Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

Support Coordinator for the Division of Developmental Disabilities
Moving the Goalposts

The foundation for managing, administering, and overseeing the life-long support needs of the adult individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community is Support Coordination. This job was initially required to have a high school diploma, but the state changed this requirement to a bachelor’s degree. However, the State has never changed the rate to reflect this heightened educational requirement.

Time to Right the Rate.
In our person-centered, strength-based system of care, the first responsibility of the Support Coordinator is to the individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities. A Support Coordinator’s sole motivation is to the individual’s success, ensuring their interests, goals and personality are reflected in the services they receive and the connections they have to their community.

Here is an Individual.
The Support Coordinator promotes the individual’s right to self-determination by ensuring that they are truly involved and engaged in the development of a plan that reflects their goals and objectives through the initial processes of intake and assessment, while addressing any immediate needs for safety, food, shelter, health, counseling, and employment.

What do they want to achieve in their life?
As the individual’s primary contact within the DDD service system on an initial and ongoing basis, the Support Coordinator tailors the service plan to meet the individual’s objectives and ensures the provision of these services by locating resources and programs, and confirming eligibility, securing authorizations, and completing documentation, while making sure that any transition is well ordered and trouble free for the individual.

How can I help them achieve it?
In addition, the Support Coordinator remains accessible to the consumers and their guardians 24/7 to manage crises, oversee, monitor, reassess, and report. This is done to ensure the provision of quality services, the promotion of the individual’s well-being, respect and right to self-determination, but also the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Is the system of care doing what it said it would and should be doing?
Despite frequently coming up against resistance and systemic barriers, the Support Coordinator continues to overcome roadblocks to help the individual achieve his/her goals. While others may see something as too complicated or arbitrary, the Support Coordinator is the person who overcomes the challenges and says,

“Let’s find a way to make this work”.
The state is correct, this is not a job for a high school graduate. The requirement to have a college degree in a related field recognizes that the Support Coordinator is committed to a career in human services and signals that they possess the necessary perseverance and self-direction, management skills and maturity to do the job.

The remuneration must reflect the increased educational requirements.

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