



## 1115 People First Waiver Information

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Dear Families and Guardians,

The People First Waiver. You may have heard bits and pieces of this new OPWDD initiative. In a nutshell, the People First Waiver is actually a Research and Demonstration Waiver from the Federal Government (Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services) to the State of New York (OPWDD and the Department of Health) that allows OPWDD to fund services to individuals with disabilities and their families in a managed care environment.

So what does this mean for you or your family member? Initially it will not mean significant changes. Most services that are currently received by you or your family member will likely remain the same in 2012.

However, eventually it will mean the fundamental way that services are provided, funded and monitored will change pretty dramatically. As your service provider, Coarc wants to ensure you have up-to-date information about the changes that are on the horizon. We are your partner in care and want to make this transition as transparent and easy as possible. Keeping it simple, here are some highlights of the 1115 People First Waiver that will eventually be implemented:

- A new Assessment Tool will be developed to more accurately reflect an individual's abilities, and in turn, the amount of funding provided to support them.
- Coordinating Care Organizations will be developed. Already termed "DISCOs" (Developmental Disability Individual Service and Care Organizations), these organizations will be responsible for managing and coordinating the full spectrum of services needed by an individual with a disability. Right now we know the DISCOs will be existing non-profit providers or a collaboration of existing providers. We do not expect Coarc to become a DISCO directly.
- The full spectrum of care will include all forms of care that an individual needs and will include acute care (hospital care), specialty care (clinical care, dentistry, etc.) and long-term care (the services that Coarc provides as well as nursing home care). It is hoped that Coarc, via your Service Coordinator, will continue to play a role in coordinating your or your family member's care and services.



- Services will become more person-centered and individuals and their families will have more choice in the types of services and supports you are most interested in receiving.
- Reimbursement methodologies will change, but should have a limited impact on the services received by you or your family member.
- Quality metrics will be developed and agencies will be evaluated based on specified personal outcomes that better measure the quality of services provided to individuals. Eventually a 'report card' will be available on-line for all organizations providing care. This will allow for more transparency and choice for individuals with disabilities and their families.
- A 'no wrong door' approach will be established so individuals and families in need of services will receive them regardless of which state agency they approach.

The 1115 Waiver process is a five year renewable process, so these changes are expected to occur relatively slowly. It is important for you to know that Coarc has established work teams to monitor the 1115 People First Waiver changes, initiate needed operational changes and share important information with you as your service provider.

For anyone looking for more information on the 1115 People First Waiver, please visit our website [www.coarc.org](http://www.coarc.org). We will provide periodic updates as new information becomes available. In the meantime, if you have other questions please contact Alex Schneider, Coarc Director of Development and Community Services, at (518) 672-4451, ext. 3422.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Stall  
Executive Director