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*For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

October 9, 2018

Curtis Cunningham  
Family Care Waiver Renewal Comments  
DHS/DMS/BAPP - Room 518  
PO Box 309  
Madison, WI 53701-0309  
VIA EMAIL: [dhsfcwebmail@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsfcwebmail@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

Mr. Cunningham,

The purpose of this letter is to respond to your request for ideas to improve aspects of Family Care and the Family Care Partnership Programs that we would like to see added, removed, or changed going forward.

The Arc Dane County is an independent parent driven and self-advocate (individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities) organization working to ensure people with developmental disabilities and their families are offered the same opportunities, choices, rights, and respect due everyone in our community. Employing education, advocacy, and support, the Arc Dane County works regularly with families to both improve services and to ensure families have a thorough understanding of resources available to them.

We offer the following recommendations for your consideration during the waiver renewal process:

1. Many people, particularly those with ID/DD are already involved in the medical system in their communities. They are seen regularly by a physician, a Physician's Assistant (PA), and nurses, all of whom know them well. Costs can be reduced, with no threat to health or welfare, by allowing MCOs to decide, in partnership with the individual and/or their legal representative and without mandate from DHS, whether a nurse should be assigned as part of the care team.
2. Providers are an integral part of delivering individual plans and services. Providers are also an integral part of participant-centered planning. Communication from MCOs to providers should be improved so that meaningful information is conveyed in a timely manner. And, communication must be improved so that MCOs do not simply provide directives to providers but engage with them to ensure providers can fully implement, in a safe and consistent manner, the services identified in the member-centered plan. One key element in improved communication is the workload of Care Managers, who should





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not be overburdened with administrative tasks/paperwork. Care Managers should devote the majority of their time to being Care Managers.

3. The reimbursement rate that is provided to MCOs must be raised in order to, among other things, improve recruitment and retention of direct support workers. In times of low unemployment, wages become a key element in recruiting and retaining qualified workers. There is significant difficulty in filling direct support positions and difficulty in encouraging qualified direct support workers to remain in their jobs. Longevity and consistency are critically important in providing quality and safe services for people with disabilities.

We appreciate this opportunity to share our recommendations with you. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Alice O'Connor', written in a cursive style.

M. Alice O'Connor  
Director of Advocacy  
The Arc Dane County

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Barnes', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sarah Barnes  
Board President  
The Arc Dane County

