



Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

Executive Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Community Partnerships and Systems-Change

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Overview of NYS OPWDD

- Served 123,953 people through Medicaid services in 2021*
- Each year, OPWDD spends over \$8 billion in Medicaid fund
- Services include: housing supports, community habilitation, day and employment programs, family support services, respite, and care coordination

* www.opwdd.ny.gov/data

Overview of NYS OPWDD continued

- Services are delivered mainly through a network of nonprofit providers
- OPWDD is also a service provider for more than 50,000 people
- OPWDD employs approximately 18,000 people working across 1,645 sites and 57 counties

OPWDD Executive Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Officially created in August 2022 with the appointment of a full-time Chief Diversity Officer
- Participation with the NYS Community of Practice for Cultural and Linguistic Competence and the Office for New Americans is the foundation
- OPWDD's Strategic Plan, community-based pilot programs, and NYS Laws and Executive Orders are facilitating the way forward



NYS Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities



州残障局临改革 华社逾万特殊需求儿童或失服务 副局长亲赴华社倾听诉求

纽约州残障局 (Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, OPWDD) 明年将进行重大改革, 华人社区虽然有一万多特殊需求儿童, 华人社区机构可能会因为这次改革, 而失去特殊需求儿童服务项目。4日, 两百多名华人家长向残障局发出诉求, 要求提供一个在语言、文化上能够服务于华人的机构。残障局副局长兰菲尔 (Joann Lamphere) 4日专程从州府奥本尼来到纽约, 参加几个华人社区机构联合举办的论坛, 这些机构包括传心家长协会、华策会、大学睦邻之家、王嘉康社区医疗中心、CARES、GHO。

【侨报记者林菁 12月4日纽约报道】残障局明年重大改革传心家长协会是一个由发展障碍特殊需求儿童的家长组成的非牟利机构, 拥有400多名华裔成员, 许多人是新移民。会长叶玉婵表示, 残障局将进行一个重大改革, 会直接影响到华人特殊需求孩子。目前残障局设立 MSC 项目 (专案管理者) 来服务特殊需求儿童, 华人社区有3个机构有 MSC 项目, 其中包括华策会。但是, 今后残障局将用 CCO (医疗管理机构) 来取代 MSC, 而且全州只设立10个 CCO, 可能不会有华人 CCO。叶玉婵指出, 华策会等机构联合起来



华人家长向残障局提出诉求。
(林菁摄)

申请设立一个 CCO, 但据说被拒绝, 因为必须有1万个以上服务对象, 才能成立 CCO。未来的 CCO 可能都是美国人管理的, 在语言上、文化上无法提供华人所需的服务。

华人残障儿童有15000

据传心家长协会介绍, 纽约华社约有15000个年龄3到17岁的有发展障碍和特殊需求的孩子。他们中很多人并不了解残障局的相关服务。一些华人家长最初通过微信自发组织起来, 形成了传心家长协



残障局副局长 (左1) 在听取华人意见。

(林菁摄)



残障局副局长向家长解释服务和改革。

(林菁摄)

会, 大家互相分享信息和提供支持。

他们的孩子最多的是患自闭症, 也有些孩子有学习障碍、脑瘫, 也有坐轮椅的残障孩子。在论坛上, 不少家长提出, 残障局在华人社区宣传不足, 很多人不知道残障局有提供特殊需求儿童服务, 他们通常是从其他家长那里得到信息, 才开始申请服务。家长指出, 因缺乏中文翻译, 华人申请时间通常要加倍。从马来西亚移民来的吴颖恒说, 她的9岁孩子患有自闭症, 如果不是因为传心家长协会, 她并不知道可以申请残障局服务。她指出, 华人家长得到信息的渠道太被动, 希望残障局通过学校来介绍其项目。另外, 她的申请花了两三月, 如果需

要中文翻译, 可能需要一两倍时间。

家长呼吁设立亚裔 CCO

家长林可说, 纽约市亚裔占13%, 如果残障局设立10个 CCO 公司, 按人口比例应该有一个亚裔 CCO。"因为只有了解我们的文化和背景, 才能提供好的服务。"林可指出, 现在华人社区机构有 MSC 项目, 整合改革后, 这些 MSC 被抽掉, 就像把原先的众多小商家取缔, 用10个大型机构 COO 来垄断。即使这些机构提供中文翻译, 也不方便, 远远比不上华人社区机构。COO 模式现在很流行, 但林可指出, 整合之后会有一些好处, 在外州行得通, 但是外州没有纽约这么多元化。



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STATE OF
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Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

Community Needs Assessment

The findings in this Community Needs Assessment are intended to inform the future work of the NY Community of Practice (CoP) Team, as well as contribute data to the I/DD field. Data is often the cornerstone of policy development, helping to inform key stakeholders and drive change. NY CoP Team members have noted at collaborative meetings that it is challenging to find **data at the intersection of disability, race, ethnicity, language and other identity categories**. Thus, this Needs Assessments makes a small contribution in that area.

¹https://ddpc.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2019/08/NYCoP_Community_Needs_Assessment.pdf

Community Needs Assessment

Research in the field of cultural competence and guidance from the National Center for Cultural Competence has emphasized that **communities are able to determine their own needs** instead of relying on “experts.” In practice, this meant that our team could not determine the needs, barriers, and action steps necessary in order to increase access to information and supports, services, and rights for Spanish and Chinese speakers in isolation. **We need to engage these communities directly.**

¹https://ddpc.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2019/08/NYCoP_Community_Needs_Assessment.pdf

Recommendations* on Language Access

“My child is deaf and has ASD. I am in need of **sign-language** service for my child.” “I waited hours for an **interpreter**.” “How will the CCOs improve **language services**?”

Staff Training

More culturally and linguistically competent direct support and care coordination staff are needed.

Front Door

Front Door Info-Sessions should be more understandable, concise, and available 24/7.

Translations, Interpretations, & Health Literacy

Information in plain language, better quality translations, and greater availability of interpreters are needed. A glossary of OPWDD and disability-related terminology should be available in different languages.

Representation

OPWDD website and materials should include more representation of children and people of color with developmental disabilities.

*Recommendations and results are from focus groups and activities conducted through the DDPC Ensuring Access Grant

Top 12 Spoken Languages

NYS	OPWDD
English	English
Spanish	Spanish
Chinese	Chinese
Russian	Russian
Yiddish	French
Bengali	Korean
Korean	Hebrew
Haitian Creole	Vietnamese
Italian	Yiddish
Arabic	Polish
Polish	Arabic
Urdu	Italian

OPWDD +
Urdu
Bengali

OPWDD receives requests for translation and interpretation into languages beyond the Top 12, plus **non-spoken languages.**



OPWDD's Full-Time Language Access Coordinator

- ✓ We hired a full-time language access coordinator
- ✓ The position was modeled off of DOS/ONA* staff, Cynthia Stewart, Dr. Laura Gonzalez-Murphy, Jenny Munoz, and DDPC's language access coordinator Dr. Jackie Hayes
- ✓ The position included recommendations from communities with limited English proficiency in the job responsibilities
- ✓ We asked the NYS Community of Practice in Cultural and Linguistic Competence to review the job description

*Department of State/Office for New Americans



Language Access Operations, Policies, and Procedures

1. Enhance language access in program areas like Self-Direction and Front Door and plain language throughout the agency
2. Enhance literacy of translators and interpreters through training and partnership
3. Write and update language access policy, procedures, and protocols to reflect best practices for cultural and linguistic competence
4. Equip liaisons across the state to provide language access services

Utilization of OPWDD Medicaid Services by Race (YE June 2021)

Ethnic Category	Total Individuals	Percent OPWDD Medicaid Utilization	Percent NYS Population
ASIAN	5,104	4%	9%
BLACK	24,598	19%	18%
HISPANIC	9,060	7%	19%
NATIVE AMERICAN	1,429	1%	1%
WHITE	81,771	63%	55%
OTHER/UNKNOWN	6,790*	6%	5%
TOTAL	128,752	100%	107%**

Note. [Data in the above table were calculated based on OPWDD Data Book Page 15 Table 10 \(opwdd.ny.gov/data\)](https://www.opwdd.ny.gov/data). Data were calculated for the purposes of this presentation to show number of total individuals by ethnic racial category, Source data set is the Medicaid Data Warehouse (2021). U.S. Census data were retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY/PST045221>

*This was calculated for the purpose of this presentation by using "19" in place of "<20" for White and Other in the Seniors (60+) Category

**Total percentage over 100% is due to rounding error and because *Hispanic* is not treated as a mutually exclusive category; Hispanics can be of any race and are included in other race categories in the U.S. Census.





- The Ramirez Family and the Family of Siewling(June) Lum inspired the initiative
- Connects new Americans with developmental disabilities to services and resources
- ONA and OPWDD staff work together to help new American families overcome nuanced barriers to services
- Expands access to culturally and linguistically competent service providers

<https://dos.ny.gov/ramirez-june-initiative>



**Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities**

Community Conversations

- OPWDD, Office for New Americans, Care Coordination Organizations, and other professionals from provider agencies discuss barriers for new Americans with developmental disabilities
- Engagement takes place across NYS, especially in refugee resettlement areas



Cultural and Linguistic Competence are evidence-based practices to get to:



Diversity

Human differences
and broadening
our view to be
more expansive



Equity

Eliminating
barriers to access;
ensuring full
participation of all
people



Inclusion

Conditions where
everyone feels
accepted, safe,
empowered, and
affirmed



Advancing Cultural and Linguistic Competence, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: OPWDD-Georgetown University Partnership for Systems Change

1. Develop an agency action plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion
2. Partner with providers to support the state's culturally and linguistically diverse populations
3. Engage persons with lived experience of developmental disabilities, families, and allies directly in defining their interests and needs

Actions and Commitments toward DEI Systems-Change

The OPWDD Leadership Team participated in a **1-day visioning session** to start creating a vision and action plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The OPWDD Leadership Team will undergo a 4-part **professional development series** in April 2023 on diversity, equity, inclusion, cultural and linguistic competence, intersectionality, and other terms

DEI has hired a **full-time community engagement specialist** and is partnering with Georgetown University, Office for New Americans, and the Community of Practice to create a stakeholder engagement network that is more diverse, inclusive, and representative

Community Partnerships to:



Learn and implement best practices for cultural and linguistic competence



Listen to and respond to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities



Develop a vision and action plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion for the DD system of supports and services

Questions and Contact Information

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Pronouns: she/her/hers [what's this?](#)

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