



Board for Developmental Disabilities

2017 Legislative Agenda

Approved by the King County Board for Developmental Disabilities on October 5, 2016

The King County Board for Developmental Disabilities is guided by values that:

1. Promote inclusion, choice, and equitable access to services.
2. Align with federal, state, and local initiatives regarding integration of health and human services.
3. Address root causes of problems and social inequities.
4. Support high quality services that are outcome-based, evaluated, and utilize data in decision making.
5. Sustain the connection between healthy development, healthy relationships, school readiness and success, employment, and quality of life.

These values inform the Board's 2017 Legislative Principles for infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities, all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), and their families. Our principles support actions that:

1. Honor and uphold the civil rights of individuals to have equitable access and inclusion in all aspects of life including: early childhood, family support, health, education, employment, housing, socialization, recreation, activities of daily living, and community participation.
2. Ensure an equitable, coordinated, and responsive system of supports across the life span for all individuals to realize their full potentials and live meaningful lives.
3. Ensure equity and social justice for individuals by reducing cultural, linguistic, and other barriers to information, education, and services as well as ensure access to accurate translations, interpreters with relevant training, and multiple formats for presentation of information.



The Unserved and Underserved Need Equitable Access to Services

Thank you for adding 4,000 families to an Individual and Family Support (IFS) Medicaid Waiver program.

Issue: More than 10,000 individuals statewide are waiting for Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) services. Supports must be expanded to include individuals who are not receiving a paid service or who are currently not enrolled in the DDA service system. It is necessary to maintain current supports and plan for future caseload growth due to the aging I/DD population and rising incidences of autism.

The Board Strongly Recommends: Maintain commitment to move people to the IFS waiver and serve additional people with the most urgent needs.

Young Children Need Birth-to-Three Early Intervention (EI) Services

Issue: More very young children and their families need EI than are currently being served. An estimated 13 percent of infants and toddlers have delays that would make them eligible for EI, but only 5 percent are currently accessing those services in King County. Nearly 4,000 children received EI in King County in 2015, while about 5,500 who were likely eligible did not access these services. Early Intervention is so successful that 36 percent of children who received EI services in 2015 were no longer eligible for special education by age three. Infants and toddlers urgently need EI services as early as possible while their developing brains can make the greatest gains.

The Board Strongly Recommends: Support adequate funding and policies for the State Department of Early Learning's Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program to identify and serve a significantly greater number of eligible infants and toddlers. The earlier we invest, the greater the return for both the child's development and our society.

Families in Crisis Need Locally Based Crisis Stabilization and Planned Respite

Issue: Individuals and their families need increased access to local community-based services that prevent crises and out-of-home placements.

The Board Strongly Recommends: Expand out-of-home crisis stabilization services and overnight planned respite so individuals can be served in their local community.

Young Adults Need Employment Services

Thank you for the bi-partisan support and investment to add 1,000 individuals to the Basic Plus Waiver program, which will provide employment supports for 2015 - 2016 high school transition students.

Issue: All transition age young adults with I/DD must have the opportunity to pursue competitive employment and participate in their local communities.

The Board Strongly Recommends: An automatic increase in the biennial DDA budget for employment services for all 2017 - 2018 high school transition students with I/DD.

People with Disabilities Need Stable and Equitable Community-Based Residential Services

Issue #1: Continued underfunding of Supported Living (SL) has resulted in a staffing crisis with turnover reaching over 50 percent and 11 percent of positions open at any time. As a result, approximately 100 individuals with approved SL funding wait without services, and another 35 are forced to remain in costly state institutions because agencies are unable to hire or retain necessary direct support staff.

The Board Strongly Recommends: Support DDA's budget request to meet state and local mandated minimum wage for residential providers to address the high turnover of staff.

Issue #2: There is a growing need for community-based housing options for thousands of people living with aging parents. The current licensing and training regulations for Adult Family Homes (AFH) serving adults with I/DD need significant changes in order to expand and sustain these homes.

The Board Strongly Recommends: Require the State Department of Social and Health Services to review licensing and training requirements specifically for AFHs and create a streamlined process to promote an increase in the number of AFHs serving adults with I/DD.

For additional information, please contact: Denise Rothleutner, King County Developmental Disabilities Division, 206-263-8988