

Eye on Advocacy

Weekly E-Newsletter

November 25, 2025



NJCDD's Eye on Advocacy weekly e-newsletter is published every Tuesday, focusing on important news and events for the intellectual and/or developmental disabilities community. You are welcome to submit news items and feedback to njcdd@njcdd.org

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The NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities will be closed on Thursday, November 27, 2025, in observance of Thanksgiving Day.

Upcoming Events

For more details on the events listed in this issue, scroll down

- The Protecting Care: What NJ Advocates Need to Know about H.R. 1: [Register Here](#)
- Boggs Center Training: [Register Here](#)
- The Boggs Center Lecture Series: [Learn More](#)
- Fiscal Intermediary (FI) Transition Updates [Learn More](#)

GARDEN STATE COALITION FOR CARE

PROTECTING CARE: WHAT NEW JERSEY ADVOCATES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT H.R. 1

WEBINAR WITH Q&A

H.R. 1, formerly known as the One Big Beautiful Bill, will have major implications for New Jersey's Medicaid program, NJ FamilyCare. This webinar will equip advocates with the information they need to understand and respond.

DISCUSSION INCLUDES:

- ✓ High-level overview of H.R. 1, outlining its origins, major provisions, and its direct and indirect impacts on vulnerable populations
- ✓ Funding restrictions and new administrative requirements that could limit access to optional Medicaid services, like HCBS
- ✓ Implications for the Medicaid expansion population, including work requirements, eligibility redeterminations, and cost sharing provisions.
- ✓ NJ-specific strategies and advocacy opportunities to protect access to care

THURS, DEC 11TH 2PM TO 3:15PM

SCAN TO REGISTER

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COALITION AT DISABILITYRIGHTSNJ.ORG/GSSC/](https://disabilityrightsNJ.org/gssc/)

Protecting Care: What NJ Advocates Need to Know about H.R. 1

The Garden State Coalition for Care presents a webinar for advocates with Q&A discussion: Protecting Care: What NJ Advocates Need to Know about H.R. 1

H.R. 1, formerly known as the One Big Beautiful Bill, will have major implications for New Jersey's Medicaid program, NJ FamilyCare. This webinar will equip advocates with the information they need to understand and respond.

Experts from the Garden State Coalition for Care will provide a high-level overview of H.R. 1, outlining its origins, major provisions, and its direct and indirect impacts on older adults and people with disabilities, and their caregivers. The presentation will highlight how funding restrictions and new administrative requirements could limit access to optional Medicaid services, including home and community-based services that support people remaining in their homes and communities.

[Register Here](#)



The Boggs Center offers training and consultation on topics relevant to addressing the needs of and supporting people with developmental disabilities and families across the lifecycle.

You may view and register for many of these trainings using [The Boggs Center Online Registration System](#).

Learn more about Boggs Center training and consultation opportunities:

- Aging & Grief
- Behavior & Mental Health
- Community Supports & Quality
- Community-Based Instruction
- Employment
- Meaningful Days
- PCAST - Person-Centered Approaches in Schools and Transition
- People With DD And Families
- Supports Brokerage
- Support Coordination
- Transition
- Workforce Development & Frontline Supervisors

[Learn More](#)

Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series

FALL 2025 WEBINARS

Registration is open for the Fall 2025 Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series.

[View Fall 2025 Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series Brochure](#)

[Learn More](#)

All sessions will be held online using The Zoom Webinar platform.



Division of Developmental Disabilities

Fiscal Intermediary (FI) Transition Update

The transition of the Division of Developmental Disabilities' (DDD) Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Self-Directed Services Model from Public Partnerships LLC (PPL), the current fiscal intermediary, to Acumen Fiscal Agent (Acumen), is underway.

[Learn More on Upcoming Transition Webinars](#)

In the News



[Read More](#)

How the next generation of NJ doctors is improving care for people with disabilities

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

When Elizabeth Dalzell's daughter Liesl complained of severe pain in her left shoulder in June by using sign language, it began a nearly monthlong odyssey through New Jersey's health care system before the young woman with multiple disabilities received the care she needed — a routine cortisone shot.

During that time, an urgent care provider balked at giving Liesl an X-ray because she moved too much. An orthopedist asked Dalzell if her daughter would get "all weird" during an examination. And a week had to pass before an anesthesiologist was available to put Liesl under so she could receive the shot without interfering.



[Read More](#)

NJ man with disability hit with \$3,390 ambulance bill Horizon refused to cover

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

Days after Ed Heaton had surgery to repair his broken shoulder in May 2023, he was transported from a rehab facility in Essex County to his surgeon's office for an exam.

Because Heaton has cerebral palsy and is paraplegic, his rehab facility had booked an ambulance so he could more easily be transferred from a bed to a gurney.

Moving him onto his medical scooter using a small crane called a Hoyer Lift and into an ambulance van would have been excruciatingly painful after surgery.



[Read More](#)

Beyond the ramp: These New Jersey clinics are redefining disability access in health care

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

The front entrance now includes a ramp. The exam room has a height-adjustable table and transfer board. If the waiting room is too loud, patients can go outside.

None of this happened by accident. It came from listening.

At the Freehold Family Health Center, a patient advisory council of people with disabilities, caregivers and health care professionals mapped the barriers preventing access to the clinic and then took steps to fix them — from re-striping the lot for more accessible parking to moving a curb cut, adding equipment and providing more training.



[Read More](#)

In NJ, managed care means delays and denials for disabled patients: 'Not a fair fight'

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

Josh Gargano knew what would happen when his therapy was cut.

His body would seize up. Without regular physical and occupational therapy, his spastic quadriplegia — a severe form of cerebral palsy — would lead to increased stiffness, reduced mobility and, eventually, chronic pain.

"You take these services away, I regress," said Gargano, 35, who uses a wheelchair. "You put me back on them, I improve. It's as simple as that."



Arlene Romoff, 76
Here you are with a hearing loss, which is a medical condition.

[Read More](#)

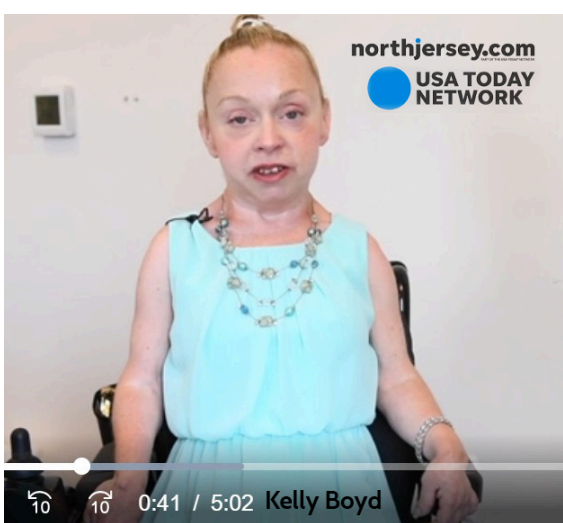
NJ's health system has a huge gap in care for people with disabilities on Medicaid

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

When Nantanee Koppstein found a new primary care practice in the Princeton area for her daughter, she was overjoyed — considering that it took weeks of searching for a doctor who had experience treating a patient with developmental disabilities.

The first visit was great. The doctor was kind and competent. Koppstein and her daughter, who has multiple disabilities, were confident they had found a practice that would serve them for years.

But a few weeks later, in early 2020, Koppstein's hopes came crashing down.



In NJ, people with disabilities face indignity, missed diagnoses, barriers to health care

Story by Gene Myers and Scott Fallon, NorthJersey.com

Kelly Boyd, 45, remembers a trip to a Mercer County OB/GYN not for what the doctor did, but for what she said.

“She asked me — twice — if I was a dwarf,” Boyd said.

The doctor hadn't read her chart, which noted her diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis, a condition she has battled since infancy. The Hamilton Township resident, who uses a wheelchair and is 4-foot-9, said the question was offensive — and irrelevant.

[Read More](#)

Resources

Supports Brokers

Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct



Getting Started

In New Jersey, people can self-direct all or some of their Home and Community Based Services, made available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Supports Program or Community Care Program. Self-directed services are provided by a person you hire, known as a self-directed employee (SDE), or a service provided by a business/vendor that serves the general public, and are paid through use of a fiscal intermediary. Your Support Coordinator will work with you and, as needed, your family to help you understand what it means to self-direct by sharing information, as well as:

- Talking with you to learn about your strengths, needs, and interests, and what you want and don't want in your life
- Supporting you to describe your life goals
- Identifying different types of support that can be used to help you achieve your life goals, including DDD services, relationship-based supports (such as a family member or neighbor), community resources, technology, and other state and local service systems
- Explaining how self-directed services are different from provider-managed services, and which DDD services can be self-directed and which cannot
- Describing the role of the fiscal intermediary and the differences between the two options – Agency with Choice and Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent
- Sharing information about the resources you use when you self-direct one or more of your services

Learn More

- Check out *Understanding Self-Directed Services in New Jersey* by the Boggs Center: <https://boggscenter.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/understanding-self-directed-services-in-new-jersey-and-the-role-of-the-supports-broker>
- Visit the **Office of Education on Self-Directed Services** webpage: <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/community/education>
- Email DDD.OESDS@dhhs.nj.gov




Supports Brokers: Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct

In New Jersey, people can self-direct all or some of the Home and Community Based Services, made available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Supports Program or Community Care Program. Supports Brokers can help people who choose to self-direct to coordinate and maintain their self-directed services. The Boggs Center is excited to share **Supports Brokers: Assisting and Empowering You to Self-Direct**, a new one-page fact sheet to help people with disabilities and families better understand self-direction and the roles and responsibilities of Supports Brokers.

[Download Fact Sheet](#)



Need help with child care, child support, food assistance or cash assistance?

The Division of Family Development can help!

Division of Family Development

The Division of Family Development (DFD) is the state agency that supervises four programs that support New Jersey Families. Use the links below to navigate to the service you are looking for.

The Child Care Assistance Program can help lower-income families who are working, in training or in school, or a combination of these activities to pay a portion of their child care.

[Get help paying for, or finding, childcare in NJ](#)

The New Jersey Child Support Program helps establish and enforce child support orders, locate parents, establish paternity, and provide options for paying support.

[Learn more about Child Support](#)

NJ SNAP is the food assistance program that helps low-income individuals and families buy the groceries needed to eat healthy.

[Learn more, and apply, for food assistance](#)

WFNJ provides temporary cash assistance and many other support services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program for families and General Assistance (GA) for single adults and couples without children.

[Learn more about WFNJ cash assistance](#)

VOTING:

IT'S YOUR RIGHT



Voting: It's Your Right

Voting: It's Your Right is a guide about voting rights and the voting process in New Jersey written in clear language for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The 7th Edition, available electronically in English and Spanish, provides readers with information on:

- Registering and preparing to vote
- Options for voting by mail and in-person
- Voting rights and accessibility
- Contacting election officials with questions

[Download guide – English](#)

[Download guide – Spanish](#)

Limited quantities are available in hard copy format through the Publications Order Form.

[Access the Order Form Here](#)

Voting: It's Your Right is also available as an [E-Learning course](#)



Selecting a Service Provider Making Choices, Becoming Empowered

A Guide for People with Disabilities and Their Families

People receiving services through New Jersey's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) can choose the service provider that best meets their needs. This guide offers people with disabilities and their families ideas that can help them select a provider that will support them to live the lives they want.

RUTGERS HEALTH
The Boggs Center
on Disability and Human Development
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Selecting a Service Provider: Making Choices, Becoming Empowered

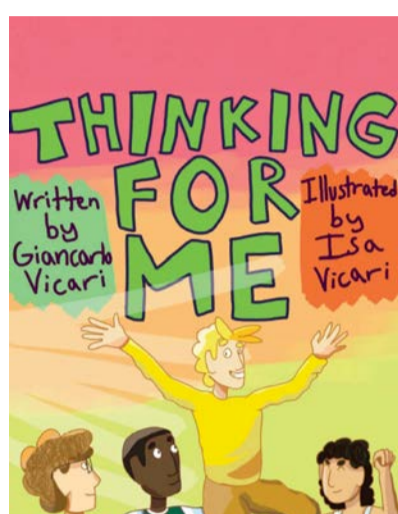
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[Download guide – English](#)

[Download guide – Spanish](#)

Limited quantities are available in hard copy format through the Publications Order Form.

[Access the Order Form Here](#)



Thinking for Me Comic

[Learn More](#)

Giancarlo Vicari, Youth Ambassador from New Jersey, created a comic called "Thinking for Me" about turning 18 and talking to your parents about alternatives to guardianship. We helped make Giancarlo's comic into a 5-minute audio story narrated by Giancarlo and his friends. This audio story is a great resource to share with anyone interested in learning more about supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship!

[Download the Comic](#)



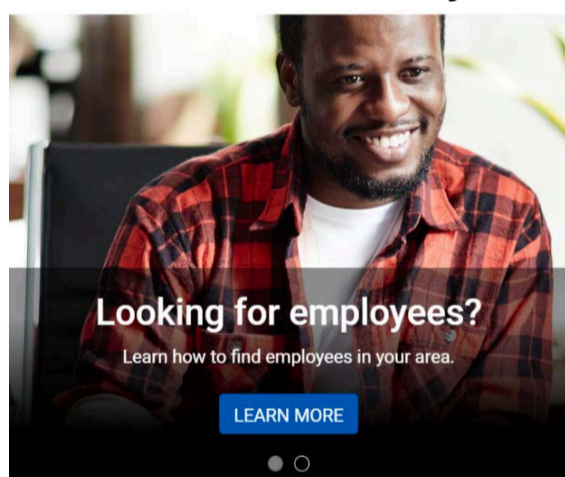
Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals
with Intellectual or Developmental
Disabilities and Their Families

Transition Resources New Jersey State Resources

One challenge common to every individual with an intellectual or developmental disability and their families is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Known as the proverbial "cliff" – the point at which there seems to be a sudden drop in services and supports as children age out of the school system and into adult life. Below are resources to help with this transition.

[Learn More](#)

Jobs that Care New Jersey



The Direct Care and Service Workforce is critical to the lives of people with disabilities and those who are aging. The demand for these jobs is growing fast and will continue to increase in years to come. This workforce is essential to providing the supports individuals need to live healthy, active, and engaged lives in the community. From helping with personal, health, and home care to providing support with community activities, workers in these roles make a difference!

If you are interested pursuing a rewarding career, please check out the information on this site to learn more and to find jobs in your area.

[Learn More](#)



Employment First

The Employment First page on the NJCDD website has been updated with information intended for individuals living with disabilities who are interested in working!

Now, along with information about Employment First in New Jersey, the page features plain language information and links related to:

- [Seeking Employment](#)
- [Benefit Resources](#) as they relate to work
- [Transitioning to employment](#) from high school

[Learn More](#)

DISABILITY BENEFITS 101 NEW JERSEY

[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)

- + FIND THE RIGHT HEALTH COVERAGE FOR YOU
- + BENEFITS AND WORK ESTIMATOR
- + LEARN ABOUT SSI & SSDI BENEFITS, AND MORE!



BENEFICIOS POR DISCAPACIDAD 101 NUEVA JERSEY

[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)

- + ENCUENTRE EL SEGURO MÉDICO A SU MEDIDA
- + ESTIMADOR DE BENEFICIOS Y TRABAJO
- + CONOZCA LOS BENEFICIOS DE SSI Y SSDI, ¡Y MÁS!

The NJCDD is proud to support NJ DB101, a free, user-friendly, all-in-one place, resource guide for employment and benefit questions/information. Find out how working impacts benefits like SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, and more! Resources are in plain language and available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

[Learn More](#)

An Enhanced Family Support Crisis Handbook

4th Edition

Available in English and Spanish



Enhanced Family Crisis Handbook

The purpose of this expanded version of the Toolkit is to empower individuals with disabilities and their family and professional caregivers by providing information to more effectively advocate for persons with complex severe behavioral health conditions (which we formerly referred to as “dual diagnosis”) for treatments, supports, services and the conditions that promote mental wellness.

[Learn More](#)

Manual Mejorado de Crisis Familiares

El propósito de esta versión ampliada del kit de herramientas es facilitarles a las personas que tienen discapacidades y a sus cuidadores familiares y profesionales herramientas que los empoderen, al proveer información que permita abogar de una forma más efectiva por las personas que tienen condiciones graves y complejas de salud conductual (a las que antes se denominaban con “diagnóstico dual”) para conseguir los tratamientos, apoyos, servicios y las condiciones que fomentan el bienestar mental.

[Aprende Más](#)



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