



**From:** OPWDD-Commissioners Correspondence Unit  
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**Subject:** OPWDD's Road to Reform  
**Date:** April 3, 2013 12:49:20 PM EDT  
**To:** STAKEHOLDERS@LISTSERV.OPWDD.NY.GOV  
**Reply-To:** List <STAKEHOLDERS@LISTSERV.OPWDD.NY.GOV>

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April 3, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

On April 1, OPWDD submitted its formal People First Waiver application to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The submission of the People First Waiver represents the culmination of two years of examination, discussion, and system redesign in collaboration with thousands of stakeholders. It will authorize the development and operation of developmental disabilities individual support and care coordination organizations (DISCOs), which were recently approved in New York State's enacted [2013-2014 budget](#).

OPWDD has also worked closely with CMS to develop reform initiatives that meet federal objectives and ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the system in the future. OPWDD has outlined these and many other changes in its report, the [Road to Reform](#).

In addition, New York State and CMS have identified a series of shared goals that will improve opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities in the areas of employment, integrated living, and self-direction of services. These goals are captured in a [transformation agreement](#). In it, OPWDD has committed to:

- Offering opportunities for individuals moving from OPWDD campuses to live in smaller, more personalized settings.
- Establishing a strategy for increasing supportive housing options, and a timeline for the transitioning of residents of intermediate care facilities to community settings.
- Increasing the number of individuals in competitive employment by 700 within one year.
- Educating more than 6,000 stakeholders to increase the number of individuals who are self-directing their services in part or whole from 850 to over 2,000 in this fiscal year.

To support the [transformation agreement](#), OPWDD will have access to additional funding and technical assistance through the federal government's Balancing Incentives Program. This program provides funding to states that make structural reforms to increase access to non-institutional long-term supports and services. OPWDD will also begin participating in New York's Money Follows the Person demonstration, which lends federal financial support for individuals who wish transition from institutional settings into community settings.

On April 9 from 11 am to 1 pm, OPWDD will host a statewide videoconference to explain these changes in more detail, and to hear your ideas on how we can make the most of these latest opportunities to improve services for people with developmental disabilities. To register to attend, please email your People First Waiver liaison, whose address can be found in the table below. I look forward to working with you as we continue to move our system forward.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Burke

People First Waiver Liaisons			
Region	Office	Liaison	Email
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