



May 24, 2016

Dear Chairman Oelslager, Ranking Member Skindell and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Mark Davis and I am President of the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA). I am here with Maryse Amin, Ph.D. of OPRA. OPRA is a statewide association representing private providers of service to individuals with developmental disabilities. Our members represent the full array of services to individuals served with Ohio's developmental disabilities system.

I want to talk about an innovative approach to improving the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) through epidemiological research and evidence-based strategies to improve their integrated health care. We support Ohio moving to "Modernize Medicaid, Streamline Health and Human Services and Pay for Value" (OHT). In order to accomplish these goals in the area of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), we need to make data-informed policy decisions. The question: what works best for what people at what cost and over what timeframe, needs to be answered with research-based findings. No one has done this research. We do not have a basic health profile on people with IDD.

Today's health care system does not have a well-developed epidemiological understanding of the population of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The impact of long term services and supports (LTSS) on the health care of people with IDD is not known. The intersection of LTSS, behavioral health care, physical health care and dental services for individuals with IDD is not known. This lack of knowledge contributes to the poor health outcomes and inadequate access to health care services experienced by individuals with IDD.

Challenges include disproportionately higher rates of preventable mortality; co-morbidities and chronic conditions among adults; less access to preventative care; a lack of formal training of health care professionals specific to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and

cognitive challenges of the individual which inhibit the ability to self-report and understand health care directives.

As our health care system undergoes reforms designed to improve health outcomes and assure universal access to health insurance and health care, it is important to take a closer look at how individuals with I/DD interact with that system. Our focus should be on conducting epidemiological research to improve health care outcomes, lower health care costs and better integrate physical and behavioral health care with LTSS to achieve community integration for individuals with IDD.

We are in support the establishment of the Epidemiological Research Grant Program Fund at DODD, to fund a grant that leads to information and strategic direction to policy makers and payers utilizing data driven research to improve health care outcomes for individuals with IDD at reduced costs. Building on collaborative partnerships, the grantee will collect and critically evaluate data unique to the IDD population and offer solutions that will benefit all stakeholders.

The grantee will recognize that an interdisciplinary approach to research and analysis will yield the best outcomes. In addition, all studies will view the individual holistically and take into account all services including but not limited to, acute health care, polypharmacy, mental health and LTSS. This will inform the next phase of our system's reform and the future research needs for this population. We need to have a basic health profile for people with IDD, before we can move toward any effective approach that integrates funding streams, holds providers accountable for outcomes, pays for value and modernizes our system of supports for Ohioans with IDD.

Thank you for your consideration.