



Press Release

Secretary Carol A. Beatty • Deputy Secretary William Frank

Maryland Selected For Learning Collaborative

Disability Network Business Acumen Learning Collaborative Is Aimed at Increasing Capacity of State's Community Based Organizations

Annapolis, MD (August 21, 2017)- Maryland was selected as one of five state teams for participation in the Disability Network Business Acumen Learning Collaborative. This effort is led by the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) in partnership with nine national organizations.

Each of the five selected state teams includes at least one state agency and one community-based organization serving persons with disabilities. In Maryland, the Department of Disabilities will lead this effort in partnership with the local agencies which comprise the Maryland Association of Centers for Independent Living (MACIL). The MACIL is the coordinating organization for the seven Centers for Independent Living (CILs) providing services for those with disabilities throughout Maryland.

"Maryland is pleased to be selected for this learning collaborative as we continue to seek new and innovative ways to ensure Marylanders receive the most effective, efficient, and coordinated long term support and health care," said Secretary Carol Beatty of the Maryland Department of Disabilities.

The purpose of the learning collaborative is to develop the business acumen of disability support organizations so they are able to successfully partner with existing healthcare entities. In Maryland, the team will focus both on improving the general health of residents and decreasing overall healthcare costs. These teams will share what they learn from their efforts with the intention of helping other community organizations enhance their current business relationships and improve health services.

Katie Collins-Ihrke, Executive Director of Accessible Resources for Independence, a member of MACIL, also commented by stating, "This collaboration will positively impact the lives of those with disabilities in addressing social determinants of health and aid healthcare entities to reduce costs. We look forward to being a resource to those in the community who need disability related information and are excited for the opportunity to work with the Department of Disabilities on this very important project."

The learning collaborative will launch at the 2017 Home and Community Based Services Conference being held in Baltimore, August 27th – 31st.

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About the Maryland Department of Disabilities: The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is charged with coordinating and improving the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities in the state of Maryland. By working collaboratively with all State government agencies, MDOD provides advocacy and guidance to ensure that State entities deliver services in the most integrated settings possible, develop consistent policies affecting those with disabilities, and consider the diverse needs of all when making decisions which impact Marylanders. MDOD focuses on independence and full community membership through its programs which address accessible housing, employment, transitioning youth, community living, technology assistance, barrier free living, and transportation. This focus is one which consistently has an eye to economic growth through strengthening of a diverse workforce and provision of the efficient and effective supports necessary for full participation in our state's economy.