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Developmental Services Program Local System of Care Plan FY 2015 – FY 2017

Approved by NKHS Local Developmental Services Standing Committee on March 26, 2114

The Mission of the Northeast Kingdom Human Services Program is to support people with Intellectual/developmental disabilities to live normal, self-directed, and complete lives, and for every Individual to be accepted, valued, and contributing members of their families and communities.

Current Status of services and support needs:

Service Coordination: Over the past three years NKHS has increased service coordination from 247 in FY12 to 269 in FY13 and 279 individuals in FY14. These services assisted individuals in gaining access to home supports, health care, employment, community access, transportation, independent living skills and other individual service needs.

Community Supports: NKHS served 154 individuals with community supports (staffed and contracted) in FY12, 158 in FY13 and increased these supports to 165 in FY14. These supports assisted individuals to build social skills, daily living skills and to participate in community activities to build on their circle of support system.

Employment Supports: NKHS served 74 individuals with employment supports (staffed and contracted) in FY12 and FY13 and 81 in FY14. These supports assisted individuals to work in their community, gain skills needed for future employment opportunities, learn independence skills, and build self esteem, as well as, being tax paying community members.

Home Supports: 140 individuals were supported in Shared Living Homes in FY12, 143 in FY13 and increased to 145 in FY14. These Shared homes are giving individuals the opportunity to be a shared member of their home and for the individuals to learn independent skills if they so desire to go on to other options of independent living.

Other Residential Supports:

27 individuals were supported in their own apartments in FY12 and FY14. In FY13 NKHS supported 30 individuals with the supports they required to live independent. These supports are individualized for each person requesting these services.

20 individuals were supported in one of NKHS 5 group homes over the past three years.

- 6 individuals in Newport
- 3 individuals in Lowell
- 4 individuals in Danville
- 4 individuals in Waterford
- 3 individuals in Barnet

5 individuals were supported in individualized staffed Living homes. These services tend to be more costly but are geared for maximum skill building, emotional regulation and safety. This support is reviewed on a regular basis in order to move the individual on to other housing option when they are ready.

Clinical Services: 126 individuals were served in FY12 and FY 13 and we saw an increase to 138 individuals in FY 14. These supports vary by the individual's needs and range from Psychiatry, individual therapy, DBT groups, offender therapy and groups to private therapist outside of the agency. The individual's receiving DBT supports spoke highly of this service and they feel it is one of our most important support services.

Respite: 190 individuals in FY12 and FY13 were supported with Respite in their Medicaid Waivers. In FY14 202 individuals were supported with respite in their Medicaid Waivers. These supports are vital to families and Shared Living Providers who give on-going care to the individuals. The need for relief and/or emergency care is vital for families and Shared Living Providers to maintain their lives and the individual they care for.

125 individuals were served with **Flexible Family Funding** over the past three years. This program is keeping many individuals home with their natural family and provides the flexibility for families to choose what they need for support. This is a cost effective program and is keeping many individuals off a more expensive funding source. An increase in the cap would assist more individuals and families. NKHS will often utilize One Time Funding dollars to increase the number of families needing this important support.

Crisis Services: NKHS Developmental Services has Crisis Supports available to our Tri-county area 24 hours each day 7 days each week for individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities. We cover Orleans, Essex and Caledonia counties.

The number of individuals requiring crisis services has increased over the past three years. The budget cuts that require decreasing individual supports are becoming more worrisome for individuals, families, stakeholders and NKHS employees. With the addition of future cuts we see this service continuing to be a vital part of our

community. We have limited housing options to support individuals in crisis and will need to secure options as the need increases.

Current Status of FY 12 – FY 14 Outcomes

1. Training – *What are we going to do.*

Staff will be trained on electronic documentation.

How are we going to do this?

NKHS chosen Electronic Medical Record is Lavender and Wyatt .

NKHS Electronic Medical Record Core Team has been working on developing a meaningful electronic record for over three years. This team is made up of employees from each department and assuring that all program needs are being met. Developmental Services has two key people that have been representing the DS needs. Developmental Services was chosen to go first in NKHS's implementation of the EMR. The DS staff was ready for this challenge and the Core team was knowledgeable in its implementation. The Core team trained DS staff in each site over a three day period. Individual training of staff is an ongoing process, as well as, the glitches in the Electronic Record.

What difference will this make?

The implementation of the Electronic Record has certainly taken its toll on the NKHS employees. The needs of the individuals we serve have to come first so employees were torn in many ways to meet all the demands of their jobs. Many staff was in their offices early morning until very late at night trying to meet all the needs.

Over the past year DS staff are feeling more comfortable with the EMR system. As DDAS paperwork requirements change this adds an expense and time constraints as well as additional training to NKHS employees in our EMR system.

The intent for individuals to have access to their Electronic Record is a goal of NKHS. The difference this will make is for individuals and/or their guardians to have access when and where they desire for certain parts of their record.

Individuals will be supported by service coordinators to learn how to access their record if they so desire. NKHS will have kiosks available for computer use for this purpose.

2. Communication – *What are we going to do.*

Keep all people involved and up to date in a timelier and complete manner.

How are we going to do this?

NKHS Developmental Services has focused on communication with involvement from self-advocates, families and employees. This has been an outcome of the agency, as well as for the Developmental Services Program.

A commitment from our Executive Director to keep staff informed and to share information in a timely manner has kept employees up to date with budgetary issues and agency news.

Developmental Services has formed focus groups with representatives from all job descriptions to support our commitment to communication.

Self-Advocates/Individuals meet on a regular basis and communications to NKHS and from NKHS are shared at these meetings.

Agency, State and Self-Advocate/individuals information is shared at Developmental Services Local Standing Committee meetings.

Weekly staff meetings are held to share communications to and from staff on a regular basis.

NKHS has developed an intranet page for all employees to have access to. The information included on this page will keep employees updated with policies, activities and other agency information.

What difference will this make?

Individuals, families, employees and contractors will have information pertinent to their needs in a timely manner.

This information will include trainings, budget cuts and agency news.

Self-Advocates will have the information that they need to make informed decisions around their services, advocacy activities and program development.

3. Agency-wide Strategic Planning - *What are we going to do.*

Continue the outcome for all Newport programs to be under one roof.

How are we going to do this?

NKHS has met this outcome when all programs moved into our Derby office in June of 2013. NKHS will continue to review and update our Agency Strategic Plan

Developmental Services employees, individuals, families, contractors and stakeholders will all have input into our agency Strategic Plan.

They will have this opportunity through surveys, focus groups and conversations.

What difference did this make?

This move has enhanced our communication and access to all services offered by NKHS.

Ongoing reviews and updates of our Agency Strategic plan will keep NKHS up to date with the needs of the people we serve, the community and employees.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services Developmental Services Program gathered information for this plan in the following ways:

Surveys asked for the following input, as well as, any other input individuals, families and stakeholders wanted to share.

What is working?

What should be changed or improved?

Where do self-advocate/individuals and families want to be in three years?

- NKHS DS sent surveys to all individuals receiving services and/or their guardian.

We sent out 232 surveys and received 41 back

- We held meetings with self-advocates/Individuals in Derby and St. Johnsbury.

The conversations, questions and concerns are in this document.

- Local Standing Committee members have on- going input monthly on NKHS Developmental Services, as well as, receiving the survey.

- Utilized Agency Satisfaction surveys

NKHS provided all employees with a comprehensive employee survey in the fall of 2013

Developmental Services utilized this survey feedback for our Local System of Care Plan.

We were able to capture the above questions, as well as, other areas of importance to the DS employees.

- Utilized DDSD Quality Service Review

NKHS utilized the Quality Service Review to capture input to the questions needed to develop this System of Care Plan

- Utilized internal Quality Assurance process

NKHS has monthly Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement/Compliance meetings. Information was reviewed and utilized for the writing of this plan.

- Critical Incident Reports

NKHS has weekly critical incident report meetings where input is gather on the situation and what could have been done differently and what support do we need to offer so the incident is not repeated.

These incidents are also reviewed within our Agency Review committees on a monthly basis where feedback is given by Compliance and Risk management staff. Numbers of incidents and trends are also reported in our Quality Improvement/ Assurance committee.

NKHS DS sent surveys to community partners in our region.

Surveys were sent to:

Global Campus Foundation

Economic Services
Voc Rehab
Caledonia Home Health
Orleans/Essex VNA
Public Health
Rural Community Transportation
Area Agency on Aging
Umbrella
Faith In Action
ARIS Solutions
Riverside Enrichment Center
SASH
Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Inc.
Local Schools

Feedback received via surveys, meetings and conversations.

What is working?

Having support to live independently.
Assistance to get to doctor appointments.
Community integration programs to meet other people.
Dialectical Behavior Treatment (DBT groups).
Individual Therapy.
Employment support.
Respite.
Global Campus.
Shared Living Providers.
NKHS employees.

What should be changed or improved?

No more budget cuts.
Less staff turnover which is hard for some

individuals.

Better communication for all.

More things to do in the winter time.

More mileage in my budget so I can go where I want to go.

We need a community center where we can go.

More job opportunities.

Where do self-advocates and families want to be in three years?

To become more independent and live on our own or with my boy/girl friend.

More housing options that are affordable.

To know my son/daughter will still have services.

Employed in satisfying jobs.

No more budget cuts- we need our services.

The overall communications voiced concerns about budget cuts, worries about services in the future, keeping good staff and the need for more services for existing individuals. Self-Advocates/Individuals were clear they wanted to continue participating in Global Campus, DBT groups and self-advocacy activities. They want to be able to spend time with their peers/friends and have the same opportunities as other members of our community.

Positive feedback was repeated as “great staff”, “wonderful Shared Living Providers”, individuals having choices of what they do. A lot of “don’t change anything”; “I like my services just as they are” and “I couldn’t do this without NKHS”.

Priority Needs FY15-FY17

1. Independent living options (under-met need)

More flexibility in Medicaid Wavier funding to support independent living cost. The option for the individuals to utilize housing support in their Medicaid Waivers to pay for rental deposits, to assist them to pay for rent, to purchase household items needed to set up a home, etc.

The need for more section 8 housing vouchers to obtain affordable housing.
The need for ongoing support from families, Shared Living Providers and NKHS agency employees around independent living skills, i.e.: cooking groups, money management, relationships, safety, etc. This gives individuals the opportunities to learn and practice independent living skills.
NKHS will provide on-going support groups and utilize individuals already living independently to support their peers to live independently.

2. Communication initiative (under-met need)

Continue with Program initiative with all Developmental Services staff in communication as this should always be an ongoing area of importance.

Increase communication with Individuals, families and community partners in ways that work best for each in a timely manner.

NKHS will work within our ability to communicate in a manner that works best for our partners via email, phone, letters, meetings, time of meetings, etc.

3. Training (met) (under-met)

NKHS has put into place a new annual training calendar.

The calendar will have all trainings and dates available to individuals, employees, SLP and contracted workers. This will better coordinate our offered trainings to all interested.

For required trainings (pre-service, in-services, first aide, etc.) NKHS will be flexible in dates and time to meet everyone's needs.

Self-Advocates/Individuals have requested more training in the areas of CPR, First Aide, different kinds of disabilities, independent living skills, money management, etc.

Two NKHS Program Directors are participating in the State wide training consortium for Intellectual disabilities training.

NKHS DS will have several employees trained in each site in Individual Support Agreements, Support Plans and other pertinent documentation required from DDAS.

DS employees will have Results Based Accountability training to assist us with measurable outcomes in words that we all understand.

4. Transportation (unmet need)

Support more individuals to utilize RCT (Rural Community Transportation)

Individuals experienced in RCT have volunteered to work with their peers on public transportation.

RCT does not reach rural areas. This is an unmet need.

Employees are car pooling when appropriate to cut mileage expenses
Individuals are also car pooling when appropriate.
NKHS has purchased an economic vehicle to provide access to community for rural individuals.
Agency vehicle will provide individuals access to self advocacy activities and other community functions.
Work with large business on transportation, i.e.: Jay Peak Resort van from Newport for all Jay Peak employees.

Regional Outcomes FY15 – FY 17

Communication

What are we going to do?

Communications to all self advocates, employees, contractors and other stakeholders will be consistent, complete and in a timely manner.

How are we going to do this?

Specific groups identified will meet to continue discussing areas that we need to work on for better communication. These groups will have employees from all job descriptions and from all sites.

Self Advocates/Individuals and local standing committee will have input on our communications.

A survey is being developed for Shared Living Providers to give specific input on what their needs are for better communication, support and training from NKHS DS Program.

DS employees will follow the Code of Conduct developed by them in February 2014 in order for all communications to be shared respectfully. This document was just accepted as an agency wide Code of Conduct.

What difference will this make?

Accurate information sharing in a timely manner.

The opportunity for input from everyone

All communications will be respectful.

Independent Living Options

What are we going to do?

Provide support and assistance to individuals who want to live independently and/or learn the skills to be more independent while living with others.

How are we going to do this?

Individuals with experience living independently will mentor their peers.

Groups and/or support to enhance independent living skills will be offered by self advocates, families, employees, contracted workers and community members.

Discussions with stakeholders around the need for affordable housing.

Researching what other areas in the State are doing around independent living.

What difference will this make?

Individuals will have more options and choices on where they live, how they live and who they live with.

Electronic Medical Record: un-met

What are we going to do?

Continue to work with NKHS EMR Core Group to have Developmental Service record completely electronic.

How are we going to do this?

EMR core group will continue to develop and train DS staff on implementation of our EMR record. Training will be provided in each new phase of EMR.

Paper records will be scanned into electronic file.

Individuals will be trained and supported in accessing their records once NKHS has completed this implementation.

What difference will this make?

The difference this will make is for individuals and/or their guardians to have access when and where they desire for certain parts of their record. Individuals will be supported by service coordinators to learn how to access their record if they so desire. NKHS will have kiosks available for computer use for this purpose.

System Outcomes FY15 – FY17

■ Independent Living Options.

Independent Living is an area that is discussed as a State-Wide issue. The lack of affordable apartment options, section eight housing vouchers and rent cost hinders the options available for individuals.

The need for financial assistance for individuals to acquire and maintain an apartment is needed.

More flexibility in the way supports are provided is needed.

■ Funding appropriate to individual needs instead of based on a budget cap.

Many individuals require more funding than the \$200,000 cap. Often times these supports can be decreased over time. Depending on the situation cost effective services can be obtained over time. When agencies have to provide services over allotted budgets due to the individuals and community safety others are impacted.

■ Options for serving individuals who pose a risk to public safety and agencies liability.

Some of the individuals that receive services within the Developmental Services Program require 24/7 support around public safety. These supports require skilled staff and specific residential options. When individuals require support around violence and unsafe behaviors our options are limited in how we can provide support. The liability falls with the agency that is serving that individual. A state wide look at how and why Developmental Services supports these individuals, with all stakeholders taking responsibility for the support and funding, should be looked at.

■ Increase Flexible Family Funding

Flexible Family Funding is a program that meets the needs of many families. An increase in this funding will keep many individuals living at home longer hence avoiding a more expensive Medicaid Waiver funding source. Do to the funding increase that will be needed to serve more individuals and to increase the cap allotted per individual now this needs to be a System outcome.

■ Sustainability of existing Developmental Services funding.

Developmental Services consistently has taken budget cuts and the worry of Individuals, stakeholders and employees are the sustainable of the services currently in place. With the increase need in people meeting the funding priorities currently the concern is for existing people needing to take cuts in their limited services.

Department of labor rules are adding to the worries of sustainability of current and future services. What does this mean for the way we provide Developmental Services now?

How is health care reform going to affect Developmental Services?