



State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Elisa F. Velardo
Deputy Commissioner

To: DDS Qualified Providers

From: Jordan A. Scheff, DDS Commissioner

CC: Elisa Velardo, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff; Krista Ostaszewski, Health Management Administrator; Regional Directors; Assistant Regional Directors; Regional Resource Administrators, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Initiative Leadership

Date: November 6, 2023

RE: **STEP Transformation Plan Approval Guidance**

Dear Qualified Providers -

I am writing to provide an update on a recent change in our approach to reviewing STEP Transformation Plans. As you know, we've historically advised that plans should prioritize transitioning individuals from congregate settings to community-based supports before addressing program restructuring. After further review and discussion, we have decided to modify our approach to also allow providers to submit plans that concentrate on restructuring current day and residential programs to support individuals with higher behavioral or medical complexities or those on the DDS Emergency Waitlist.

Individuals identified as part of the residential restructuring approach must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Identified as being on the DDS residential wait list.
2. Has an unmet residential need or
3. The residential move better aligns to meet the needs of the individual

This adjustment is aimed at better addressing the immediate needs of individuals with a higher Level of Need (LON) and those on the DDS Emergency Waitlist, while promoting a more flexible and streamlined approach. I ask that you focus your efforts on individuals currently residing in institutional, hospital or other temporary congregate type settings or on those individuals with complex needs that without emergency residential support are at a higher likelihood of entering an institutional or hospital setting.

Specific to restructuring a day program, the day program must be redesigned to either focus on employment-based services or support new individuals that have an unmet day need.

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DDS has communicated this change to Regional Leadership. I strongly encourage all providers to take part in our [STEP Initiative](#), collectively these unique transformations are helping to shape and transform the lives of those we serve.

Looking forward to our continued work together!

Thank you.

Jordan A. Scheff, DDS Commissioner