



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

ALISON G. LAND, FACHE
COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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November 15, 2021

TO: The Honorable Ralph S. Northam, Governor
The Honorable Justin E. Fairfax, Lieutenant Governor
The Honorable Eileen Filler-Corn, Speaker of the House of Delegates
Fr: Alison G. Land, FACHE, Commissioner
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)

Dear Governor Northam, Lieutenant Governor Fairfax, and Speaker Filler-Corn,

Chapter 232 of the 2021 Acts of Assembly directs the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to report on the utilization of supported decision-making agreements in the Commonwealth. The language states:

The Department shall collect data regarding the utilization of supported decision-making agreements in the Commonwealth to guide the development of policies and programs to enhance the use of supported decision-making agreements and shall report such information together with recommendations to enhance the utilization of supported decision-making agreements annually to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 1.

Between July 1, 2021 and October 31, 2021, the Department engaged or is planning to engage in the following activities to implement supported decision-making in the Commonwealth:

1. During the previous General Assembly Session, DBHDS was awarded a position to research supported decision-making and develop program documents and training.

DBHDS created the employee work profile with feedback from stakeholders. The position was advertised and interviews occurred the first week of November. Human Resources is validating recommendations and the position is anticipated to be on boarded in the next month. Once the position is on boarded to enact the supported decision-making expectations, this position will identify stakeholders across the Commonwealth to help contribute to the development of training materials, documents for use, and best practices in supported decision-making.

2. Funding was also awarded to update the waiver management system to collect data on the utilization of supported decision-making. DBHDS has reviewed the data collected through the current Waiver Management System and will make recommendations to our vendor at the end of this fiscal year when we update the Individual Service Plan and the data collected in the system.

DBHDS is in the process of operationalizing supported decision making as an option for individual with developmental disabilities. There will be significant progress made in the next six months once the position is on boarded.

CC:

Vanessa Walker Harris, MD

Susan Massart

Mike Tweedy