

Klamath County Developmental Disabilities



February 19, 2015

Testimony to Joint Committee on Ways and Means SubCommittee on Human Services:

Co-Chairs Senator Bates and Representative Nathanon and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Carrie Buck, and I am the Developmental Disabilities Program Director for Klamath County.

I have been asked by the Association of Community Mental Health Programs to address the value of implementing the Workload Model Funding Formula at 95% equity for Community Developmental Disabilities Programs (CDDPs). Specifically, I am speaking to the State designee functions of the CDDPs'.

- Eligibility
- Licensing/Certification of Foster Homes
- Protective Services

With the advent of Community First Choice – K State Plan, our eligibility specialist's workload has almost double. The CDDP's are the

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gatekeeper for eligibility, the first door individuals come through for services. In Klamath, we have seen a 10% increase in the numbers of people seeking services and supports. Klamath has had a steady 10% increase in caseload from 2010, and 10% increase in the first half of this year. Eligibility Services have been funded for years based on the outcome numbers for these functions. In reality, Eligibility is a program rather than a single task. The Workload Model acknowledges the community education, the screening of inquiries, as well as the process of gathering and reviewing all the information needed to make an eligibility determination.

Under the case load model, we would have been required to complete an eligibility assessment on every individual making an application. If only 50% ended up meeting the eligibility criteria, essentially we were only reimburse for the 50% eligibility, even though we were required to do the same work for everyone. The eligibility specialists could be working on 20 applications at the same time, helping families to gather testing data and diagnosis, calling Social Security, contacting schools, and setting up evaluations. The workload model acknowledges this work, and adds staff so we can complete eligibility more quickly and meet the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) timelines for access to services. Since all of these duties are necessary as components of eligibility determinations, we need to fund them as a program.

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However, Oregon has never funded licensing/certification of foster homes. Foster care is a vital residential option for people with disabilities. Having witnessed, first hand, the lives supported by foster providers, I see the effectiveness of quality foster care. Foster Care provides a family setting with stable caregivers and a normal rhythm of life for the person who chooses to live in this home. Klamath has a foster home I call the Fraternity House, it has 3 younger men living with a male provider. When I visit, all the guys are busy doing chores, working out, messing with cars or preparing for visitors (usually someone's girlfriend). They are living such a typical life, more typical than living with your parents at their age.

Licensing of Adult Foster care home and certification of children homes is another example of a task that is really a program. To build effective foster programs, a CDDP needs to recruit, train and trouble shoot with providers, as well as inspect and monitor the homes. This means we look at the safety of the home, review the medication and financial records, do the criminal history check, and deal with issues when a provider is not in compliance and follow-up. I remember working with a provider on her menus, as I sit with the 3 folks who live there. The folks were all obviously healthy and happy---so if the menus need work, who cares, "the proof is in the pudding"! We are the state's designee as we go out into the homes to do the inspections, and then send the reports to ODDS licensing, who actually issues the license to the provider. We are

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the eyes and ears in the community. We develop relationships to better enhance outcomes through good referrals to individuals. Only the Workload Model funding formula addresses this responsibility in developing, monitoring, and supporting this residential option for Oregonians with developmental disabilities.

Therefore, as a person who has managed Klamath's CDDP for 25 years, and has had the honor of touching the lives of many people with disabilities and their families, funding the Workload Model for CDDPs at 95% will allow us to build and maintain these core functions of Oregon's service delivery system for people with developmental disabilities.