

Self-Determination Project Monthly Update

January, 1999

Intermediary Service Organization (ISO) Update: The request for proposals (RFP) was disseminated on January 4, and so far, there appear to be at least 11 entities interested in responding with proposals. The deadline for letters of interest is February 10, with a bidders conference scheduled for February 15, 1999. The deadline for submission of proposals is March 15. A panel of consumers/parents, providers, business managers, and Division staff has been assembled to review and evaluate the proposals. The intent is to choose an ISO by the beginning of April and to have them in operation by July 1, 1999.

Another piece of the puzzle which has been receiving some attention is the issue of workers' compensation and homeowners' insurance. There are some states (New Jersey and New Hampshire) which have made legislative changes to require that homeowners' insurance offer a rider to cover workers' compensation claims. Language was introduced to the House Commerce committee in 1997 as a bill by Matt Dunne, but the bill died in the committee. We are in the process of trying to find out what it would take to resurrect the bill so that Vermont would have the same coverage offered by insurance companies.

Meeting with Developmental Service Directors: The four provider regional facilitators met with the DS directors at their monthly meeting on January 6 in Burlington. Providers got an update by the facilitators of activities/initiatives that they have been focusing on in the last quarter, in addition to some of the obstacles/barriers they have encountered in working with referrals in their regions. The DS directors and the provider facilitators will continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

SD Project Evaluation Committee: The evaluation committee for the Project met for a second time to process and delineate the goals/objectives which need to be achieved by the Project. Essentially, the grant proposal outlines seven major objectives, including: technical assistance, training, involvement of peer support members, developing a training curriculum, etc. The committee's next meeting is set for February 23, at which time the Administrator will present a graph of the goals/objectives, and a status report. Committee members will then assist in determining who might be responsible for following through on items which need further attention or action.

Project Staff Annual Performance Reviews: By the end of January, all 13 of the Project staff will have completed a performance review. The intent of these meetings with the Administrator is to assess how staff has performed on seven major job duties, areas of strength, areas for improvement, and to set performance goals for the coming year.

Guardianship Training: Two of the consumer regional facilitators have organized a training for individuals interested in learning about guardianship services. A panel of presenters (a judge, self-advocates, a Disability Law Project Lawyer, the Guardianship Services Specialists Director, and an ex-guardian) will discuss information for people who have guardians. The intent is for these trainings to be offered regionally, beginning with the first training in Chittenden County, at the State Office Building on January 26.

Referrals and Technical Assistance: Since January 1, there have been 10 new referrals for technical assistance to the Project. Recently, we have seen more and more referrals coming directly from self-advocates who have participated or had direct contact with one of the regional regional facilitation teams. There have also been many recent referrals from parents of children in high schools, interested in receiving information/assistance with transition school to adult services. To date, there have been 74 individuals who have requested some form of technical assistance from the Project.

Self-Determination Network: The Self-Determination Network is planning another Vermont Interactive Television meeting on Wednesday, February 17th from 9:30-11:30 a.m. The VIT sites will be in Rutland,

Springfield, Newport, and Waterbury. The meeting will begin with a summary and discussion to follow-up on the December 20th meeting. That discussion focused on what peer support groups and advisors need in order to maintain and strengthen peer support and self-advocacy in Vermont. The last hour and a half will be facilitated by Deborah Lisi-Baker, who will provide an overview of the CHOICES curriculum, available through Vocational Rehabilitation, so that SD Project staff and peer support groups might decide which, if any, portions of the curriculum they might like to have introduced in a training.