



February 5, 2021

Dear Members, Families, and Friends,

At Person Centered Services, we prioritize excellent care for you and/or your loved one. That is why we were disheartened to learn that once again, OPWDD targeted New Yorkers with disabilities in the Governor's 2021 – 2022 Executive Budget.

This has major implications for all 110,000 members and families of the seven Care Coordination Organizations, including the more than 17,000 people supported by Person Centered Services. Attached are key points for your information and reference.

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) submitted an administrative budget action that cuts 23% in funding to the Care Coordination Organization/Health Home (CCO/HH) for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). This is hidden from public view in the Governor's FY 2021-2022 Executive Budget.

This new cut is in addition to the 16.2% CCO/HH cut that went into effect last year (on July 1, 2020). If this funding cut is approved, 166 million dollars (39%), will be slashed from the CCO/HH operating budgets! The impact of these new proposed cuts is alarming and creates significant concerns for the 110,000 individuals with I/DD and their families who rely upon the CCO/HHs to ensure equitable access to quality health care and long-term support services for all people with I/DD, many of whom are unable to advocate for themselves or do not have family to assist.

Given the enormity of the repercussions of this proposal, the seven CCOs/HHs have launched a unified effort to advocate against these deep funding reductions. We will be sharing more information on how you can support the advocacy efforts to stop the proposed funding cuts and assault on individuals with disabilities.

As we navigate this all-too-familiar budget landscape, be assured that our Care Coordination services are uninterrupted. Just as Care Coordinators advocate daily on behalf of people they support, advocacy at a state budget level is also our job. We are confident that a thoughtful but aggressive and organized approach can influence change.

It is important to remember that the CCO/HHs were created as part of Governor Cuomo's 2011 commitment of, "Care Management for All." Since then, the State created CCO/HHs for people who receive Medicaid for HIV, behavioral health conditions, and children. Individuals with I/DD have very complex medical, behavioral, and social needs which require the highest standard of care management to ensure their health, safety, and quality of life. In 2018, the seven (7) CCO/HHs were created to serve the State's I/DD population and provide the level of care coordination they require.

Should this 23% new funding cut be implemented on July 1, 2021, the negative impact on service delivery and the workforce, which includes 4,000 CCO/HH Care Managers, will be significant and devastating. Individuals and families depend upon the CCO/HH Care Manager to access food, shelter, medicine, social and community resources, and advocate for their rights.

It is also important to note that the remaining NYS Medicaid populations will continue to have fully funded budgets for the coordination of their healthcare and other needs, while the people with I/DD in New York State will not. This discriminates against people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities!

OPWDD will most likely respond that the CCO/HHs can mitigate this proposed funding cut and the overall \$166 million dollars by enrolling new members into Medicare.

We have begun meeting with State Assembly Members and Senators to alert them to this proposed cut and enlist their support to defend against it. Today, on behalf of all CCOs, Nick Cappoletti, CEO, LifePlan CCO NY, will testify at the NYS Mental Hygiene Legislative Budget Hearing and represent the CCO/HH concerns. Members of several CCO/HH Advisory Boards have also requested to testify at that hearing.

An advocacy tool kit will soon be available for you to join us in our organized opposition to the cuts. Please sign-up for electronic news alerts on this website: <https://cmany.net>

While the budget action by OPWDD leaves the path forward unclear, we will do everything in our power to support our workforce and to provide quality services to members and families. We are committed to transparency and will keep you informed.

We remain committed to providing the best Care Coordination services possible, and to our mission of connecting people to the care, support and opportunities that maximize their quality of life.

Sincerely,



Bridget Bartolone
Person Centered Services