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KEVIN ZINGLER
PRESIDENT & CEO

January 13, 2022

Testimony Regarding Proposed DDS Five Year Plan 2022 – 2027

Commissioner Scheff and DDS Leadership team, thank you for providing this forum for input regarding the departments proposed five year plan from 2022 – 2027. Before I comment on the plan, I would like to take this opportunity to commend and thank the Department for its efforts during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. As indicated in the accomplishments section, the Department in partnership with the private provider community have worked tirelessly to ensure the stability and availability of virtual services relied upon by individuals and families during this time. There is no doubt in my mind, our collective efforts have saved lives. Thank you!

After reviewing the plan, I am encouraged and supportive of the draft priorities outlined in each of the “domains” of the Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) framework. While goals and objectives still need to be drafted for each domain, the plan provides an opportunity to continue stakeholder dialogue initiated through the “Seeds of Change” forums conducted last fall to prioritize and develop goals.

The goals and objectives or action steps for each priority will be dependent upon a number of variables in the future; including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, projected DDS retirement “cliff”; staff recruitment & retention (both public & private sectors) and the stability of the private provider community.

Thankfully it is anticipated that funds via the American Rescue & Recovery Act will provide resources to recover from the pandemic and provide “seed” money to

MARC, Inc. of Manchester is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization that supports people with developmental disabilities from Ashford, Bloomfield, Columbia, Coventry, East Hartford, Ellington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Manchester, Mansfield Depot, New Britain, Newington, South Glastonbury, South Windsor, Stafford Springs, Vernon/Rockville, West Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor.

implement system changes which will set the course to implement goals and objectives identified for priorities within each domain.

To aid in the successful implementation of this plan, I ask that the department procure a statewide Electronic Health Records System that can be utilized by all stakeholders – individuals served, parents & guardians, DDS staff and service providers to ensure real-time information sharing & collaboration regarding each person’s chosen life course. One system – statewide.

A statewide system would eliminate data silos, reduce costs, and create operational efficiencies both within DDS and the private provider community. Additionally the system could be the central hub of communication and collaboration to ensure the best quality of care and outcome for the individuals supported by the department.

Throughout this entire process, communication among all stakeholders will be critical to ensure the plan is a living, breathing document with FLEXIBILITY to ensure a vibrant outcome for all involved.

MARC, Inc. of Manchester, celebrating 70 years of service this year, looks forward to being a collaborative partner in planting, watering and nurturing seeds that will enhance the quality of life for all involved.

Thank you again for this opportunity testify. If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectively Submitted,

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