**Comprehensive Listing of Public Comments Received to Date**

**on Draft DDC Five-Year State Plan FY2017-21  
(Updated June 21, 2016)**

**First Set of Public Comments received May 6, 2016**

**General comments:**

* It may be helpful to include a section at the beginning to explain how (e.g. focus groups, surveys, etc…) the DDC identified the areas of emphasis as listed in the plan.
* Consider attaching a matrix/chart broken out by fiscal year for the emphasis area and activities, as a quick reference.
* May want to consider creating focused activities in areas where “gaps” exist and that no other entities are directly addressing supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities and/or family members across the lifespan.

**Self-determination, Advocacy & Leadership**

* Objective#1: Add “effective leadership, peer mentoring”
* Objective#2: DCAP provided to 15 or more District residents…. Is that 15 per year or just 5 per year for three years? Please clarify.
* Objective#3: Will there be funding to support for local self-advocacy organization for people with intellectual disability/developmental disability.
* Objective#4: Activity #3 – Can you attach a **quantity** to securing the participation of District residents with developmental disabilities and families in mock District-wide emergency preparedness events?
* Objective #5: Activity #1- Consider using SABE Project vote model to hold voter education activities.ar
* Consider adding Activity #4 to “actively recruit and retain DC residents with all disabilities and/or family members with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to participate in DCAP.

**Employment**

* In the main description please include “transition youth” because all the objectives relate to transition youth or add objectives related to employment for adults with disabilities. None of the current objectives refer to adults.
* Objective#1: Explore how DDC can support ensuring that **all** students with disabilities have opportunities for community based, integrated employment opportunities prior to exiting high school. Can we identify specific activities for this?
* Objective#1: DDS is already planning to support 50 youth in SYEP this summer. Please clarify the DDC’s role?
* Objective #3: DDS already provides funding for transition supports for youth – starting at age 14 during the period of the time the 5 year state plan covers. We recommend that the DDC consider focusing its efforts and funding on youth and – parents who are under age 14 to support high expectations and employment planning from an early age. This is consistent with the learning from the DC SF CoP. Also consider increasing the number from ten students to 20 students with developmental disabilities to gain work experience – however, we should discuss this further -- it would be helpful to specify DDC’s role in “filling the gap” since DDS is already providing this direct service.

**Education**

* Objective #1: RSA and OSSE, with support from DCPS and DC Public Charter Schools, through the Secondary Transition Community of Practice, coordinate and host the transition fair. Please define DDC’s role e.g. information dissemination partner? Presenter?
* Objective #1: Activity #4 – See comments above. Also based on the learning from the SF CoP, we wonder if there is an opportunity to partner with EIS to share the Lifecourse Framework with families.
* Other Comment: We are leaving out elementary and middle school?
* Other Comment: There is no reference to DCPS or DC Public Charter Schools. There’s no reference to education agencies when developing education objectives. We recommend DDC to include them.

**Community Living**

* Objective #1: Activity #1 – Replace DDS with “DC government agencies including DDS” since this is across disability, all ages, all payer system.
* Objective #1: Activity #2 – Please include “assist DDS in identifying new members form diverse backgrounds, sharing information on the Lifecourse Framework and the learning from SF CoP.”
* Objective #2 – Will this be an integrated program? We think there is so much we can do around nutrition and fitness using the same community supports we all use to be healthy. Perhaps the DDC could support a partnership for an integrated approach?
* Objective #3 – Activity #1 – This is great. We’d love to see this happen.

**Cross Cutting**

* In the Main Description – add “advance person-center planning” after cultural and linguistic competence.
* Objective #1 – Activity #4 – Change to “Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that will facilitate the recruitment and retention of District residents with developmental disabilities and/or family members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to serve as DDC members.
* Objective #1 – ADD Activity #5 “Actively recruit and retain District residents with developmental disabilities and/or family members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that reflects the District’s demographics to serve as DDC members.
* Objective #2 – Change “organization” to “Council”
* Objective #3: Rewrite to say “Support the effective outreach and implementation of the new No Wrong Door (NWD) Program and its initiatives for people with developmental disabilities and their family/caregivers to make informed choices regarding long term supports and services they prefer and need in order to live with dignity in their homes and be fully included in their communities.
* Objective #3 – Activity #1: Please change it to say “Serve as a valued partner to the DC Department on Disability Services (DDS), Office of Aging/Aging and Disability Resources, Department on Behavior Health and other government stakeholders by offering recommendations and suggestions throughout the NWD implementation process via community outreach and feedback forums including existing partners.
* Objective #3 - Activity #2: Please change it to say “Assist with disseminating NWD resources, such as the NWD E-Newsletter and other information to the developmental disabilities community.”
* Objective #3- Activity #3: Please change it to say “Assist DDS in identifying and recruiting a minimum of 10 District residents per year with developmental disabilities and family members reflective of all ages to participate in Person Centered Training (PCT) sessions and nominate candidates to become official PCT trainers in support of the NWD program.”
* Objective #3 - Activity #4: Please change it to say “Assist DDS in providing culturally and linguistically competent resources and information to District residents reflective of the District’s demographics with developmental disabilities on long-term supports and services.”

**May 27, 2016: Public Comments Received   
from District Resident & Sibling**

**Area of Emphasis: Self-Determination, Advocacy & Leadership**

Objective #1:

* “Cool! I’ll keep my eyes out for this opportunity.”
* “effective negotiating skills”: For what? General Life Skills? Government? Professional?

Objective #2:

* Add professional staff?
* Activity #3: Recommend changing “leadership program” to General Advocacy Partners program
* “I would be interested too.”

Objective #3:

* Activity #3: Recommend providing a number of attendees for each event as a outcome

Objective #5:

* Activity #1: Provided to whom?

**Area of Emphasis: Employment**

Objective #1:

* “More than twenty five (25)” – Total or for each year?
* Activity #1: Recommend continuing the sentence by ending with “that employs DC youth at local government agencies.”

Objective #2:

* Activity #2: “obtain thirty (30) or more – per year?

Objective #3:

* “demonstrating transition to work” – Does this mean outcome should result in 10 students with jobs?
* Activity #2: “Transition to Work program” – Is the DDC going to create this program?

**Area of Emphasis: Education**

Objective #1:

* Activity #2: Potential opportunity to partner with the Office of Disability Rights?
* Activity #4: Objective #3 from **Employment** section already listed; Consider removing.

Objective #2:

* Activity #1: “Partner” – Partner and do what?

**Area of Emphasis: Community Living**

Objective #2:

* Is this a training course like DC Advocacy Partners program?

Objective #4

* Activity #2: Will activity present solutions to the challenges and barriers?

**Area of Emphasis: Cross Cutting**

General Comments:

* Recommendation: Include collaboration with the DC Commission on Persons with Disabilities (i.e.: Mayor’s Expo on Disability Awareness).
* Recommendation: Submit report to Mayor providing recommendations for improvement from the DDC and the DC Commission on Persons with Disabilities.

**Comments from Community Forum at the   
R.I.S.E Demonstration Center (Ward 8)**

**May 31, 2016**

On May 31st, the DC Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) hosted a Community Forum to solicit feedback regarding the DDC Five-Year Plan DRAFT. Everyone introduced him/herself. Mat McCollough, Executive Director, gave a brief summary about the DDC and how we arrived to this point of comment solicitation. Listed below are the comments that were shared:

* **How do you re-educate the community when it is fearful of benefit loss?** By positive re-enforcement and educating family of other options.
* **I recently visited one of the providers I used as a client five years ago. The people are not progressing. There is no level of growth.**
* **What does this Plan do to show people we are changing for the better?** We have new initiatives that are implemented; i.e. Supporting Family Community of Practice, Employment First, Person-Centered Thinking Training for all DDS coordinators, and No Wrong Door (accessing electronic file of government services without having to duplicate basic intake data).
* **The system is currently supporting and operating on deficits.**
* **Does DDC provide Special Olympics funding?** No, they receive funding from other sources such as the Arc. The DDC and government agencies support what they do; yet, they do not provide funding. Special Olympics provide participants an opportunity to get involved in competitive sports.
* **The DDC project on recreational involvement is good. There should be some evening programs versus just day programs; i.e. author therapy. This would help offset the feeling of loneliness. This would include interactions between people with and without disabilities**.
* **What does the Plan do to offset the feeling of loneliness and stigma associated with behavior health services?** We focus on what the client wants to do and assist family members in changing mindset of service recipient via self-advocacy, family advocacy and collaborations with service agencies (including thinking outside the box).
* **How do you change the box?** Attitude regarding positive aspects and sharing; mentoring others.
* **Any mentoring opportunities in the Plan?** Yes—limited; but not as peer specialists.
* **Where are the people that should be here? Are they blind or something? Do they not understand the importance of this?** People need to take ownership and become integrated with what is going on.
* **I heard their benefits were being cut.** HCBS in DC is getting better.
* **What is your story that can be adopted and replicated (Mat)?** Be disciplined. Early intervention services are key (i.e. OT and PT). Get toddlers tested when you see a delay. Children are not getting enough academic attention. The focus is on therapies; thus, not as many students with disabilities are graduating.
* **Is Early Intervention included in the Plan?** Yes.
* **I like the overall attention on the ideas presented and identification of partners.** We are partnering with other organizations and focusing on activities that improve the quality of life. This includes pursuing changes to policy and legislation. We identify gaps.
* **What about employment? Is there a program?** RSA is responsible. We try to work with agencies that help those with developmental disabilities. We do not go out and re-invent the wheel?
* **What do you mean re-invent the wheel?** If we can identify the stakeholders and who is responsible, we work with them.
* **Do you have data that shows what works?** WIOAfocuses on transition. We are looking at the diploma versus certificate track.
* **How do we ensure they can find a job when they are on the certificate track?** **Are there** **incentives in the Plan to assist people with developmental disabilities to go to college without having a loan?** Yes, my wife has a forgivable loan if she works five years for Vocational Rehab.
* **How do you make people aware of those types of opportunities that will assist you going into your area of interest?**
* **If you expect changes, there must be incentives for the workers. Love and dedication do not feed your family. Providers should be held accountable for who is progressing and who is not.** The funding source dictates type of evaluation.
* **We need to advocate for awareness of services.** **We need to make sure there is accountability for competitive employment for those with developmental disabilities.**
* **What happened to the Mayor’s Expo on disabilities? It moved from the library. There was more exposure at the library.**

**Comments from Project ACTION! Community Forum**

**June 1, 2016**

On June 1st, Sudie Johnson, Program Analyst, for the DC Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) attended a session hosted by Project Action! (PA!) to hear feedback regarding the DDC Five-Year Plan DRAFT. Heidi Case, PA! Consultant, and Sudie Johnson gave a brief summary about how the DDC arrived at this point of comment solicitation. We were told to simplify what was written to ensure it was understood by everyone present. We reviewed and clarified each of the goals, objectives and activities.

**SELF-DETERMINATION, ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP:**

* All are OK.

**EMPLOYMENT:**

* Goal should be specific to adults and job seekers with **developmental** disabilities versus adults and job seekers with disabilities.
* All objectives and activities should be specific to **developmental** disabilities versus disabilities.
* Include a call for **individuals with developmental disabilities** to serve as mentors for Disability Mentoring Days.
* Include a push/activity for **internships for college students with developmental disabilities**.
* Objective #3; Activity #2 - … grant competitive process **for implementing the Transition to Work program** with the …

EDUCATION:

* All are OK.

COMMUNITY LIVING:

* All are OK.

CROSS CUTTING:

* All are OK.

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**Comments from Community Forum at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library**

**June 2, 2016**

On June 2nd, the DC Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) hosted a Community Forum. Mat McCollough, Executive Director, DC DDC, facilitated a discussion to solicit feedback regarding the DDC Five-Year Plan DRAFT. The meeting opened with introduction of attendees followed by a summary of what brought us to this point of comment solicitation. Listed below are the comments that were shared.

**SELF-DETERMINATION, ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP:**

* DCAP helped us to get an understanding of what it takes to get a bill passed. It helped us to get a voice and share our voice. It gave us an opportunity to meet Councilmembers. It helped to build you up and become an advocate. We are now on the team.
* Next level DCAP will help to successfully negotiate with policy makers on behalf of people with disabilities.
* Strengthening advocacy skills is important. Use your own voice for self and others. No one knows better than you what it takes to make you happy.
* Emergency preparedness tends to leave people with disabilities out of preparation readiness plans including emergencies such as bad weather/blizzard. You need to include functional needs and how to deal with people with developmental disabilities. Are seniors included? The Office on Aging has its own plan. DDC works with ADRC and has an amazing relationship. Delores Scott worked to get advisory council for emergency preparedness. Per CMS some providers are getting it and are developing plans. Plans should be totally integrated with others versus having a plan exclusively for people with developmental disabilities.
* So far, there will be five (5) persons with developmental disabilities working at the polls on June 14th that I am aware of. It allows them to make money. The DDC should coordinate a candidate forum to help us understand what the candidates stand for.

**EMPLOYMENT:**

* Employment is the greatest challenge. Summer youth employment program gives one experience and greater opportunity for competitive employment.
* Disability Mentoring Days afford opportunities for exposure to work. You should push to utilize people with disabilities to serve as mentors. Perhaps students can observe for more than one day with the mentor organization.
* Push to get data regarding quantifiable outcomes/results for people with developmental disabilities and plot the trend.
* We need improved pre-employment and transition-to-work services.
* What’s available for older people—I did not see anything. You are dealing with adult learning. You could partner with OSSE, but DDC is not in position to do that. It may not fit under the developmental disabilities label. Perhaps we can talk to Grosso for activities for older citizen who don’t qualify for DD services.
* There are people in Project Action! who want to learn to read and write.
* Employment is #1 priority.
* One population should not receive services at the expense of another.

**EDUCATION:**

* Transition and Early Intervention are needed.

**COMMUNITY LIVING:**

* I like the book club. The social interaction will help strengthen literacy skills.
* Parent-to-Parent Chapter includes Family-to-Family support as well.
* There is a lack of accessible housing. Some developers get it and some don’t. Most accessible units tend to be studios and one (1) bedroom units in the retail market. Families need at least two bedrooms. Bozzuto has improved based upon the independent testing.
* The Community Service and Recreational Opportunities goal impacts loneliness and depression. It helps to engage in wholesome fun.

**CROSS CUTTING:**

* They help to recruit and retain.
* Work with Department of Behavior Health and reach out to other organizations that may have been left out as they come together for full recovery.
* Who are the partners (for No Wrong Door)? They are Department on Disability Services, Department of Human Services, Office on Aging, Department of Behavior Health, and Department of Healthcare Finance.
* The more DD advocates are connected to the community of people with all disabilities, the better they are.
* As I look at the Plan, there are several places that Project Action! can apply. We should apply as we have several advocates.

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**Additional Comments**

**EDUCATION**

OBJECTIVE #2: Strengthening Early Intervention Services in the District. (FY19-21)

Activity #1: Partner with the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (UCEDD), CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early" Ambassador for the District of Columbia, and the DC Act Early Team with expertise and understanding of early intervention services.

Activity #2: Disseminate opportunities to participate in the Early Intervention Services Certification Program available through the UCEDD with the general public.

Activity #3: Educate general public, policymakers, and Part C & B administrators on the importance of expanding early intervention services available to families by disseminating the CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early" Materials.

Activity #4: Educate policymakers and administrators with assistance from the CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early" Ambassador for the District of Columbia on the importance of identifying quality early intervention service providers and coordinated service delivery offered to the families.

Activity #6: Educate twenty (20) or more parents/guardians with assistance from the CDC "Learn the Signs. Act Early" Ambassador for the District of Columbia on the early intervention services available to their infants and toddlers with developmental delays.

**SELF-DETERMINATION, ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP**

1. The DC Advocacy Program should be funded each and every year for the following reasons:
2. To retain and continue to build on public interest and ground gained.
3. To maintain current infrastructure because it will be challenging to regroup once the current momentum and knowledge based experience is diverted.
4. To produce more Advocates/Partners that could help empower and strengthen our community because together-we-achieve-more.

**EMPLOYMENT**

Congratulations on an impressive draft five-year plan that promises to continue creating new possibilities for DC citizens with developmental disabilities.  For the most part I applaud the planned directions and choices, but I do have a few comments and concerns about the employment section, where DDC’s stated plans target only students in academic programs.  Specifically:

* Why does objective #1 plan to focus only on high school students, when SYEP has been extended up to age 24?  **I’d suggest objective #1 be revised to say “More than 25 individuals with disabilitieis up to age 24 receive…”**
* Why does objective #2 specify “30 or more HS, college and graduate students”  when the AAPD website states in response to a question as to whether applicants must be students, ” No, we welcome all people with disabilities who wish to advance their career opportunities to be a part of DMD programs.”  **I would recommend that objective #2 read instead:  “30 or more students or job-seekers with disabilities…” which is the language used on the AAPD website.**
* In line with this, activity #2 under objective #2 should read, “thirty (30) or more applications,”  with the word “student” dropped.

In other areas, I like what seems to be a plan for a more intensive DCAP program, although it would be nice to have a footnote explaining how the Advanced DCAP specifically differs from the General DCAP program.  I also very much like the plan for the Living a Healthy Lifestyle program but given how big a problem this is for this population cohort, I hope that the target of ten people is an annual and not a total number for the fy18-21 period.