

A Communication from the Policy Information Exchange

Slice of Pie

A *Slice of Pie* is an ongoing publication keeping our readers informed about important public policy issues. It is the mission of the Policy Information Exchange to **educate and inform Pennsylvanians with disabilities, their families and advocates, and the general public, regarding public policy issues and to further the exchange of policy information between the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council and federal, state and local policy makers.**

The Policy Information Exchange is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council.

STATE NEWS

COUNCIL ON REFORM

The Council on Reform was established through Governor Wolf’s Executive Order 2019-05 with the purpose of making recommendations to improve the support and protection of vulnerable populations. The council submitted its recommendations to Governor Wolf on Friday, November 1, 2019. The populations addressed in the report include children, adults, and seniors, and it covers the areas of prevention and diversion, protection and intervention, and justice and support. The eleven page report and a form for public comment through December 16, 2019 is available at this link: <https://expressforms.pa.gov/apps/pa/DHS/Council-Reform-Recommendations-Vulnerable-Populations>.

CLOSURE OF POLK AND WHITE HAVEN STATE CENTERS

Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller announced the closure of Polk State Center in Venango County and White Haven State Center in Luzerne County on August 14th. The closure process is expected to take approximately three years. Both centers are intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual

In This Issue	
State News	page 1
National News	page 4
Resources	page 6
Contact PIE	page 7

and developmental disabilities. The closures reflect the Administration's work to serve more people in the community, reduce reliance on institutional care, and improve access to home and community-based services so every Pennsylvanian can live an everyday life. DHS held public hearings within 30 days of the closure announcement to accept comment about the closure from stakeholders, officials, and the community. Hearings were held at Polk, White Haven, and the PA State Capitol. A toll-free hotline has been established for family members of Polk and White Haven residents who have questions during the closure process. Family members will be able to speak with staff from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling 1.888.565.9435 or by email at RA-PWRASateCenters@pa.gov. For more information regarding services for people with intellectual disabilities and the closure, visit www.dhs.pa.gov.

Two pieces of legislation have been introduced that would seek to halt the closure of Polk and White Haven State Centers. Senate Bill 906 and House Bill 1918 would place a moratorium on closing a State Center for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities until the Waiting List is eliminated. For more information about these bills, go to: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>.

DHS STRATEGIC PLAN

On November 13, 2019, The Department of Human Services (DHS) released a 29-page strategic plan for 2019 through 2022 for the over 3 million people touched by the Department's services. The plan addresses four goals:

- Providing every child with a strong foundation for physical and behavioral well-being;

- Bending the health care cost curve;
- Enhancing access to health care and social services that help Pennsylvanians lead healthy, productive lives; and
- Promoting accountable, transparent government.

The report is available at this link:

<https://mailchi.mp/2fa21ef082a6/announcing-the-department-of-human-services-strategic-plan?e=af27668a09>

ELECTRONIC VISIT VERIFICATION

The Offices of Developmental Programs and Long-Term Living in the Department of Human Services announced on November 12, 2019 that Pennsylvania will formally request a Good Faith Effort (GFE) Exemption from CMS to delay the implementation of the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) mandate scheduled to take effect January 1, 2020. The request is based on the need for more time for providers to fully prepare for EVV, including required certification and testing. Providers are required to use EVV on January 1, 2020 unless a delay is approved. Information about EVV is available at this link: <http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/billinginformation/electronicvisitverification/index.htm>.

PENNSYLVANIA EXPANDS HOME VISIT SUPPORT

PA is expanding home visiting supports to first-time mothers and mothers of children with additional risk factors. The expansion, made possible in collaboration with physical health Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs), will guarantee at least two home visits to new parents and families with children with additional risk factors across Pennsylvania, expanding access to evidence-based or evidence-

informed models that promote and support healthy child and family development. To learn more, visit: <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/pennsylvania-expands-home-visiting-support-to-first-time-mothers-and-children-with-special-needs/>.

PLANS OF SAFE CARE FAQ

On June 28, 2018, Governor Tom Wolf signed Act 54 of 2018 updating Pennsylvania law, to require health care professionals notify the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) so that a Plan of Safe Care can be developed for infants affected by substance abuse. The FAQ is a follow up to the Governor's Institute on Plans of Safe Care. To read the document, visit: http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_292112.pdf, which provides clarity around the Plan of Safe Care found at: <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/resources/PlansSafeCare/index.htm>. The document lists and directs services and supports to provide for the safety and well-being of an infant affected by substance abuse, withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

OMHSAS

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has issued one new Bulletin:

Guidelines for Implementing Assisted Outpatient Treatment (OMHSAS-19-04) was issued on November 4, 2019 and was effective on that date. The Bulletin issues guidelines for the implementation of Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) pursuant to the Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA) by Act 2018-106 (Oct. 24, 2018) (Act 106) in order to promote consistent application of AOT procedures.

OLTL

Community HealthChoices

The Office of Long-term Living (OLTL) continues to prepare for the implementation of the Community HealthChoices (CHC) program on January 1, 2020 in the remaining three Regions: Northeast, Northwest, and Capital/Lehigh. Participants have been offered the choice of three managed care organizations, and providers have been urged to contract with them, as well. Information is available at <http://www.healthchoices.pa.gov/info/about/community/>.

BILLS OF INTEREST

Below we summarize some bills of interest to the disability community from the 2019-2020 Session. For more information about these bills or any other state legislative activity, go to <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>.

HB 3. Introduced by Representative Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) and Representative Frank Dermody (D-Allegheny). This bill would create an authority to operate a **state-based health insurance exchange** for Affordable Care Act individual market plans. Referred to Insurance, June 4, 2019. Approved by the Governor, July 2, 2019, becoming **Act No. 42**.

HB 117. Introduced by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-Allegheny). This bill would require state-owned buildings and certain places of public accommodation, including auditoriums, convention centers, sports arenas, and amusement parks with a maximum occupancy of 2,000 or more people, to install and maintain at least one **adult changing station**. Referred to Labor and Industry Committee, Jan. 28, 2019.

HB 1895. Introduced by Representative David H. Rowe (R-Union). This bill would amend the Mental Health Procedures Act to protect the rights of Pennsylvanians receiving **mental health care**. This Bill will state that persons in treatment have a right to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Referred to Human Services, Sept. 30, 2019.

HB1918. Introduced by Representative Gerald J. Mullery (D-Luzerne). This bill would provide for White Haven and Polk **State center closure moratorium**. Referred to Health, Oct. 15, 2019. Laid on the table calendar since, Oct. 22, 2019.

HB 2008. Introduced by Representative Frank Burns (D-Cambria). This bill would repeal the requirement that **Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)** rides be provided by a contracted broker. Referred to Health, Oct. 30, 2019.

HB 2075. Introduced by Representative Tim Hennessey (R-Chester). This bill would analyze the requirement that **Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)** rides be provided by a contracted broker. Referred to Health, Nov. 20, 2019.

SB 421. Introduced by Senator Lisa M. Boscola (D-Lehigh). This bill would amend the Pennsylvania **Election Code**. Referred to State Government, March 25, 2019. Approved by the Governor, Oct. 31, 2019 becoming Act No. 77.

SB 852. Introduced by Christine M. Tartaglione (D-Philadelphia), This bill would create the **Office for People with Disabilities** within and to be administered by the Office of the Governor and make the office permanent by statute. Referred to State Government, Sept. 20, 2019.

SB 890. Introduced by Senator Bob Mensch (R-Berks). This bill would allow individuals with disabilities to increase earnings under a new category of **MAWD**, called Workers with Job Success (WJS). Referred to Health and Human Services, Oct. 8, 2019.

SB 906. Introduced by Senator John T. Yudichak (D-Carbon). This bill would provide for White Haven and Polk **State center closure moratorium**. Referred to Health and Human Services, Oct. 18, 2019. Final passage, Nov. 18, 2019. Referred to House Health Nov. 19, 2019.

SB 914. Introduced by Senator Pam Iovino (D-Allegheny) and Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington). This bill would require state-owned buildings and certain places of public accommodation, including auditoriums, convention centers, sports arenas, and amusement parks with a maximum occupancy of 2,000 or more people, to install and maintain at least one **adult changing station**. Referred to Labor and Industry Committee, Oct. 23, 2019.

SB 924. Introduced by Senator Lawrence M. Farnese Jr. (D-Philadelphia). This bill would provide for a streamlined process to acquire **guardianship for medically disabled adult children**. Referred to Judiciary, Oct. 24, 2019. First consideration, Oct. 29, 2019.

NATIONAL NEWS

FEDERAL BUDGET 2020

On August 2, 2019, the President signed into law the **Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019** that includes a two-year deal for spending limits and a suspension of the debt limit through July 2021. Congress did not complete work

on the 12 appropriations bills that fund the federal government for the fiscal year that began on October 1, 2019. On September 27, 2019, the President signed a FY2020 Continuing Appropriations Resolution funding the government through November 21, 2019, and on that date a second Continuing Appropriations Resolution was signed through December 20, 2019. After this date either a negotiated budget for the full fiscal year or another continuing resolution will be required. Information about the status of the bills is available here:

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/AppropriationsStatusTable>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$50 MILLION INITIATIVE

The U.S. Department of Transportation is committing nearly \$50 million to expand access to transportation for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and low-income Americans. Transportation Secretary, Elaine Chao, said the initiative would make transportation service more efficient, affordable, and accessible to individuals with disabilities, older adults, and to some challenged, underserved communities. The notice is available here: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2019/10/31/feds-expand-transportation-special-needs/27385/>.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY (NCD) RELEASES ANNUAL FEDERAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

This report is issued annually to the President and members of Congress identifying the status and progress of national policy and offering recommendations on continuing, new, and emerging issues that affect the

lives of people with disabilities. To read more on the findings and recommendations, read here: <https://ncd.gov/newsroom/2019/annual-federal-report-progress>.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY RELEASES REPORT ON GENETIC TESTING

The National Council on Disability (NCD) recently released “Genetic Testing and the Rush to Perfection,” the third report in a series on Bioethics and Disability. This report examines the range of scientific, commercial, professional, and social factors that converge around prenatal genetic testing and their effect on the lives of people with disabilities; and it provides an update on the interaction between genetic testing and employment discrimination. To read the report, visit: https://www.ncd.gov/sites/default/files/NCD_Genetic_Testing_Report_508.pdf.

ADVOCATES HOLD CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING ON DSP WORKFORCE CRISIS

On November 1, The Arc U. S., as part of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, along with the National Domestic Workers Alliance, hosted a Congressional briefing titled “The Hidden Crisis of Care in the U.S. - Addressing the Homecare Workforce Shortage.” The briefing covered the shortages in the direct care workforce and the need for investment at the federal level to address it. Read testimony from the briefing from Nicole Jorwic, The Arc’s Senior Director for Public Policy, at: <https://thearc.org/congressional-testimony-the-direct-care-crisis/>.

RESOURCES

NCSECS RELEASES REPORT ON CIVIL RIGHTS DATA COLLECTION

The National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools (NCSECS) released the Key Trends in Special Education in Charter Schools in 2015-2016: Secondary Analysis of the Civil Rights Data Collection. This report analyzes the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) which tracks emerging trends as reported by 85,864 public schools across the U.S., including 5,548 charter schools. To read the report, visit: <https://www.ncsecs.org/top-10-resources/crdc-analysis/>.

EVERYDAY LIVES CONFERENCE

The Office of Developmental Program's 2020 EveryDay Lives Conference will be held at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, 325 University Drive, Hershey, PA. on January 7-9, 2020. To book a room, call (855) 729-3108.

THE ARC UNITED STATES AND THE CENTER FOR FUTURE PLANNING

The Arc US is supporting and encouraging families to plan for the future. The Center provides reliable information and assistance to individuals with I/DD, their family members and friends, professionals who support them and other members of the community on areas such as person-centered planning, decision-making, housing options, and financial planning. Visit: <https://futureplanning.thearc.org/pages/learn/about>.

PERSON CENTERED THINKING

Training sessions are being offered throughout the state from December through March. The two-day training sessions will familiarize attendees with Person Centered Thinking, a core foundation of supports and services for individuals with intellectual disabilities, through guided exercises. For more information, visit: <https://palms-awss3-repository.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Communications/ODP/2019/ODPANN+19-068+Person+Centered+Thinking+Training+Available.pdf>.

2019-2020 Training Dates and Locations:

- December 4, 2019/ December 5, 2019 - Bethlehem
- January 6, 2020/ January 13, 2020 - Reading
- February 20, 2020/ Friday, February 21, 2020 - Harrisburg
- March 2, 2020/ March 9, 2020 - West Chester
- March 26, 2020/ March 27, 2020 - Pittsburgh

Pre-registration is required. To register online, visit: <https://www.tiu11.org/pct-training/>. If you have any questions about this training opportunity, please contact tiutta@tiu11.org.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S CONFERENCE

March 9-11, 2020; Hershey Lodge and Convention Center; Making a Difference: Educational Practices That Work! Visit: <https://www.pattan.net/training/conferences/pennsylvania-department-of-education-conference/> for more details.

PENNSYLVANIA DEAF-BLIND PROJECT'S FAMILY LEARNING CONFERENCE

June 26 – 27, 2020; The Penn Stater Conference Center, State College, PA. Registration – Soon to be posted. For more information, visit: <https://www.pattan.net/Training/Conferences/Pennsylvania-Department-of-Education-Conferenc-1>.

2020 PA COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TRANSITION CONFERENCE: CALL FOR CONFERENCE PROPOSALS

The 2020 PA Community of Practice Conference is being held July 15-16, 2020 at the Penn State Conference Center,

State College PA. The planning team is requesting proposals from individuals or groups to present on a wide array of subject matter. Proposals must be submitted via online application, so visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020TransitionPA>. Proposal Deadline is January 31, 2020. Direct questions regarding proposal submissions to: paconf2020@gmail.com.

22ND ANNUAL NATIONAL AUTISM CONFERENCE – PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

August 3 - 6, 2020 – The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA. Registration will be posted soon.

CONTACT PIE

Contact the PIE Team with any questions, comments, suggestions, or information to share at PIE, c/o The Arc of Pennsylvania, 301 Chestnut Street, Suite 403, Harrisburg, PA 17101, by email at pie@thearcpa.org or by phone at 800-692-7258.

- o **A Slice of Pie** is available by email and contains hyperlinks for ease of accessing websites and internet documents and resources.
- o PIE Alerts, PIE Information, and PIE Job Postings are available by email to keep people informed about disability issues between newsletters.
- o Sign up for A Slice of Pie or PIE electronic messages by phone at 800-692-7258 or by emailing pie@thearcpa.org.
- o Individuals who already get A Slice of Pie and/or PIE electronic messages can make changes at any time by clicking “Update Profile/Email Address” at the end of any PIE email message.
- o A Slice of Pie is available at the Developmental Disabilities Council website www.paddc.org, by clicking on “Publications” and “Slice of Pie”. Archived editions can also be found there.
- o **A Slice of Pie** is available in alternate format upon request.
- o The PIE office will download, copy, and mail information mentioned in A Slice of Pie upon request.

A Slice of Pie

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARRISBURG, PA
PERMIT NO. 649

Policy Information Exchange
c/o The Arc of Pennsylvania
Suite 403 – Pennsylvania Place
301 Chestnut Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Change of Information?

We want to be certain that you do not miss an issue of *A Slice of Pie*, so please send name or address changes either by phone 800-692-7258 or by email to pie@thearca.org. Thank you.

The PIE Team

THE ARC OF PENNSYLVANIA

PIE STAFF:

Sherri Landis

Alexa Brill

Katie Yost

CONSULTANTS:

Vini Portzline

Joan W. Martin