



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor - Van Mitchell, Secretary

To: Individuals Families/Legal Representatives/Support Brokers/FMS
DDA Headquarters/ Regional Offices

From: Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Date: September 26, 2016

Re: Self-Direction Service option (SDS)

The Developmental Disabilities Administration will continue to accept feedback and recommendations regarding the Self-Direction services until December 31, 2016. Thank you to those of you who have already submitted your comments. It is greatly appreciated. The DDA will be submitting Amendment #3 *during spring of 2017*. There **WILL NOT** be any changes made to SDS in Amendment #2. However, we are encouraging families to provide feedback on the new proposed services in Amendment #2.

The Administration will develop a robust SDS option (*for Amendment #3*) based on your feedback, consultant reviews and federal mandates that will ensure the health and wellness of the participants.

Our office would like to also thank you for taking the time to contact the DDA, regarding your inquiries, questions and concerns. The Administration has been going through a transformation. Just to provide you with a brief background; the DDA has faced public scrutiny for financial weakness, significant audit findings and a growing waiting list. As a result, the DDA identified the need to establish a long-term plan to transform its existing financial and programmatic system. The self-direction option is a part of the system transformation.

Self-direction is a service model that empowers public program participants and their families by expanding their degree of choice and control over the long-term services and supports they need to live at home. However, within this service model there is a great risk of exploitation, nepotism, abuse, and lack of accountability. As a system, it is extremely important to have policies, standards, and quality measures to adhere to the federal mandate of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to ensure the health and wellness of the individuals to whom we provide services.

The DDA is committed to establishing a system for success to better serve participants funded by the Administration. Based on the input and recommendations from individuals, families, providers, and national experts, the DDA has identified the primary focus areas that will improve Maryland's Self Direction service model:

- Development of a clear definition for Self-Direction,
- Establishing a clear understanding of the Roles and Responsibilities of the participant, family and people who support individuals that are in Self-Directed Services.
- Establishing a Participant Criteria for Participation;
- Establishing a process for Voluntary Termination
- Development of a Design Element for Individual Budgets, and
- Offering participants the assistance of a counselor to help participants develop the skills necessary to self-direct.

The DDA is currently hosting Listening Sessions in each Region on [Self-Direction](#). If you are interested in attending, the dates and locations are available on the DDA's training calendar located on the DDA's website: <http://dda.dhmh.maryland.gov/pages/training.aspx>.