

ANCOR Links

September/October 2014

Columns

CEO Perspective: Courage As a Core Value

Renee Pietrangelo, PhD

Technology access is critical to communication, coordination, cooperation/sharing and collaboration for people with disabilities.



We are in the midst of a renaissance; visible in such trends as collaborative crowdsourcing. People are organizing themselves from the ground-level up. What's taking shape is a more individualized society that is richer and more diverse. This is a bonanza for people with cognitive disabilities—but only if they have full and equal access.

There's no question that optimal experiences for each of us add up to a sense of participation in determining the content of life. Surely fulfillment and happiness are contingent on the level of participation. Individual identity is powerfully shaped by group allegiances and collaboration.

Never before will being connected mean so much. In a world where we are increasingly seen as personal brands of our capabilities and unique abilities, the honest and earnest exchange of information will be paramount to our success as engaged citizens of the world. The world is increasingly mobile, and that means that our work and socialization is increasingly interoperable.

It's critical that we leverage this interoperability to the fullest in order to assure communication, coordination, cooperation/sharing and collaboration across the board—something of paramount import to people with cognitive disabilities.

How can it be anything but the supreme imperative to ensure the rights of people with cognitive disabilities to technology and information access?

So... what's the bottom line? If I had to pick one word to describe the most essential human requirement for the dynamic and paradigm-busting future facing us, that word would be courage. Courage must be a core value. It takes courage to shape the future. The Declaration is a courageous document. As its endorsers, we must apply courageous tactics to assure its realization.

Author LINK: *Renee Pietrangelo is CEO of ANCOR. She can be reached at rpietrangelo@ancor.org.*



President's Corner: Transitions

Chris Sparks

A message from our newly-elected Board President



My family has recently experienced the arrival of our second grandchild, a little girl who joins her older brother. As we share this news people inevitably get around to asking a variation of the same question: "How is he adjusting?" After all, our grandson has been the sole center of attention for nearly the past five years. There is recognition that changes and transitions, as well planned and joyous as they often are, can create some stress.

ANCOR is experiencing some well planned but rather substantial transitions over the next few weeks. At the end of the year, we are saying goodbye to Renee Pietrangelo after 15 years of distinguished service as our CEO. She has done an excellent job. Renee leaves with our affection and gratitude.

We are welcoming a familiar face as our new CEO, Barbara Merrill, who currently serves as ANCOR's Vice President of Public Policy. Barbara has brought energy, passion, and a flair for organizing tactics. The result has been a leap in effectiveness for ANCOR's public policy work. Barbara's experiences have uniquely prepared her for this opportunity. She has been involved in disability issues since 1992. Her previous work highlights include:

being an elected member of Maine's House of Representatives, having been a practicing attorney, being the Executive Director of the Maine Association of Community Service Providers, serving as the Director of Government Relations for The MENTOR Network, and then to ANCOR. Perhaps most importantly, she understands the political process, public policy, and the complex ways in which they impact ANCOR members.

Finally, we are welcoming three new members to the ANCOR Board of Directors and new officers. I will be serving as the ANCOR Board President, with Angela King of VOA as Vice-President, joined by Dave Toeniskoetter of Dunganvin as past president, and Julie Manworren of Living Well Disability Services as treasurer. New Board members include Diane R. Beastron, Koinonia; Sarah Magazine, The MENTOR Network; and Stan Soby, Oak Hill. These are all talented and committed people and I am fortunate to serve with them.

Over the last couple of years the ANCOR Board has worked diligently, informed and entreated by Renee, to align efforts, activity and organizational resources into areas of emerging importance. Clear priorities have emerged: managed care and our role in the changing health care environment; emerging technology opportunities and challenges; augmenting business capacity and sustainability; direct support workforce; Medicaid and its regulatory complexities; and building future leadership capability. We have changed the mechanics of how issues are prioritized and framed, and then how we organize in response to them. The result is a Board that is focused – grappling consistently with issues of greatest import to members – and flexible and nimble in the face of a rapidly changing field and world.

Since 1991, I have worked for Exceptional Persons Inc., a private non-profit that provides a broad array of community services for people with intellectual disabilities, brain injuries and mental illness, as well as, families who need child care and providers of child care. I have been actively involved in ANCOR for many years and am convinced no national association works harder on behalf of members to give them critical information and voice on pressing issues. Almost serendipitously, I have developed friendships along the way that have been rewarding and beneficial for our organization and me.

The next few years promise to be exciting and challenging for organizations that provide services to people with disabilities and rely upon public funding to do so. For those who are willing to prepare, take calculated risks and work collaboratively with others, there are nearly unlimited opportunities. ANCOR is committed to journeying with members, providing essential information at the earliest possible juncture and offering organizational development and support that result in success.

As a membership organization, we are deeply invested in the engagement and success of our members. I invite all members to continue or open dialogue on the ANCOR Connected Community and to contact me or any other Board members with questions or suggestions.

Author LINK: **Chris Sparks** is Executive Director of Exceptional Persons Inc. He can be reached at chris.sparks@episervice.org.



Past President's Message: Speaking with One Voice in Washington

Dave Toeniskoetter

What is the compelling reason for ANCOR to exist?



Last week, I was engaged in interviews of candidates for ANCOR's next CEO. One of the Search Committee's questions to each candidate was "What is the compelling reason for ANCOR to exist?" This led to some excellent dialog with the candidates, but also spurred me to think about the critical role ANCOR plays in representing providers of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and the people we support.

Why should my organization (or yours) belong to ANCOR? Isn't it enough that we belong to our state provider associations? After all, most of us neither contract with, nor are paid by the federal government. How much are we affected by decisions made in Washington?

My service to ANCOR has helped me to understand some important truths about the relationship between providers of I/DD services and the federal government. First, even though most of us don't receive a single dollar directly from the federal government, Washington has an enormous impact on our services through the Medicaid program, which funds the majority of services under the HCB waivers and

the ICF/IID program. Without Medicaid, our services would be far more susceptible to cuts at the whim of each state legislative session or recessionary cycle.

Second, as providers, we must speak with one voice in order to be heard above the constant din of Washington politics and policymaking, but the very nature of Medicaid as a federal-state partnership makes that outcome challenging. The Medicaid waivers look different in every state, so providers have different experiences and different terms to describe our services and our regulatory and funding environments. Lacking a common experience or taxonomy for the service system, we find it difficult to come together in common positions on issues of importance to the provider community.

Despite these challenges, ANCOR has had a remarkable track record of success in influencing federal funding and regulatory policy for services to people with I/DD. Just since the beginning of this year, CMS has announced a new Home and Community Based Waivers rule, and DOL has announced a significant new guidance on Shared Living services. In both instances, ANCOR was recognized by the regulatory agencies as being both the voice of the provider community and an important resource to understand how services work in the "real world." Because ANCOR members were able to speak with one voice on both of these important subjects, we were able to favorably shape the direction of both the new CMS rule and the new DOL guidance.

This is a stressful time for ANCOR as we welcome only the third CEO in the 44-year history of our Association, but it is also a time of great opportunity. We have never been better positioned as the respected voice of private providers of home and community based services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This year – 2014 – has been a year of unprecedented membership growth for ANCOR. Growth means we will have more resources, but even more importantly, it means we will have greater influence in our political system. When we speak with one

voice, we are very capable of being heard, even in our nation's capitol.

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Public Policy: National Advocacy Campaign--Now More Than Ever!

Barbara Merrill, Esq.

Presidential Executive Action could improve staff stability and address income disparity for 40,000 workers.



Presidential Executive Action Could Improve Staff Stability and Address Income Disparity For 40,000 Workers

In August, one of the founders of ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign – and a former ANCOR board member – emailed to tell us that he has lost his enthusiasm for the elected officials' expressions of support for Direct Support Professionals week. In short, he believes Congressional and gubernatorial proclamations designating the week amount to empty gestures that let the people who control the purse strings off the hook.

In case you missed it – in terms of official recognition of the importance of the work performed by Direct Support Professionals, this year's DSP Week was the most successful ever. The U.S. Senate, for the 7th consecutive year, unanimously passed a resolution sponsored by Senators Ben Cardin and Susan Collins, designating National Direct Support Professionals Week. This year we picked up 16 original co-sponsors – a tripling of the number of Senators sponsoring the resolution over last year. We have also seen a dramatic increase in the number of states officially recognizing the week over the last two years. Two years ago we were below one half, last year at two thirds, and already this year almost 80% of the states have formally joined us in recognizing the important work done by DSP's.

So, given that level of success, shouldn't we just be patting ourselves on the back? It is an important accomplishment, and we should be deeply proud of it. It means that a decade after the onset of the National Advocacy Campaign, the recognition "pillar" of the campaign has been embraced by most of the nation's governors and by the US Senate. If you like metrics, that's a pretty good one. We could call it a day and go home.

Measured against this success was the email from the member I mentioned above. I called him back. I wanted to hear him out, and share my view that giving is a habit and we should never think for a minute if we ask a politician for one thing, we've used up some secret quota. The people who are most likely to support any endeavor are people who supported it in the past.

Then, we moved on to review the mission of the National Advocacy Campaign: enhancing the lives of people with disabilities who rely on long term supports and services by obtaining the resources to recruit, train and retain a highly qualified and sustainable workforce. That's why ANCOR initiated Congressional support for legislation that was introduced in four successive Congresses: to give states an optional enhanced Medicaid match to address workforce compensation. That's why, when the federal budget deficit and so-called "fiscal cliff" seriously threatened federal Medicaid funding, we focused our grassroots advocacy on how cuts would further endanger our ability to attract and retain a qualified workforce. We – the greater Medicaid advocacy community – were collectively successful in pushing back cuts at the federal level, but the enormity of the recession's challenges led us to drop the push to pass our legislation.

The truth is that, in recent years, this has been a rearguard action. Any and all progress made to increase the amount of take home pay for our direct support workforce has been made on an incremental state-by-state basis. And so far, no state has claimed victory – how can they, when the national average starting wage still hovers around \$9.36? Our members have told

us that our continuing drumbeat at the national level has been very helpful, but direct support wages are still unacceptably low. To add to the stress, providers are currently being challenged by federal and state mandates that seek to improve working conditions and benefit packages, but come without additional funding sources. Although clearly the expectation is that states will figure out how to absorb the added costs, we know that will not happen without a nudge from the federal government. Oh, to be sure, there will be some states that step up in relatively short order, but the truth is that it will take years for other states to increase rates paid to providers – and direct support professional wages will remain stagnant, turnover rates alarmingly high, and quality will suffer.

That's why ANCOR helped to form a coalition of Medicaid dependent providers to invite CMS to work with us to identify strategies to assist providers whose state rates have not been adjusted to help them comply with the ACA employer mandate.

That's why we asked the Department of Labor to further delay implementation of the Home Care Rule to give states more time to identify funding to minimize the unintended consequences of narrowing the companionship exemption.

That's why we are making the case that any minimum wage increase must include adjustments to provider payment rates to ensure that wages paid to direct support professionals are sufficient to attract and retain quality workers.

And that's why we are urging CMS to clarify that states can leverage additional federal dollars through adoption of a provider assessment on waiver services.

But that's clearly not enough. Such advocacy amounts to plugging the leaks in an already weakened dike. That's why we are firmly supporting the Community Integration Act, introduced by U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (IA), that would ensure that states take the steps needed to ensure that all individuals with disabilities are given the opportunity to lead full and fulfilling lives in community. Importantly, this legislation recognizes that quality services require adequate state payment structures to ensure an ample and well-qualified workforce. Although Senator Harkin is retiring this year, we are working to identify future champions for this proposal. This legislation gets to the root of the problem: the current CMS standard of beneficiary access is inadequate; the measure of whether enough providers are available to provide the service fails to value what is necessary to attract and retain a professional stable direct support workforce critical to quality supports.

Too many DSPs go paycheck to paycheck, earn less than a living wage, and are forced to rely on public welfare benefits to make ends meet. As experience proves, states in general will pay as little as they possibly can to prop up the provider network, and CMS often seems all too willing to sign off. And the provider network, overwhelmingly nonprofit, will do what nonprofits do – live within their budgets to continue to carry out their mission to serve people with disabilities – and continue to pay poverty level wages.

Through the federal/state Medicaid partnership, the federal government has the authority to greatly improve the standard of living for over four million people – the estimated size of the direct care workforce. President Obama has increasingly demonstrated his administration's willingness to take executive action to improve the lives of Americans. His dedication and commitment to people with disabilities has been proven repeatedly over the past six years through aggressive Department of Justice enforcement of the Olmstead decision, the Department of Labor's commitment to improving employment outcomes, HHS's final Home and Community Settings rule, and HUD's commitment to expanding rental assistance.

ANCOR applauds Senator Harkin for including the workforce provision in his legislation, and we will work to identify future sponsors of the bill, but the Obama Administration could truly advance the ball through regulatory/executive action that requires CMS to scrutinize provider payments to ensure an adequate workforce – not one plagued by low wages and high turnover.

The minimum wage campaign is front and center this campaign season, and the state efforts will continue with varied success, with the usual suspects of business pitted against labor groups. But business responds to the market, and the federal government is in a position to influence the low wage earners market. More simply put, as direct support worker wages remain low, the big box stores and fast food restaurants have little incentive to pay more.

I agreed with our member that we cannot give our elected officials a pass – ANCOR's National Advocacy Campaign must continue to reject a Medicaid-funded system that perpetuates poverty level wages. That does not mean that we should stop recognizing excellence in our workforce through proclamations, awards and the like – but we must continue to hold our elected officials' feet to the fire, and reject the status quo.

Barbara Merrill is ANCOR's Vice President for Public Policy. She can be reached at bmerrill@ancor.org.



State Association View: Gubernatorial DSP Recognition Proclamations - What's the Point?

Diane McComb

The benefits of quiet leadership



This year the task of procuring gubernatorial proclamations recognizing the work and value of direct support professionals fell mostly to state associations. In the end, we managed to garner proclamations from 45 governors and the Mayor of the District of Columbia, which set the record, doubling ANCOR's success from the first year of the campaign. Well done, ANCOR!

Many have put forth the question, "What's the point?" Proclamations neither increase available funding nor directly benefit DSPs or the people with disabilities they support every day. Most governors are glad to issue a proclamation, appeasing constituents with a no-cost, feel-good political action. Don't we just facilitate a way for states to dodge the real issue regarding the crisis in funding?

ANCOR's role at the national level in this campaign is compelling and strategic. Beginning over a decade ago the National Advocacy Campaign began with the introduction of federal legislation to increase the rate of reimbursement from Medicaid to better the wages paid to DSPs. I was then the CEO of Maryland's state association and recall the impact of this effort mirrored in Maryland's own initiative – Direct Support Professionals Make a Difference. Shouldn't they also make a living? We discovered our DSP workforce was much larger than anyone had known, nearly half that of the state government workforce. These dedicated men and women were doing work critical to the lives of people with disabilities and their families everyday, yet a majority worked two and sometimes three jobs to make ends meet.

The sad reality is wages remain woefully inadequate for a workforce so key to the quality of life for millions of Americans with disabilities. With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, a majority of DSPs are likely eligible for Medicaid under the provision authorizing enrollment up to 138% of the federal poverty level. Many qualify for food stamps and other public assistance programs.

So what's the point of putting effort into securing a gubernatorial proclamation honoring DSPs when neither our federal government nor our states generally acknowledge the worth of this incredible workforce by paying a decent, living wage?

Here's my response to the naysayers: Over time, this effort has broadened the awareness of ANCOR's work on this important issue. While we all know a resolution doesn't by itself increase rates, we have found the collective actions ANCOR has taken over the years HAVE improved the understanding of the issues facing DSPs and the agencies for which they work. Our annual national recognition program honoring DSPs from each state elevates their stature with local, state, and national elected officials sparking curiosity and acknowledgement of the difficult work at hand.

If we view the gathering of state proclamations each year as one small part of a larger strategic plan, we might see a collective benefit emerge. If we are persistent and committed, this seemingly small gesture will exponentially increase public awareness of our workforce and its value. If we continue to honor the individual efforts of DSPs who are exceptional, we will reinforce their value as a vibrant part of America's workforce. If we continue to move toward credentialing and encourage the adoption of the NADSP's Code of Ethics across the field, we will play a part in professionalizing the field.

All of these efforts are critical, and yes, strategic. To skip the baby steps – the ones like procuring DSP recognition proclamations and honoring DSPs in each state – misses the point. We will never be successful if no one knows who we are. We will never reach the ultimate goal of a better wage if our messaging is inconsistent. With persistence, however, we CAN make certain each governor in each state knows who ANCOR's workforce is. With persistence, we have a shot at increasing the value our states place on DSPs. And with persistence, we might just pull this off – one state at a time.

Diane McComb is ANCOR's Liaison to State Associations and can be reached at dmccomb@ancor.org.



Wage & Hour: Charging Employees for Housing

Joni Fritz, Labor Standards Specialist

Use caution when charging employees for housing.



When an employee makes the employer's premises his or her legal residence, the employer may or may not charge that employee for the living space. Several matters must be considered when making such a decision. **The focal point of this decision is whether the room(s) provided is for the "convenience" of the employer or of the employee.** Arguments can be made both ways.

Statutory and Regulatory Language

The Fair Labor Standards Act, Section 3(m) specifically states that: "Wage' paid to any employee includes the reasonable cost, as determined by the Secretary of Labor, to the employer of furnishing such employee with board, lodging, or other facilities, if such board, lodging, or other facilities are customarily furnished by such employer to his employees: *Provided*, That the cost of board, lodging or other facilities shall not be included as a part of the wage paid to any employee to the extent it is excluded therefrom under the term of a bona fide collective bargaining agreement applicable to the particular employee: *Provided further*, That the Secretary is authorized to determine the fair value of such board, lodging or other facilities for defined classes of employees and in defined areas, based on average cost to the employer or to groups of employers similarly situated, or average value to groups of employees, or other appropriate measures of fair value. Such evaluations, where applicable and pertinent, shall be used in lieu of actual measure of cost in determining the wage paid to any employee." The Labor Department has advised ANCOR that Section 3(m) is intended to apply to lodging and other facilities **"furnished by an employer as compensation** to employees, regardless of whether an employer calculates charges for such as additions to or deductions from wages." (Emphasis ours.)

Even where employees make the employer's premises their legal residence, many employers consider this for their convenience rather than the employees'. Therefore they do not count it as part of their employees' wages.

U.S. Department of Labor *29 Code of Federal Regulations* Section 531 further describes the application of the statute. Sec.531.3 states that the term "reasonable cost" as used in Section 3(m) of the Act is determined **"to be not more than the actual cost to the employer" of the lodging, and that "reasonable cost" does not include a profit to the employer or to any "affiliated person."** Therefore, an agency may not determine the typical cost of a room or apartment rental in the local community and charge their employees that amount, but must base charges on actual cost of mortgage or rent of an applicable portion of a building plus maintenance and utilities.

Application to Overtime and Taxes

There are other important issues to consider when charging employees for lodging as part of their wages. When furnished as an addition to or deduction from wages, this amount is considered part of the "regular rate of pay" when computing overtime. Therefore, overtime must be computed after the weekly amount of the reasonable cost of lodging is added to the hourly rate of pay.

It seems to this writer that the advantages of considering the provision of housing to employees "for the benefit of the employer" outweigh the complications that arise when considering these for the benefit of the employee, and considering them part of the employees' wages.

If your agency rents housing to employees without considering it part of the employee's compensation, we strongly

recommend that you obtain the services of an attorney who is familiar with labor law to review the provisions of law and regulations cited in this article to be certain that you will not run into trouble with Labor Department or IRS rulings should an investigation occur.

*Author LINK: **Joni Fritz** is a Labor Standards Specialist whose guidance is free to ANCOR members and to those who attend a Wage and Hour Workshop or participate in a teleconference she that has conducted. Any ANCOR member who wishes to make arrangements for consultation or workshops with Joni must first contact Barbara Merrill, ANCOR Vice President for Public Policy, for a referral at (703) 535-7850, ext. 103 or bmerrill@ancor.org.*



Articles

Comings and Goings: ANCOR's New Board of Directors

On October 1, 2014, the new ANCOR Board of Directors took office.

On October 1, 2014, the new ANCOR Board of Directors took office. Congratulations to all who were elected or re-elected. An asterisk indicates a newly-elected individual.



President
Chris Sparks*
Exceptional Persons Inc.
Waterloo, IA



Vice President
Angela King*
Volunteers of America
Arlington, TX



Secretary / Treasurer
Julie Manworren
Living Well Disability Services
Eagan, MN



Past President
Dave Toeniskoetter
Dungarvin, Inc.
Mendota Heights, MN



Robert Baker*
Keystone Human Services
Harrisburg, PA



Diane Beastrom*
Koinonia Homes, Inc.
Independence, OH



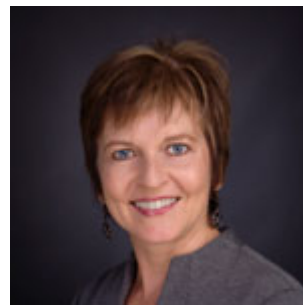
Bob Bond
ResCare, Inc.
Spencerville, IN



Robert Budd*
Family Residences and Essential Enterprises
Old Bethpage, NY



Mark Davis
Ohio Provider Resource Association
Columbus, OH



Paula Hart
Volunteers of America of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN



Sarah Magazine*
The MENTOR Network
Boston, MA



Stan Soby*
Oak Hill
Hartford, CT



Greg Wellems
Imagine!
Lafayette, CO

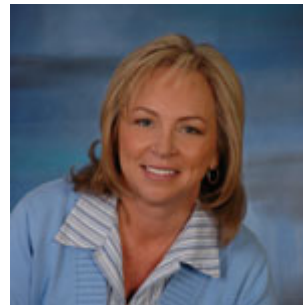


Donna Werner
Mosaic
Macomb, IL

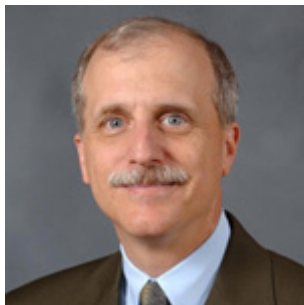
We thank the following departing Board members for their service to ANCOR and its membership.



Past President
Wendy Swager
Soreo
Tucson, AZ



Michelle Auer
RISE
Mesa, AZ



Arthur Ginsberg
Keystone Human Services
Chevy Chase, MD



Than Johnson
Champaign Residential
Services, Inc.
Urbana, OH



Legacy Leaders: The Future of I/DD Services is Now

John Rose

"The future will happen -- you don't have a choice as to whether you want to participate in it or not."

A recognized futurist from the DaVinci Institute, Thomas Frey, says that, "the future will happen – you don't have a choice as to whether you want to participate in it or not." He goes on to say that the future is created by the people around you and that you can influence their input as to what the future will look like (CMS is requiring states to ensure greater public input on their Transition Plans). He warns however, that, "If your *problems (service delivery systems)* are not aligned with the *needs and desires* of the future, the future will kill them." Frey asks the question: "**What does the future want?**"

The future of I/DD services will look very different from those today; it is inevitable – change will happen! While services as we know them today are not "problems," as a matter of fact, the legacy programs developed and in place since the 1970s have served people quite well. It's simply that the current model can no longer sustain or meet the "needs and desires" of the individuals who seek its support.

While I am more of a realist than a futurist, I feel that there are at least **three givens** that will foster systems change in all states within the next few years.

First, with the US deficit ever increasing (\$3.6 trillion), where entitlements are nearly half of the budget and with Medicare and Medicaid as huge drivers of that expense at 24% of the total budget (Medicaid is at \$415 billion, with I/DD at \$65 billion), the need for a remedy to control Medicaid spending is crucial. It seems that one solution will come in the form of Managed Care. An important note here is that Medicaid, as a major fiscal concern for all states, encompasses far more than just I/DD. It includes a myriad of programs that are all in need of funding. My futurist hat has me seeing a single state department with responsibility for all services, both acute and long term: DOH (Department of Health or DPW or ?) and, in turn, the MCO also being responsible for ALL Medicaid/Medicare programs within DOH, as well as, dual eligibles. No longer will there be single focus state agencies like OPWDD or ODP or ???

Second, the current systemic model of service delivery cannot meet the growing and future demand for services. While currently the I/DD system accommodates about 650,000 people (residential), there are concerns for those on waiting lists (approx. 30k+), those at home (approx. 700K+), possibly those still in institutions (approx. 15k) and those graduating from schools every year (????).

Third, CMS is focusing the future of services around the individual with less of a focus on certified settings. Individuals will be given greater CHOICE in their desire and need for supports, as well as greater control of who they want to support them and where they want to get those supports. Individualized Supports (IS) in Integrated Settings (IS) is what it IS. The intent of CMS also is to change the current model of funding from FFS (Fee for Service) to MFP (Money Follows the Person).

This paradigm shift brings about at least **three concerns**:

1. Individualized budgets will eventually be based totally on needs assessments,
2. MCOs sending out RFP's for ALL Medicaid services, at a set dollar amount (states are now doing 'rate rationalization or equalization in order to level the dollar playing field for the shift to MCOs, which will end up getting about 20% less than the state currently expends), and
3. RISK – both for MCOs and individuals. Is it a coincidence that "IS" is at the center of "RISK"?

I will expand on the latter concern at a *future* time. I only wanted to succinctly lay out for you the potential for concerns as I see them unfolding.

In summary, the future of I/DD services over the next three to five years, will experience major changes and challenges, which will include provider agencies reinventing themselves and their mission statements, agencies merging and closing, and, since the DOH will be concerned also with Medicare and other populations under Medicaid, budgeting in a MFP arena will certainly be market driven and competition will be fierce.

Also, supportive decision making will replace guardianship and it will, indeed, take a community to come together to assist individuals in obtaining the paid and natural supports that they will need to include, at least, transportation services. Further, MCOs will vary from state to state on how they will engage provider agencies, directly or indirectly, as they may even hire the expertise that they need to manage I/DD long term supports or work with coalitions of provider agencies. Also, the major question remains as to how states will promulgate CHOICE, while monitoring RISK potential (hopefully engage NADSP and their proposed IDM training).

The saying that, "if it isn't broke, don't fix it," almost holds true. The system however, is broke, literally (\$), when you consider the pending and potential demand for future services.

Change also, however, provides opportunities. These opportunities will exist by providing services to other populations, working with schools to provide "life skills" early on in middle grades, boutiques of specialized services and collaborations. While providers have put forth a tremendous effort in creating a quality continuum of programs and services, I see them once again, the chameleons of change rising up to ensure that those they support now and in the future will have increased opportunities for a quality of life. Now is the time to prepare for the future and embrace change.

John Rose, VP, SEFCU Insurance, ANCOR Legacy Leader & POD member, and member of Liberty Ent. CCL Board (NYSARC Chapter).



2015 DSP Recognition Award Nominations

Nominate an outstanding DSP for ANCOR's 2015 Direct Support Professional Recognition Awards.

Background

In 2007, ANCOR awarded its first national **Direct Support Professional Recognition Awards** in conjunction with the **National Advocacy Campaign (NAC)**. Since then, ANCOR has recognized more than 200 state and national direct support professionals and members of the long-term supports and services workforce. The campaign's mission is to enhance the lives of people with disabilities by obtaining the resources to recruit, train and retain a sustainable direct support workforce. The awards honor and recognize the dedicated individuals who continually enrich the lives of the people with disabilities they serve.

Through its landmark **NAC**, ANCOR continues to provide a strong voice in Washington for the direct support workforce on issues that affect their ability to provide quality supports to millions of Americans with disabilities. In addition, ANCOR has led the way to increasingly high standards for quality, inclusion and individual choice.

Why Submit a Nomination?

In addition to advancing the goals of the **NAC**, your nomination provides an opportunity to spotlight the critical value and importance you place on your dedicated direct support staff while educating your local media, elected officials and supporters about the value DSPs bring to their communities. And it's great for worker morale. Each nominee is considered a "finalist" and acknowledged accordingly by ANCOR.

Nomination Process

Only nominations submitted online through ANCOR's website will be eligible for consideration. **Nominations must be received no later than Friday, December 12, 2014.**

Note: Unlike in previous years, we will not be extending this deadline. Please get your nominations in on time.

Remember, every organization, regardless of its status as an ANCOR member, its size or the number of states in which it operates, may nominate up to three DSPs per state. See additional details on the nomination form.

Please read carefully and follow the instructions on the nomination form. Every year some DSPs are disadvantaged because their nominations are poorly written or are not responsive to the prompts. Please be sure to do your DSPs justice by reading and following the instructions. **Also, please note that Criteria 6 is new this year.**

Only nominations accompanied by a clear digital photograph of the nominee (preferably with the person(s) they serve or in a work environment) will be eligible for consideration.

All state and national award recipients will be announced at ANCOR's 2015 Conference. The national recipient will be invited to attend the conference at ANCOR's expense.

Nomination Form

To submit your nominations for the **2015 Direct Support Professional Recognition Awards**, [click here](#).

Guidance for Submissions

For additional information about how to make your submissions, [click here](#).

Questions?

Please direct any questions to [Debra Langseth](#).

Thank you for your continued commitment to the direct support workforce and the delivery of quality long term supports and services to those with disabilities. All nominations are confidential. ANCOR will secure release forms from nominees before using their name or likeness in any public communications.

2015 Direct Support Professional Recognition Awards
are being underwritten by

RELIAS | LEARNING



Verland's Equestrian Program: Danny's New Friendship

Many forms of "Fun" in the life of a person with disabilities.

Danny cannot see. His house manager and DSPs have made many of the objects he uses special by adding something unique and tactile to it to better enable him to know what it is and say its name. Danny's hands are his eyes and he knows the people who support him by the touch of their faces and the sound of their voices.

One day about a month or two after arriving at Verland, Danny was brought to the stable to be introduced to the horses and donkeys and become an equestrian. His first touch was with Thor, one of the donkeys. He petted Thor, ran his hand along the long ears, which often twitched away from his touch, and gave Thor a small carrot. Thor enthusiastically responded with a "kiss" for Danny's hand, and - luckily - a gentle bray that caused Danny to retreat a few steps. But Danny was happy to meet Thor as could be seen in his grin and giggles.

Of course, Danny, being new, had to be introduced to all the animals. Next he was given Kiki the cat to hold. He enjoyed the purrs and the twist of Kiki's tale around his arm. Then Kiki jumped down and the interview was over. Chelsea, the Equestrian Director, said, "Ok, Danny, don't be disappointed. We want you to meet Bubba." Before he knew it, Danny was putting his hand on a very big head, and feeling the warmth and the mane of a very friendly horse. "Here, Danny, give Bubba an apple." The apple half was given to Danny and to his surprise his outstretched hand was soon enveloped in a moist and warm "kiss."

He giggled, almost guffawed with delight. Then, with one-half done, Bubba soon began to gently nudge him for more. The experience was repeated with three more apple halves and two carrots.

Danny was completely engaged. When the food was done, the petting began and was reciprocated with more little kisses and nudges for more petting. Danny had become an equestrian. Each and every time at the barn, Danny's first word is "Bubba." A long and fulfilling friendship has developed. And although the exercise is important for balance and motion, the friendship is surely the greatest achievement of the equestrian program – thanks to Bubba.



ANCOR Board Member Among Those Honored

Paula Hart, ANCOR Board member and President & CEO, Volunteers of America of Minnesota, was among the 10 heads of Twin Cities non-profit health and human services organizations to be honored by the George Family Foundation as it hosted the first-ever "Celebrating Twin Cities Women Leaders."



ANCOR Board member and Volunteers of America of Minnesota President & CEO, **Paula Hart**, was among the 10 heads of Twin Cities non-profit health and human services organizations to be honored by the George Family Foundation on Sept. 16, as it hosted the first-ever "Celebrating Twin Cities Women Leaders." [Click here](#) for the story on VOAMN.org. The event recognized these exceptional women for "making remarkable contributions to building the Twin Cities."

"We are pleased to honor Paula Hart for her leadership and contributions to our community. I find it immensely gratifying the number of talented women who have led the Twin Cities in building institutions and solving significant social problems," said Penny George, president of the George Family Foundation. "I hope the community realizes how very fortunate we are for their dedication

and their leadership."

Paula Hart has served on the ANCOR Board of Directors for the past nine years. The event celebrated women who have served as CEO, board chair or president of large corporations, colleges and universities, government and nonprofit organizations, health care, and major arts organizations in the Twin Cities.

Added Bill George, former chair & CEO of Medtronic, who currently teaches at Harvard Business School, "Ever since Penny and I moved to Minnesota in 1970, we have been astounded by the remarkable women who have built the character, culture and quality of life of the Twin Cities. These women are leading or have led our major corporations, government organizations, nonprofit foundations, health care, universities and colleges and the arts. We are proud to recognize these outstanding leaders."

A former President of the Women's Health Leadership Trust, Paula is also a member of the Women's Presidents Organization.



Did You Know

Did You Know: Sprint and Sears!

"Did You Knows" feature vendors in the ANCOR Services Corp.'s *Shared Resources Purchasing Network!*



Did You know that Sprint is offering a free Bluetooth headset as a special bonus for a limited time to those ANCOR members and employees who purchase a new line of service through the dedicated web-based Sprint ANCOR portal (corporate or individual lines)! [Click here](#) for details...



Did You know that through ANCOR Services Corp.'s SRPN, Sears is offering FREE delivery on the initial order of any ANCOR member who tries the program for the first time? [Click here](#) for details...

