



Mental Health and Disability Services Redesign 2011

DeWitt, Iowa Listening Post

Source: Public Comments

Date: October 17, 2011

Time: 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

*These public comments were captured during the DeWitt, Iowa Listening Post that took place on October 17, 2011. Division Administrator Rick Shults represented DHS. Any case specific materials that were provided publicly were done so by family members. Department responses provided to the consumer and/or family member as a follow-up to a question asked during the meeting are confidential.

Comment: I am a consumer diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. Very active participant like the last Redesign...everything you say seems like last Redesign...want recovery oriented services and peer support and wrap around services...these were excluded from the last Redesign. They need to be in this Redesign. Help those with MH problems to become taxpayers. Another huge issue is employment. Companies are not hiring people with disabilities right now. Recovery oriented services get people to work so they become taxpayers...peer support is one way to get people back into recovery.

Comment: I am a consumer with a son who has problems. One good thing would be to educate people that mental illness is an illness. We need to change how people view, understand and treat those with mental illnesses. Son also needs peer support.

Comment: I have a son in the system. My main complaint is when dealing with the professionals there is a lot of resistance to family members wanting to be involved in a child's life. They hide behind the privacy laws. Many case managers are not open to information from family members to help discuss what is going on in the person's life. More family support is a must.

Comment: I am a consumer who has been touched by various mental illnesses. I am also a CPC. (See handout titled: Re: 2011 Redesign: Include RCFs in core services.)

Comment: I am a consumer who lives in Pathways cluster assignment in DeWitt. I have an individual apartment that I pay rent for. I am on Social Security. I want everyone to know how important family is. However, it's really a two-way street. The person with the lived experience should also reach out to family as much as family reaches out to them. Is college educated but can't get a job. I think it is great that you're explaining this to us and opening up the process to us.

Comment: I am a consumer with DAC. There is one thing you didn't talk about and that is recreation activities. We'd like to have more of those. Also, I wouldn't be here if it weren't for the help of my mom and dad. There are some problems with employment.

Comment: Consumer – I worked all my life. I'm bi-polar, depression, OCD, but everyone time they send me a paper that says I qualify for services, but when I fill out the paperwork they say I don't qualify. I've been a taxpayer all my life. The services I need I can't need. I'm retired. I almost died two years ago because problems with my heart. Nurse told me to get ready to be on my own because the state is cutting services. So where is the money going to come from for the services?

Comment: Consumer –with regions it seems like you're going in the wrong direction. It seems like you're adding to the burden, not eliminating the burden.

Comment: Consumer- Need to look at where the money comes from. I recommend looking at Ft. Dodge and Webster counties. They have a peer run, drop-in center that has saved that county so much money. The hospital complained that they couldn't keep their psych beds filled. This is where we're going to find the money. If we can help them thwart the crisis, then we can keep them from more expensive services later. Cost per person at an institution is extremely expensive. I had a severe breakdown about 6 years ago, but I didn't need to go to the hospital because of my wraparound services. I got myself out of that depression on my own without costing a lot of money. We'll find money by not wasting it on expensive services we don't need.

Comment: Consumer – I agree with bringing kids home and keeping them home.

Comment: Lori Elam, Scott County CPC...have any of the workgroups discussed the shortage of workforce including psychiatrists? Need to include community mental health services in the workforce plan.

- Comment: There have been initiatives in Iowa to use the CPC's as the point to initiate contact with family physicians and psychiatrists. This is what the feds are going because they realized they can't get the psychiatrists in rural community. One reason is because there were no peers.
- Comment: I am a local mental health activist. What I have seen when my children are in the hospital...insurance running out when you leave the hospital and substance abuse is a real diagnoses. Having worked with MH professionals, we've found them completely useless in helping our family. I had to find the help myself. I found NAMI on the Internet. We need to educate our MH professionals how important family is and the services available for families.
- Comment: Consumer with mental illness. Back in 1960s when I was young, I was hollering for help and there was no one there to help me. But I think I've had a turnaround. I wish the abuse I had never had happened. There were a few times I was homeless but now I'm in a 24 hour facility. Need more help though with things like cell phones, etc.
- Comment: Consumer – right next to me is Becky Peterson who has helped me for the last 20 years. I want to thank you. There are really people who are out there that really love you and really care about you. You just have to find them. Got to find the right agency, you have to be persistent and you really have to be out there talking to people.
- Comment: Consumer and mental health professional. Most of my most needy clients have history of severe abuse. The more DHS can do to prevent child abuse would be great but more attention to MH people with trauma.
- Comment: Iowa KidsNet is going to roll out a 7-week program of resource training for foster and adoptive parents. One topic that will be covered is how trauma affects a child's brain. (www.iakids.org)
- Comment: Consumer with son with problems. Many children are not being properly diagnosed. MH professionals are not asking the right questions. Often the solution is to drug them and this doesn't address the problems.
- Comment: Executive director of Pathway Living Center who serves Clinton County. I am particularly concerned about the funding issues. Can you share more information about funding for providers and peer providers and other things that need to happen in the state?

Comment: On the fiscal piece there are a few things I've been concerned about. One is trying to make this piece congruent on second how to make it work with ACA. Hope would be that Medicaid expansion would proceed. Assume you're doing planning on that, when we're looking at the services we're talking about here, they be included as much as possible in the benchmark plan. Waiver services, habilitation services, are they going to be included? Can they be included? Health Care Homes...I hate to see it shape the system for a year and a half before we figure out how to make them happen. I'm hearing some concern with the Magellan contract at this point there isn't anything included that they have to be a safety net player in terms of commitments and Medicaid is decertifying people...in terms of problems with inpatient beds.

Comment: Regional workgroup member and elected county official. What of the key elements what are going to be the core services and what are going to be the core services plus. Still haven't seen a list. The state has removed our funding for the core services but not the fact they have to fund core services. Too often those making the decisions are not aware of all the facts. A lot of people in rural counties are concerned about transportation services.

If you have additional input that you feel is critical to consider in the redesign process, please email your comments to: DHS-MHSRedesign@dhs.state.ia.us.

If you would like to learn more about the Redesign process and follow the progress of the workgroups, visit: <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Partners/MHDSRedesign.html>.