

HB 1873 by Naishtat

House Human Services Committee | Monday, April 13, 2015

HB 1873 allows DSHS and HHSC to develop a pilot-program for self-directed mental health services for individuals who participate in the STAR+PLUS Medicaid managed care program.

CPPP Position: FOR

Thirteen years ago, President George W. Bush created the New Freedom Commission on Mental Health in an effort to better understand the mental delivery systems throughout the U.S. and to make recommendations that would enable adults with serious mental illnesses and children with serious emotional disturbance to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.¹ In the final report to the President, the New Freedom Commission identified two principles that underpin reform of the mental health system. First, “**services and treatments must be consumer and family centered;**” and, second, “**care must focus on increasing consumers’ ability to successfully cope with life’s challenges, on facilitating recovery, and on building resilience.**”² Self-direction is a possible means by which to achieve these goals.

The **Self-Directed Model** includes:³

- *Person-centered planning* – the individual identifies their own strengths, preferences, and desired outcomes.
- *Individual budgeting* – budgets provide a mechanism for people to have control over the money spent on their services along with control over who will provide the services and supports
- *Support services* – a support team that helps the individual make informed decisions.

Self-determination is the cornerstones of self-directed care, which encompasses **freedom and choice** in how an individual wants to live life, as well as, **authority over and responsibility for** the costs of the selected services.⁴

Existing Self-Directed programs have demonstrated to show to improve consumer satisfaction with services compared to traditional community mental health services. **Consumers report this satisfaction is in “large part due to the focus on recovery rather than symptoms; the flexibility of the approach in meeting individual needs; and the support provided by counselors and peers in articulating goals and developing spending plans.”**⁵

In parting, my spouse is a clinical Child Psychologist, who tells clients that “finding a therapist is like finding the right pair of shoes... it might be the right price and look good on the shelf, but after a while the fit is not right and you develop a blister. So you [the client] has tell me what works and what doesn’t.”

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¹ SAMHSA. (2003). Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America, Executive Summary: The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Achieving-the-Promise-Transforming-Mental-Health-Care-in-America-Executive-Summary/SMA03-3831>

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). The Contribution of Self-Direction to Improving the Quality of Mental Health Services. <http://aspe.hhs.gov/daltcp/reports/2007/MHsldir.htm#execsum>

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Id.