



February 8, 2021

Dear Members, Families, and Friends,

Once again OPWDD targets New Yorkers with disabilities in the Governor's FY 2021 – 2022 Executive Budget! This has major implications for all 110,000 members and families of the seven Care Coordination Organizations, including the more than 7,900 individuals supported by Prime Care Coordination. Attached are key points for your information and reference.

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) submitted an administrative budget action that cuts 23% in funding to the Care Coordination Organization/Health Home (CCO/HH) for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). This is hidden from public view in the Governor's FY 2021-2022 Executive Budget.

This new cut is in addition to the 16.2% CCO/HH cut that went into effect last year (on July 1, 2020). If this funding cut is approved, **166 million dollars (39%), will be slashed from the CCO/HH operating budgets!** The impact of these new proposed cuts is alarming and creates significant concerns for the 110,000 individuals with I/DD and their families who rely upon the CCO/HHs to ensure equitable access to quality health care and long-term support services for all people with I/DD, many of whom are unable to advocate for themselves or do not have family to assist.

It is important to remember that the CCO/HHs were created as part of Governor Cuomo's 2011 commitment of, "Care Management for All." Since then, the State created CCO/HHs for people who receive Medicaid for HIV, behavioral health conditions, and children. Individuals with I/DD have very complex medical, behavioral, and social needs which require the highest standard of care management to ensure their health, safety, and quality of life. In 2018, the seven (7) CCO/HHs were created to serve the State's I/DD population and provide the level of care coordination they require.

Should this 23% new funding cut be implemented on July 1, 2021, the negative impact on service delivery and the workforce, that includes 4,000 CCO/HH Care Managers, will be significant and devastating. Individuals and families depend upon the CCO/HH Care Manager to access food, shelter, medicine, social and community resources, and advocate for their rights.

Slashed funding will weaken and possibly destroy the CCO/HH care coordination system that was created to protect individuals with I/DD and reduce hospitalizations,



homelessness and long-term institutionalization. It is also important to note that the remaining NYS Medicaid populations will continue to have fully funded budgets for the coordination of their healthcare and other needs, while the people with I/DD in New York State will not. This discriminates against people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities!

OPWDD will most likely respond that the CCO/HHs can mitigate this proposed funding cut and the overall \$166 million dollars by enrolling new members into Medicare. THIS IS NOT TRUE—the CCOs will not be able to continue their level of care coordination if this cut goes forward and is scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2021.

Given the enormity of the repercussions of this administrative budget action, we do not know if Governor Cuomo has been fully apprised of how these cuts will affect people with I/DD and whether an impact study has been conducted. The seven CCO/HHs are launching a unified effort to advocate against these deep funding reductions.

We have begun meeting with State Assembly Members and Senators to alert them to this proposed cut and enlist their support to defend against it. On Friday, February 5, 2021, on behalf of all CCOs, Nick Cappoletti, CEO, LifePlan CCO NY, testified at the NYS Mental Hygiene Legislative Budget Hearing and represented the CCO/HH concerns. Members of several CCO/HH Advisory Boards also testified at that hearing.

We will be sharing more information on how you can support the advocacy efforts to stop the proposed funding cut and assault on individuals with disabilities. An advocacy tool kit will soon be available. Please sign-up for electronic news alerts on this website: cmany.net.

While the budget action by OPWDD leaves the path forward unclear, we will do everything in our power to support our workforce and to provide quality services to members and families. We are committed to transparency and will keep you informed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Wagner". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Kate Wagner
Executive Director,
Prime Care Coordination