Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

Lilia Teninty, Director

Oregon Department of Human Services

Outline

Empowering Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)

COVID-19 Impact on the ODDS System

Vaccine requirements and workforce impacts
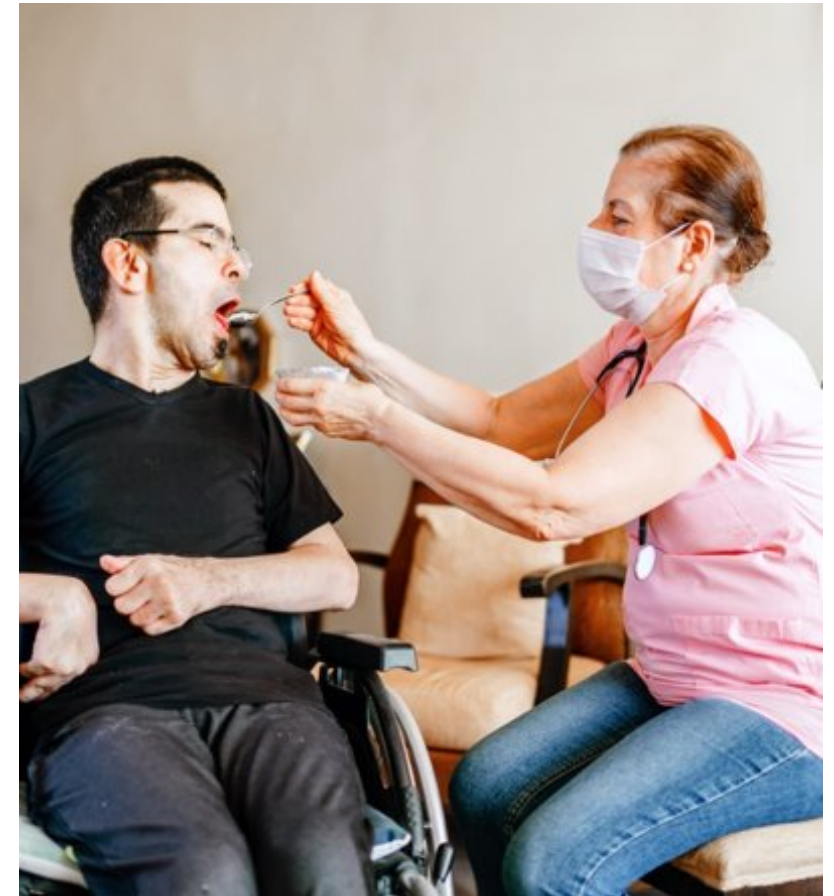
Staffing stabilization

Questions/Discussion

Oregon Department
of Human Services

Direct Support Professionals: I/DD Workforce

- Direct Support Professionals, or DSPs, provide supports and services to Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

- DSPs work in 24-hour group homes and I/DD foster homes run by providers.

- Typically work in small settings, 3-5 residents in each home.

- At SACU, these workers are called Direct Support Crisis Specialists (DSCS)

Job Requirements

- Minimum requirements
  - GED or high school diploma
  - Pass background check
- Training provided by agency provider to meet ODDS and federal requirements

Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU)

- Group homes managed and operated by ODDS, created since the closure of Fairview Training Center in the 1990s

- Primarily supports people with **significant behavioral challenges**
  - **Homes for children and adults**
  - Most people living at SACU have a **dual diagnosis**, I/DD and mental health challenges
  - 21 homes with 84 adults and 15 children
  - 745 staff providing 24-hour care

- **SACU Workforce**
  - Difficult jobs that make hiring qualified candidates challenging
  - ODDS closed entry to SACU homes for the first time in their 30-year history
  - Staffing shortages intensified due to COVID

I/DD Workforce: Staffing Crisis

Before COVID-19, the DSP workforce was in crisis with staffing shortages. COVID-19 made the situation worse.

Vaccination requirements

- **OHA Administrative Rule 333-019-1010:** I/DD 24-hour group homes and I/DD adult foster care homes included

- **Executive Order 21-29 Vaccine Requirement for State Workers:** Includes Stabilization and Crisis Unit, which provides critical supports for people with I/DD in crisis with behavioral challenges

Based on surveys of provider agencies, ODDS anticipated significant staffing losses statewide and worked quickly with providers and case management entities on emergency planning.

I/DD Workforce: Staffing Crisis Response

Actions taken

- $10 million in grants for recruitment and retention (June 2021)
- $20 million ARPA funding released in Sept-Oct 2021 for group home DSP retention and recruitment
- COVID funding for Adult Foster Homes to support their workforce
- $500 incentive payments to workers in group homes, Dec 2021
- ODDS issued 90 day emergency staffing policies

ODDS will roll back the emergency staffing policies within 90 days of issuing. ODDS will support individuals to return to their original settings.

ODHS Incident Management Team Response

Private Provider Agencies

- Assessed stable vs. unstable homes
- Established contracts to provide direct care staff to assist with workforce shortages in the short term
- Provide on-line training to contracted staff to meet DSP requirements
- Initiated Oregon Intervention System (OIS) training for contracted staff
- Provider agencies are responsible for training on individuals' specific needs
- Cost of contracted staff is offset by provider
- Staffing contracts are expected to end December 31, 2021

Rollout of staff has been slow, continuing to explore ways to streamline the process

ODHS Incident Management Team Response

SACU-specific actions

- Letter of Agreement with AFSCME-represented direct support workforce:
  - Incentive pay for all hours worked providing direct care
- Provided technical assistance to enter employees' vaccination information into Workday before the deadline
- As staff become fully vaccinated by November 30, 2021, they are returning to direct care work
- Using contractors in to assist with workforce shortages in the short term
- ODDS assesses staffing needs daily and moves contracted staff from SACU to private provider agencies as appropriate

Questions?

Email us:
DD.DirectorsOffice@dhsoha.state.or.us

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