The Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS)

SANYS 2021 Position Paper

February 12th, 2021
People with developmental disabilities depend on supports and services to be successful and independent.

But for many years New York State has not provided enough money for all the people who need supports.

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) has seen some increases, but not enough for everyone who needs support.
There is some money in this budget for more affordable housing, which is needed by many people.

But there needs to be more options for the many people who are waiting for housing.

There needs to be more funding for people who want to live independently in areas where housing is expensive.
OPWDD is making some changes to rates to support people living in less-restrictive settings and also to support people with higher support needs.

We want to make sure that with these changes, people should still have a choice about where they live.

We want all people to be able to have the option to live in a less restrictive setting as part of a person-centered process.
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<th>Many people with disabilities have lost jobs because of the health crisis</th>
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<td>Even before the pandemic there was not enough support for the many people who wanted jobs in their communities</td>
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<td>Coming out of the pandemic it will be important to support innovative solutions for people to get jobs</td>
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Some people with disabilities like being able to receive services remotely, and everyone should have the choice to be able to do so, even after the pandemic.

There should also be options and support for people who choose to receive services in the communities of their choice when it becomes safe to do so.

We believe that having many different options for what people do with their days is the best way to support people with disabilities.
Many people with disabilities have struggled to have access to the internet.

We believe access to the internet and the technology to use it are a basic right.

Supporting the use of internet technology should be a basic requirement for residential supports.
Self-Direction has grown a lot in our system, but we are worried that changes and cuts may make it harder for people to use these programs.

We are worried that changes to eligibility and limits on use of services risk sending people back to institutions.

We also oppose any withhold or cut to the funding for these and other non-Medicaid programs.
Our system has struggled to pay Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) fairly, and finding staff is very difficult.

The pandemic has made this harder. Many DSPs have worked heroically and taken great risks or lost their lives.

New York State must find ways to pay DSPs fairly and honor them for their sacrifices.
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<th>Accessible transportation is important for people with disabilities to be part of their community</th>
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<td>There must be increased funding for transportation and paratransit services for people to avoid isolation</td>
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<td>People with disabilities should be included and supported to participate in all transportation planning</td>
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For self-advocates it is not clear that managed care would work, and we worry it would take money away from services.

Our system must become more person-centered, less restrictive, and more community based to survive.

We need to know what the alternative to managed care will be, or what path OPWDD plans going forward.
We encourage legislators to meet with us, talk with us, and visit us in our programs and communities.

SANYS can work with you to support connections with self-advocates to make sure everyone’s voice is heard.

You can find information on contacting us in your region at www.sanys.org