

Call to Action

Contact your legislators and the Governor now and ask them to:

1. Support completion of Medicaid Redesign by providing state match to:

- Fund more Medicaid waivers
- Continue initial steps to reduce MRDD Waiting Lists

2. Provide additional Tax Equity (\$6.5 million per year) to poor counties.

Children born in tax poor counties must have equal access to needed MRDD services.

3. Further improve the wages of Direct Care Workers (\$9.8million per year) to enhance the health and safety of MRDD citizens.

Stabilizing the workforce has a marked influence on the quality of care.

4. Restore cuts and provide a modest increase in the state Subsidy to County Boards (\$17.2 million).

Over the past ten years the subsidy has been frozen, while the population served by the counties has increased.

5. Continue to address the needs of aging parents with aging children living at home.

Add a new priority to serve children with severe disabilities including autism.

6. Push hard for more Medicaid Waivers.

The growing federal deficit suggests that the current “open window” for Medicaid expansion could be closed at any time. We must act *now!*

Act Now!

Contact the Governor as soon as you can. Thank him for his support in obtaining additional Medicaid waivers and in implementing the initial stages of Medicaid Redesign. Ask for his continued assistance to implement the community inclusion messages of Ohio Access.

The Honorable Bob Taft
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Contact your State Representative (as soon as possible but no later than April 15) and your State Senator (before June 15). Ask them to support the needs outlined in this brochure. Let them know that any further budget cuts will be felt in your/their communities, and give them some concrete examples. For example, how much longer will someone have to stay on a waiting list for services; how much turnover in direct care staff have you experienced; or does the lack of tax equity funds leave your county behind others in the services it can offer.

Ask friends to contact the Governor and their State Representatives and State Senators. Share the information in this brochure with friends, and ask them to share information with their legislators about how failing to address these priorities will affect their own situations or that of their loved ones.

In 2003, Ohioans with Mental Retardation & Other Developmental Disabilities need your help to...

- Protect health and safety
- Reduce residential waiting lists
- Provide staff with decent wages
- Provide tax equity to poor counties
- Restore budget cuts and increase federal match
- Support the completion of Medicaid Redesign



Building the Foundation: Results of the MRDD Medicaid Redesign in the last Budget Bill

- Developed a six-year plan to revolutionize MRDD Services in Ohio.
- New Level I Waiver concepts have been submitted and approved.
- For the first time, local funds are available to match and draw down additional federal Medicaid funds.
- Provided an increase in Tax Equity funding in FY 2002-2003, although State funding for Tax Equity still is only approximately 40% of the need.
- Provided a modest increase (roughly 60 cents per hour) for direct care workers.
- Began reducing waiting lists by paving the way for Medicaid Waivers to provide needed community-based services to new people.

4,000 new Individual Options (IO) waivers have been obtained to date, and 6,000 additional Level I waivers have been approved for release over the next three years.

Of the original 4,000 IO waivers that have been filled thus far, more than 400 are for residential placements to relieve the waiting list. The balance of the waivers is being used to refinance existing placements to bring in more Federal dollars.

CUTS TO MRDD BUDGET HURT REAL PEOPLE! Impact of the State's financial situation

Ongoing budget cuts to the Ohio Department of MRDD have seriously set back Medicaid redesign.

- Every \$1 cut in state funds reduces federal funds by \$1.50, and thus reduces services by \$2.50. The majority of state funds for MRDD services are used to “match” and draw down federal funds.
- The reduction of state funds for the County Board Subsidy forces counties to use their local dollars to maintain current services rather than matching federal dollars and reducing the waiting list.
- Over 16,000 people are on a waiting list for residential services. Of that number, more than 6,000 are not receiving residential services of any kind at the present time.

Our Goal

To have the Governor, the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate complete the work of Medicaid Redesign they began in the last budget bill.

This will assist elderly caregivers and individuals with disabilities, and it will allow for the provision of quality services on a statewide basis.

- Each cut diminishes ODMRDD's ability to monitor the health and safety of vulnerable citizens with MRDD and to administer the Medicaid waiver program.

Since July 2001, MRDD services have been cut over \$47.4 million in state funds. This does not include the resulting loss of additional federal Medicaid funds. There is no more “fat” left in the MRDD budget.

Tell your legislators that the cuts they make are passed back to constituents in their own districts, and that the success of Medicaid Redesign is based upon the State of Ohio remaining an equal funding partner with counties (local levies) and the federal government (Medicaid).

Members of Ohio's Waiting List Coalition

Advocacy & Protective Services, Inc.

Arc of Ohio

Cerebral Palsy Association of Ohio

Ohio AAMR

*Ohio Association of County Boards
of MRDD*

Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

Ohio Legal Rights Services

Ohio Provider Resources Association

*Ohio Superintendents of County Boards
of MRDD*

People First of Ohio