



Stark County DD Board

News Release – Waiver Services Transition

4/20/16

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### **Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities to Transition All Adult Services to Private Providers Board to Vote on Recommended Privatization Timetable with Community Input**

CANTON, OHIO – A Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities task force is recommending that the agency transition all adult program services to private providers effective January 1, 2018, in keeping with a federal mandate. If approved, 646 people currently served at the Lester Higgins and West Stark Adult Centers have more than a year and a half – until December 31, 2017 – to decide if they wish to remain at those facilities where The Workshops, Inc. (TWi) currently provides adult programs, or to choose another private provider.

Recent federal rules by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services mandate that agencies nationwide can no longer provide both case management and Medicaid waiver services, such as adult day services, adult transportation, and supported employment. Agencies must comply by 2024. The task force voted to recommend privatizing sooner than the mandated timeframe to minimize the effects of a lengthy transition.

“Our highest priority continues to be connecting individuals with disabilities and their families with the services they need. We will do everything in our power to help them plan for this change and make a smooth transition to private providers,” said Superintendent Bill Green. “Stark DD has been moving from a business model in which we provided services directly, to one in which we fund services and connect people with other providers in the community for those services. This transition is another step in that process.”

- In the third week of May, the Board will seek input on the recommendation from focus groups comprised of the individuals Stark DD serves, their families, providers and other interested parties.
- Public hearings will be held on Monday, June 20, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to gather additional input.
- The Board will vote on the recommendations of the task force and possible changes suggested by the focus groups on Tuesday, June 28, 2016.

The change will impact 160 employees who work in Stark DD adult services and transportation. TWi has shown a commitment to hire existing Stark DD employees based upon need and at their discretion in order to provide continuity of care.

“I know this transition will be challenging on many levels. We want to hear everyone’s feedback on these recommendations, and address any questions or concerns. We want to be absolutely transparent about



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this process.” said Green. “The bottom line is that we want to ensure people with disabilities live a good life and are included in the community at home, school, and work. Quite simply, that’s our purpose, and that will never change.”

For more information about the Stark DD, visit the website at: [www.starkdd.org](http://www.starkdd.org).

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