



Our Journey Forward – You Asked and We Answered: Answers to frequently asked questions about changes for sheltered workshops and Summit DD’s role as a provider

Questions about integrated day programs and sheltered workshops

What did the federal government change about federally funded programs?

The federal government, specifically the Center for Medicaid Services (CMS), made a rule in 2014 that says that Medicaid funded programs, such as day programs, must be delivered in a way that does not have the effect of isolating or segregating people from the community. Program modifications for all states must be implemented by 2019, Ohio asked for more time. CMS has not yet approved Ohio’s request for more time.

What does it look like when you say “as long as it does not isolate them from the broader community?”

This means that those with disabilities should be able to experience the same things as people who do not have disabilities. People should be given choices and options to access the community on a regular basis, if they choose.

Are services going away?

No, services for people with disabilities are not going away. Individuals who participate in day programs (commonly referred to as workshops) will still have the opportunity to participate in day programs, if they choose. Summit DD is currently working with the private provider community to develop best practices and options that will help all day programs meet these new guidelines.

I’ve heard a lot about community employment. Is this related to the federal government rule change?

Summit DD believes that everyone should have the right to work in the community, if they choose, however community employment is not a requirement of the CMS Rule. We understand that not everyone is ready to work in the community, and your SSA will assist you in determine what is important to you and coordinate right-fit supports for each person.

What happens to those who can’t (or choose not to) work in the community?

For some, community employment may not be a possibility or a preference. Every person should be provided with the opportunity to make an informed choice whether community employment is a good fit for them. This new rule is not just about community jobs, but inclusion into the community. Integration is about what a person experiences, it is not defined by a physical setting. Those who do not want to work in the community will still have the option of day programming to attend.

**What if I or my loved one isn't ready for employment after high school?
What does the transition from school-age services to adult services look like?**

Every new graduate supported by Summit DD will work with their SSA (and their team) to create an Individual Service Plan (ISP) for services, based on their needs. Summit DD will begin to work with families and schools even earlier to help with much needed transition services. If you are able to and want to work in the community, we will connect you with providers to work on job development skills or job follow along services, at your pace. If you do not want to or can't work in the community, integrated day opportunities will continue to be available.

When will I know if my, or my loved one's current situation will be permissible under the new federal government rule?

Integration, or inclusion, is about what an individual experiences, not the setting or the building itself. CMS and Ohio are currently defining the descriptions about what it means to be an "integrated setting." Once this has been defined, current sheltered settings (workshops and day programs) will be reviewed on an individual basis to determine if there are any modifications needed to comply with the new rule. They will do this by asking individuals and families about what their day looks like at these settings. Providers will have a period of time to make adjustments (if needed) to ensure that individuals have the opportunity to experience integration in the broader community, if that is what they chose.

How do I find or contact elected officials if I want to voice my concerns?

Several people have asked about how to contact their elected officials for comment. To find and contact your federal senator or representative, visit Whoismyrepresentative.com. This site allows you to find your elected officials by ZIP code, as well as gives you a link to each official's website where you can find contact information or fill out their online contact form.

CMS is a division of the Health and Human Services (HHS), to find elected officials that sit on the HHS committee, visit the [House of Representative Subcommittee on Health & Human Services](#) or the [Senate Subcommittee on Health & Human Services](#). To find your state representative or senator, visit [find my legislator](#).

Summit DD's phasing out of Waiver services

What is the conflict of interest issue?

The federal government, through CMS, has called for what they refer to as "conflict-free case management." County Boards, including Summit DD, employ Service and Support Administrators (SSAs) who determine eligibility, develop service plans and connect people to service providers. These are considered case management functions by CMS. In addition to providing these SSA services, or case management services, many County Boards (including Summit DD) also provide transportation and adult services (like day programs and community employment services) directly to individuals, which are funded through federal Medicaid Waivers. According to the federal government, this is an inherent conflict of interest – overseeing the service coordination AND providing services directly to individuals. The federal government is requiring County Boards to

resolve this conflict by no later than 2024 by phasing out of providing these services directly to individuals.

What services are impacted?

Only Summit DD provided Home and Community-Based Services (HCB Services) are impacted. More specifically, this means Summit DD supported employment services, Summit DD adult day and vocational habilitation (Summit DD Workshops) and Summit DD provided transportation services. Day programs, employment and transportation services provided by providers other than Summit DD, such as UDS, Hattie Larlham, and Blick Clinic, among others, are not impacted by the new conflict of interest federal government rule. As of fall 2015, approximately 60% of people already receive services from a provider other than Summit DD.

What is the timeline?

Summit DD is currently putting together a timeline to phase out of Summit DD provided direct services. We estimate the entire transition from County Board provided services to be completed within the next five years. As we work through the transition, we will review enrollment, needs of individuals, buildings, and efficiency in our programs to make responsible decisions for the future. What we know now is that the first center impacted by the phase out of services will be Akron Center in June 2016. We are working closely with all families at Akron Center. We expect a more detailed plan to be available in early 2016.

With the number of private providers available in Summit County, we believe that we are in a good position to allow the time necessary to create and implement thoughtful plans. Plans include Summit DD support to private providers, collaboration to develop more inclusive opportunities for individuals to choose from, and new relationships within communities to connect people to their friends and neighbors. This timeframe will provide the opportunity for individuals, families and providers, as well as our staff, to make informed decisions and prepare for their future. We will continue to be transparent and share information.

What happens to transportation?

Like our day programs, or workshops, we will gradually phase out of being a direct transportation provider. Non-medical transportation, or transportation to a day program or work, will continue to be funded through Summit DD and provided by service providers other than Summit DD. To families and individuals who currently use a provider other than Summit DD, you will most likely see no changes. For those who use Summit DD provided transportation, your SSA will begin to talk to you about providers and options that fit your needs. As always, you have the right to change providers at any time.

Will my (or my loved one's) SSA continue to be a part of the process?

Absolutely. Your SSA will continue to help create your person-centered plan and coordinate services based on what is important to you and for you.

How can I be sure we don't get pushed into a decision we are not comfortable with?

Person-centered planning provides choices to individuals about what they do or do not want. Our goal is to make sure that more integrated experiences are available to those who want them. No one will fall through the cracks.

How will Summit DD communicate with me about these changes?

We believe in being transparent and want to continue to be a resource for families. We will continue to host community meetings when new information is available. We will provide information on our website (updated weekly) at SummitDD.org. We will also keep you informed through letter or postcard mailings, monthly email newsletters (visit our website to sign up online), and printed newsletters mailed to your house three times a year. We encourage you to connect with us on Facebook as well to stay current as well.

During this transition period, will my needs (or the needs of my loved one) still be met?

Yes. Summit DD will continue to make sure everyone receives the services they need. Services may be delivered in a different way in the future, but Summit DD's SSAs and other coordinating staff will continue to make it our priority to connect each person to the right services that meet their needs through person-centered planning. Your SSA is just a phone call away!

How will you accomplish the reductions?

Summit DD will work closely with families who are currently receive day programs, community employment and transportation provided by the County Board. Our first priority is to identify individuals who want more integrated services through the person-centered planning process. SSAs will begin conversations with you to ensure a smooth transition to a qualified provider of your choice.

There are a few external factors that also influence our decisions. The Akron Center lease expires in June 2016 and will be the first Summit DD Center transitioned. We have put a team together comprised of individuals, parents, Akron Center staff, SSAs and administration staff to identify needs and create supports to make the transition process as smooth as possible for those involved.

How do I choose a new provider?

Person-centered planning ensures that each individual is the lead on their team. Our service coordinators (SSAs) are here to help you through the provider selection process. Your team will meet with you, at least once annually, to determine what is important to you and help build your individual service plan. We are committed to providing you the best information possible to choose a new provider.

How will Summit DD ensure that individuals receive quality services from providers?

Summit DD already has several processes in place to build quality services, regardless of who provides that service, including ongoing monitoring by SSAs, compliance reviews and investigations of unusual incidents. We work as a team with providers to ensure the individuals we support receive the best supports possible. Provider oversight and

quality assurance is one area where Summit DD will become even more relevant over the next several years.

Will I receive services at the same facility until 2024?

Not necessarily. As part of the CMS agreement, Summit DD is developing annual benchmarks for reductions. While CMS and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) give County Boards until 2024 to meet full compliance, Summit DD believes it is positioned to meet the new Rule ahead of that date. Approximately 60% of all individuals already receive their day program from another qualified service provider. Because of the wealth of provider options in our county, we are in a good position to work through this transition in a responsible way.

What if there aren't enough providers to fill the need?

Summit DD continues to work with current providers as well as seek additional opportunities and resources to ensure capacity for adult day support, inclusive community programs, supported employment and non-medical transportation.

Will Summit DD still offer support if a provider decides to no longer provide services?

Though Summit DD's role as a direct provider of service will change, our support to individuals and families will continue at an even greater level. Summit DD partners with more than 200 service providers in Summit County. We will continue to be the resource that connects people to the appropriate services and providers they need. Should you want or need to choose a new provider, we will be there to help you along the way. We can connect you to providers, as well as coordinate meetings so that you can choose the provider that is right for you.

**What happens if my loved one goes into that setting and doesn't do well?
How long before we have to wait to change it?**

As always, if you are unhappy with your provider, or would like a new setting, you can revise your service plan at any time. Person-centered planning ensures that the individual is the lead on each team. Our service coordinators are here to help you through the provider selection process. Your team will meet with you, at least annually, to determine what is important to you to help build your individual service plan.

What if I disagree?

As always, if you disagree with your service, you are entitled to due process. For more information about complaints or due process, contact your SSA or visit SummitDD.org.

Local funding and levy dollars

What is Summit DD's role in the community if they don't provide services?

Summit DD is the primary community resource that listens to what people with developmental disabilities need. We develop plans based on those needs and fit within an individual's budget, and then connect people to service providers, or partners, who meet those needs. We also monitor the quality of services that people receive and are there to ensure the health and safety of those with disabilities.

Summit DD will continue to pay the local share for federal Medicaid Waiver services provided to individuals through our partners, as well as pay 100% of the share (with local levy dollars) for services not eligible for the Medicaid match.

We will also continue to provide and fund Early Intervention supports for more than 800 families through local levy dollars.

I heard that services will no longer be funded, is that true?

Please rest assured that HCB Waiver services will continue to be funded, and Summit DD will continue to pay the local share (40%) for these services, no matter who provides the service – funding follows the person, not a specific provider. Individuals will continue to have free choice of provider and can choose a provider who meets their needs.

How does this evolution impact the levy and future levy dollars?

HCB Waiver services will still need to be funded through a combination of local and federal dollars. Together, Summit DD and families must work to re-educate the public about levy tax dollars. It is important that the community understands that these dollars are already being used to support services for individuals with disabilities, and are vital no matter who provides the service.

86% of adults with disabilities receive federal (or Waiver) funding for some services. Summit DD pays a 40% share for these services using local levy dollars. Levy dollars will also continue to be needed to pay the local share for service coordination, children’s programs, health and safety services, and other non-Waiver supports.

What do local dollars fund?

Local dollars fund a variety of programs and services for children and adults. Many services for adults are funded through a combination of Medicaid Waiver (federal) programs and local levy dollars. When Medicaid Waiver funding is available, Summit DD pays for the non-federal match (or share) which is approximately 40% of the cost of service, regardless of who the provider is. The other 60% is paid for through federal Waiver funds. For an individual on an IO Waiver, Summit DD pays on average \$26,373 per year, throughout the individual’s lifetime – using local dollars. We currently have more than 1,000 individuals on an IO Waiver and expect a growth in the number of adults who need these services.

Local dollars also fund Early Intervention services for approximately 800 families each year, inclusion support for more than 80 children who attend day care centers in their communities, service coordination for more than 3,000 adults and children, health and safety services, quality of life activities and day array and residential services for adults who do not qualify for Medicaid funding, among other locally funded programs.

Questions? Call our information hotline at 330-634-TALK (8255) or visit SummitDD.org and “Contact Us”.