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NEW CYCLE BEGINS FOR NJCDD GRANT PROPOSALS

The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities has released its **Notice of Funds Available** for the 2012 Grant Cycle. For this upcoming grant cycle, the NJCDD is seeking proposals for programs and activities that promote awareness and increased opportunities for people with developmental disabilities in the areas of Employment, Healthcare, and Quality Assurance.

To view the complete Notice of Funds Available and **download a Letter of Interest form**, visit njcdd.org. The deadline for new applicants to submit a letter of interest is **January 24**.

Employment

The unemployment rate for people with developmental disabilities remains acutely lower than those with typical capabilities. This is greatly influenced by perception and expectation. In particular, we must examine what is expected of people with developmental disabilities as far as work capability, and the potential they have for full-time and gainful employment. We must address the concerns that private employers may have about staff retention, productivity, and safety. We must make sure that service providers perceive their consumers as capable of employment.

To obtain equal access to employment, education must make the transition from school to work a priority, rather than an add-on, and adult service providers must work to remove barriers and support individuals in real jobs for real pay.

Healthcare

This year, major changes in the New Jersey Medicaid system are occurring, which will have a considerable impact on Medicaid recipients with developmental disabilities. While navigating the State Medicaid system is a difficult task for any individual, people with developmental disabilities have a particularly hard time finding appropriate healthcare.

Supports need to be in place to help people with developmental disabilities and their families find adequate healthcare, whatever the challenges. In particular, collaboration needs to happen between

Government, Service Providers, and consumers in decision making, and in the planning of services related to Behavioral & Psychiatric and emergency care, which are severely lacking in the state of New Jersey.

Quality Assurance

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities are often vulnerable within the criminal justice system for a variety of reasons. Both public and private organizations must work to increase the State's capacity to appropriately serve people with intellectual or developmental disabilities who are in the criminal justice system through careful evaluation of personal, social, and systemic vulnerabilities. In providing ongoing services, provider agencies must look beyond the label of criminal offender in order to meet the multiple treatment needs of the individual.

In a broader sense, organizations need to come together to create a coherent system to deliver services, which ensures that people with developmental disabilities have the opportunity to achieve the same quality of life afforded to their non-disabled peers.

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