

Minnesota's Self Determination Project

A Developmental Disabilities Project Partnership -Blue Earth, Dakota, Olmsted Counties and DHS

FACT SHEET - *FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MINNESOTA'S SELF-DETERMINATION PROJECT*

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SELF DETERMINATION PROJECTS?

The purposes of self determination projects for persons with developmental disabilities are to enhance options to choose supports, housing options and employment possibilities, and improve quality of life while doing so cost effectively. The projects also create a foundation to support change and instill creative thinking for supporting persons with developmental disabilities. Emphasis is placed on individuality for supports, services, housing options and employment. Nationwide support for self determination projects has been made available through the National Office of Self Determination for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

is MINNESOTA THE ONLY STATE THAT IS PARTICIPATING IN A SELF DETERMINATION PROJECT?

In February 1997, Minnesota was chosen as one of 18 states to receive a self determination grant, and one of nine to receive a full three year grant of \$400,000.

Is PROJECT PARTICIPATION AVAILABLE STATEWIDE?

Currently Blue Earth, Dakota, and Olmsted counties are participating in the Project. During the three year grant period, outcomes in these locations will be evaluated to determine the feasibility of using self determination approaches statewide. All counties are encouraged to adopt self determination principles and methodologies. Information sharing and educational materials will be available statewide.

WHAT ARE THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF SELF DETERMINATION?

- Freedom - The ability for individuals, with freely chosen family and/or friends, to plan and live a life with necessary support.
- Support - The arranging of resources, both formal and informal, that will assist an individual to live a life he or she chooses.
- Authority - Individuals will control resources, both formal and informal, that will assist them to live a life they choose.
- Responsibility - Acceptance of the benefits and risks by an individual for choices made, and accountability for spending public money in ways that assure health and safety and that are life enhancing.

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WHAT IS THE PRIMARY FOCUS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SELF DETERMINATION PRINCIPLES IN MN?

Minnesota's Self Determination Project's goal is to improve management and administration of services, service financing and design, access to services, and quality assurance.

The Project will focus on education, system redesign, and technical development for individually controlled resources.

The education component consists of assuring that consumers, their supports, and the community receive and understand information regarding self determination, how to make informed choices, person-centered planning approaches, quality assurance issues and other relative topics.

The system redesign component focuses on evaluating current regulation and policy, identifying barriers and challenges, and working on changes that are necessary to make self determination a reality for persons with developmental disabilities. Emphasis is on simplification, assuring health and safety, and supporting consumers.

Technical development for individually controlled resources will allow individuals to have control over their resources for purchasing individualized supports,

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?

Blue Earth, Dakota and Olmsted counties, as project participants, will select interested persons with mental retardation or related conditions to participate, for whom they are the county of financial responsibility. Selection of individuals will be based on participation criteria developed by the county.

WILL THERE BE CHANGES TO MINNESOTA RULES AND STATUTES THAT AFFECT SERVICE DELIVERY?

As part of the system redesign focus, legislation may be necessary to *provide* opportunities to purchase supports differently from the "status quo".

WHO IS THE PROJECT STAFF?

There is a state self determination coordinator, local site coordinators, and support staff at the Department of Human Services and at the participating counties.

Currently there is an advisory committee consisting of a parent/advocate, provider, participating county agencies and Department of Human Services staff. An expanded membership is planned in the near future to include consumers and other interested persons.

Contractors will be hired as needed to assist with problem-solving and special activities as part of the Project-wide work plan.

WILL THERE BE AN EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES FROM SELF DETERMINATION IMPLEMENTATION?

Evaluation will be on-going to assure that the goals of the Project are being met and to assess the need for change in direction and implementation. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation also evaluates the Project.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For more information contact Barb Roberts, State Self Determination Project Coordinator, (612/296-1146) or the Project county participants.