americans With Disabilities Act Day".

The Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ) Employment and Community Inclusion Sub-Committee recently celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the ADA. When asked, "What does the ADA mean to you?", comments included:

- "It has allowed me access to individuals I could only previously come in contact with in limited environments."
- "The ADA allowed me to be able to continue to travel around the country and work along side my husband who has a disability."
- "I look forward to the day when universal design is the expectation in all policies and development of building access."

- "Although I applaud the advances that have occurred from the passing of the ADA, I also recognize that many people with disabilities continue to face barriers. Many challenges remain for us to advocate for."
- "The ADA has helped to include more people with disabilities in the workplace and has enriched our lives."

HAPPY 30th Birthday ADA!!!!

For more information on the ADA please visit, <https://www.adaanniversary.org/>.



Presbyterian Rust Medical Center Project SEARCH Receives National Recognition

Submitted by:
Marcy Hintz, School-to-Work Transition Program Manager
UNM Center for Development & Disability/Partners for Employment

The Presbyterian Rust Medical Center Project SEARCH Team has been recognized as the recipient of this year's National Project SEARCH "Transformative Collaboration" spotlight award. The annual award recognizes a Project SEARCH team whose collaboration skills have transformed not only the employment outcomes for its students but also the effective delivery of services for each agency or business on the team.

With more than 500 Project SEARCH sites nationwide, the spotlight award is a significant recognition of the success of the Presbyterian Rust team. Pres Rust Project SEARCH is a collaboration of UNM Center for Development and Disability/Partners for Employment, Pres Rust Medical Center, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Adelante Inc., NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and NM DOH Developmental Disabilities Supports

Division. Enjoy this video spotlighting the Pres Rust Medical Project SEARCH site (<https://vimeo.com/439832607>). To learn more, visit the Project SEARCH page on the Center for Development and Disability/Partners for Employment website at <https://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/project-search/index.html>. Well done, team!



NEW MEXICO'S SUPPORTS WAIVER

Submitted by:
Jennifer Roth, Supports Waiver Program Manager and Christina Hill,
Deputy Bureau Chief, Community Programs Bureau

DDSD is excited to announce that New Mexico's Supports Waiver has been approved by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The New Mexico Human Service Department and Department of Health are working closely together to begin waiver operations. Developmental Disabilities Supports Division has started sending out Supports Waiver offer letters.

The Supports Waiver is a Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver developed to provide an option for some supports for individuals who are on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver Wait List. Supports Waiver Services are available within an approved annual budget of \$10,000. Services include:

- Assistive Technology
- Behavior Support Consultation
- Customized Community Supports - Group
- Customized Community Supports - Individual
- Supported Employment
- Environmental Modifications
- Personal Care
- Non-Medical Transportation
- Respite
- Vehicle Modification

How Will I Access Supports Waiver Services?

When a person chooses the Supports Waiver there are also two service delivery models to choose from: agency based or participant directed. A Community Support Coordinator (CSC) helps participants to understand and plan services in the Supports Waiver through a choice of Agency Based Service Delivery or through Participant Directed Service Delivery.

Agency Based Service Delivery Model

The agency based service delivery model means that the participant selects approved agencies to provide the services.

Things to consider when selecting a provider agency:

- What agencies are available in your community? Agencies are listed on the Secondary Freedom of Choice form at <https://sfoc.health.state.nm.us>.
- What things are important to you and what questions will you ask when you are speaking to an agency and considering hiring them? A Provider Selection Guide is available to help you at <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/prvsel/guide>.

Participant-Directed Services

The participant directed service means that you will either be your own employer for your services or select an Employer of Record (EOR). The EOR is in charge of hiring, directing and ensuring training of employee and vendors, completing administrative duties and firing employees if necessary. Things to consider when you are an Employer of Record:

- An EOR will need training and time to dedicate to the job.
- If you are not your own EOR, your EOR must work with you to make sure your choices and input are honored.

E-BLASTS FOR JULY AND AUGUST

Submitted by:
Tammy Barth, Manager, Provider Enrollment Manager

The following emails were distributed to the field during the months of July and August:

- DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #23 and Supporting Documents
- Community of Practice Call CCS/CIE
- Alert related to Alzheimer's Disease
- DDSD Reopening Survey
- DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #24 and Supporting Documents
- DDSD Response Memo #25 and Supporting Documents
- IQR Document Process Memo
- Training Unit Memo
- ADA 30th Anniversary Proclamation by Governor Lujan Grisham
- DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #26 and Supporting Documents
- Information about the 2020 Summit on Advocacy
- Therapist Updates for July 2020
- DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #27
- DDSD Response Memo #27 and Supporting Documents
- Virtual Town Hall Meetings for the NM DD Waiver
- Judy Heumann Speaking Tomorrow on Zoom
- DDSD COVID-19 Response Memos/Calls Discontinued
- DDSD Guidance Memos
- Therapy Provider Meeting 8.19.2020
- Rose Mary Williams
- A Friends and Relationships Socialization and Sexuality Classes September 29-November 17, 2020
- Virtual FRC Classes in Southwest

PARTNERS FOR EMPLOYMENT (PFE) PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF VIRTUAL EXCELLENCE!

Submitted by:
Carrie Roberts, Education and Outreach Manager, UNM/CDD/PFE

The PFE program at UNM/CDD would like to thank everyone who helped make our first virtual conference a success! We truly enjoyed your participation, valuable insights and engaging conversations. The Reaching New Heights conference was originally scheduled to be hosted as a three day in-person event. Due to COVID-19 concerns, the conference was converted to an online format. The annual conference hosts keynote speakers and has tracks focused on best practices in Supported Employment, Leadership and School to Work Transition. The original in-person event was slated to host 250 participants with 13 sessions.

The virtual event hosted 680 participants with 11 training sessions, several of which were recorded and posted to the PFE website (<http://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/index.html>). The outreach of this event continues as a result of the recorded sessions. A 99% satisfaction rate was reported from the on-line event. Many people reported that they appreciated that they did not have to travel. We have plans to host a conference in some form in 2021. We look forward to “seeing” you all there!

PFE has also created three new online on-demand training options. Anyone can access the videos at this link: <http://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/trainings.html>.

Registration is required to access the skills check and to receive a certificate of completion. Here is a short description of each training:

- **Employment First in New Mexico:** This course provides an overview of DDSD’s Employment First policy in New Mexico.
- **DDSD and DVR Working Together:** This course provides an overview of accessing supported employment services through the NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division and the NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- **What Do You Mean I Can Work and Still Be on Disability?!** This course provides an overview of the differences between Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). It also explains how work incentives and safety nets can benefit people who are employed.

Please check them out!

ALLOCATIONS, AND OFFERS AND MORE, OH MY!

Submitted by:
Teresa Larson, Chief, Intake and Eligibility Bureau

It is a busy time at DDSD and not just because of the pandemic. The FY21 Legislative Special Session appropriated money to provide services to 200 individuals on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) or Mi Via (MV) Waivers and 2,000 individuals on the new Supports Waiver (SW). The Letters of Interest and the Primary Freedom of Choice (PFOC) for the DD/MV Waiver Allocations were mailed on July 17, 2020. The Intake & Eligibility Bureau is working hard to process the PFOCs as they come in—and getting those individuals connected with their chosen Case Management or Consultant Agency who will then assist them through the HSD clinical and financial eligibility process.

The first 1,000 Letters of Interest and Primary Freedom of Choice (PFOC) for the Supports Waiver Offer were mailed on August 14, 2020. Individuals who are on the DD Waiver Wait List with a registration date through August 20, 2010 were included in the first mailing group. The next 1,000

letters will be mailed at the end of October. Individuals who are on the DD Waiver Wait List with a registration date through approximately April 30, 2013 will be included in the October mailing group.

The Supports Waiver is designed to provide services to individuals while they are on the DDW Wait List. It is important to note that individuals will stay on the DDW Wait List whether they accept the Supports Waiver or not. Children whose application is in a “Child Pend” status are not considered on the DDW Wait List and are not eligible for the Supports Waiver. More information regarding the Supports Waiver can be found on the DOH website at: <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/csw/>.

DDSD DEPUTY DIRECTOR ROBERTA DURAN RETIRES

Submitted by:
Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Roberta Duran, DDSD Deputy Director, retired on September 1, 2020. Ms. Duran served in several capacities over her career with the State of New Mexico. Scott Doan, Acting DDSD Director, said, "It was my honor and pleasure working and learning from Roberta over the years. Roberta is the consummate professional and always treated everyone with dignity and respect. Her knowledge of State Government and programs was invaluable! I admired and respected Roberta's passion, advocacy, direct approach, and honesty she brought to DDSD each day."

On her retirement, Ms. Duran offered these words: *Over the past 26 years as a public servant, it has been an honor and privilege to work on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. Working with individuals, families and other stakeholders in effort to advance the vision that people with IDD in New Mexico are valued members of their community has been a very meaningful, impactful and enriching experience that guided the work that my team and I did each day based on our core values.*

I am particularly proud of the Know Your Rights Campaign efforts to raise awareness and support the rights and responsibilities of people with IDD to be full citizens and to have the opportunity to have lives like you and I. However, after hearing the voices of over a thousand people, there is still much work that needs to be done to change the culture of the IDD system to be truly person centered, fair and equitable.

Even though I will be retiring, I will continue to find ways to advocate on behalf of people with IDD and their families and work towards an IDD system in NM that is person-centered and is fair and equitable.

Again, it has been an honor and privilege to work on behalf of people with IDD and their families in New Mexico. I have enjoyed working with you over the years and wish nothing but the best for DDSD in the future.

NEW HIRES & RETIREMENTS

New Hires:

Danielle Hergert, Clinical Psychologist 1, September 5, 2020, Albuquerque Office

Retirements:

Gloria Collins, Registered Nurse Advanced, Albuquerque office retiring 10/31/20

Roberta Duran, Deputy Director, Santa Fe office, retiring 09/01/20

ABOUT US

The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division is located at 810 San Mateo PO Box 26110 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505 Our website: www.nmhealth.org

FOR INFORMATION CALL:

(505) 476-8973 or Toll Free: 1-877-696-1472 or email us at SANTAFEMAILBOX.DDSD@STATE.NM.US

DDSD NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor-in-Chief: Marc Kolman
Layout: André Walker

If you would like to write an article for the next issue of the DDSD Newsletter, have suggestions or comments, please contact Marc Kolman, DDSD Newsletter Editor-in-Chief at 505-476-8839 or Marc.Kolman@state.nm.us.