



Fact Sheet

November 10, 2014

WORKSHOP CONSOLIDATION

- The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Stark DD) is **shifting its service delivery model** from being primarily a provider of services to function more as a **connector between service providers in the community and individuals and families that need those services**.
- Federal law requires that all Individual Options and Level 1 Waiver recipients have the free choice to select their provider. An individual who receives services paid by the waiver program can choose any provider who is certified for and willing to provide the requested service. Because of this, Stark DD has seen individuals choose other providers rather than the Board for day service programs.
- As part of that shift, for the past few years Stark DD has also been working toward a goal of **moving as many individuals as possible to employment in the community**.
- This is in keeping with **positive changes in the way society views individuals with disabilities** and overall trends.
 - Court decisions have supported the rights of individuals with disabilities to **live and work in the community rather than in segregated environments**. In its 1999 *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, the Supreme Court ruled that individuals with developmental disabilities **have the right to receive services in an integrated setting appropriate to their needs**. The Department of Justice is aggressively enforcing that decision. (See www.ada.gov/olmstead/olmstead_about.htm for more information.)
 - At the state level, Governor John Kasich's "Employment First" executive order states that **community employment is preferred for people with disabilities**.

ENROLLMENT

- The Board is beginning to see some success helping transition people to appropriate community employment. Because of that, **fewer individuals are enrolled in Stark DD sheltered workshops**.
 - 389 people are currently enrolled in our three workshops, down 37% from 2010.
- As a result, **Stark DD is able to consolidate facilities**. The Board plans to close one and maintain two adult workshops. With the closing of a workshop, the Board anticipates consolidating staff and individuals into the remaining two facilities.
 - Stark DD currently has three workshops: Whipple-Dale Center, West Stark Center and Lester Higgins Adult Center. Higgins and Whipple-Dale are both located in Canton; West Star Center is in Massillon.
 - The Higgins Adult Center has 79 people enrolled; West Stark has 119 and Whipple-Dale has 191.
- Stark DD is **carefully reviewing usage and costs of its three workshops**. The final decision will be announced in January 2015, and the consolidation is expected to be complete by the start of 2016.
- The Board recognizes that **some individuals with disabilities will want to continue working in a sheltered workshop environment, and will continue to provide that opportunity at two locations**.



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- **The consolidation should not result in loss of current jobs.** However, the Board may not fill positions that become open because of attrition or retirement.
 - The Board will work with employees to make any workplace transitions needed as smooth as possible.

FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY

- The Board is **working to reduce expenses so it can balance its budget** without negatively impacting service to individuals with disabilities and their families.
 - Between 2010 and 2013, **Stark DD lost \$8.4 million in total in state funding.**
 - Additionally, **Stark DD lost approximately \$1 million in property tax revenues** in 2013 because of lower property values in Stark County.
- **Stark DD's highest priority will continue to be connecting individuals with disabilities and their families with the services they need, and doing it in a way that ensures those services are sustainable.**

ABOUT THE STARK COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities provides services from infancy onward to more than 3,300 Stark County residents with mild, moderate, severe, or profound developmental disabilities. These services include educational programs beginning with Early Intervention and Preschool, and continuing throughout the school-age years. For adults, Stark DD provides workshops and supported employment in the community. Senior citizens also benefit from specially designed programs. The Board also funds residential care in the community with appropriate supports based on individual needs. In addition to a variety of programs, the Board also provides yellow bus transportation throughout Stark County to almost 408 individuals, traveling more than 1,300,000 miles annually.

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