



Victoria Shaw, Assistant Director Case Management
Anna Godin, LCSW, Supervisor of Adult Case Management and Outpatient Clinician

LD 659: *An Act to Promote Seamless and Flexible Home and Community Supports Across the Lifespan for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities or Autism*

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
March 24, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committees.

Our names are Victoria Shaw and Anna Godin. We work at Woodfords Family Services, a statewide nonprofit committed to the support and inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families. We provide Targeted Case Management services to adults with Intellectual Disabilities and/or Autism under MaineCare Section 13. Woodfords serves approximately 400 clients in this program.

We are testifying neither for nor against LD 659. While we see opportunities for individuals with disabilities to benefit from the proposed legislation, we have significant concerns about the details of the proposal and its implications for the future of the service delivery system within which we work. This is a complex proposal, and at a minimum, we ask the Committee to amend LD 659 to be Major Substantive so that the legislature and the larger provider community have the full opportunity to understand and weigh the implications of any changes enacted.

Woodfords understands the importance of a youth's transition to adult services. For many years, providers and families have referenced "the cliff" between children's and adult services, recognizing that families can experience a stark and significant change in support as they transition to adulthood. For this reason, we support the legislation's attempt to begin the transition process earlier, beginning at age 14. Transition case managers assist families with eligibility for adult services, including guardianship, living arrangements, social security and finishing school requirements, including but not limited to Individual Education Plans. This service under MaineCare Section 13 is critical for youth and their families.

We are concerned, however, that the proposed legislation is suggesting a complete new system that may eliminate MaineCare Section 13 as a service altogether, and cannot stress enough that the services Adult Case Managers provide currently is invaluable.

Here are three areas of concern:

1. Under Section 13, The Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) recently implemented a new Person Centered Planning (PCP) process and has announced the implementation of a new software

Main Office
15 Saunders Way, Ste. 900
Westbrook, ME 04092
(207) 878-9663

Central Maine Office
747 Western Ave., #2
Manchester, ME 04351
(207) 680-4790

Southern Maine Office
5 Fletcher St., Ste. 2
Kennebunk, ME 04043
(207) 878-9663

system (Evergreen). The immense cost to implement these new planning tools would be obsolete if the state transitions to the Lifespan Waiver model. The Lifespan model would have a Care Plan, not the current Person Centered Plan. Under Section 20, Care Coordinators create Care Plans once per year, this could take away the client's right to create a Person Centered Plan centered on their individual wishes and needs. Whereas, Section 13 Person Centered Plans stand alone as an independent service model that identifies the client's individual wishes and needs, without bias.

2. DHHS has begun testing the new Supports Intensity Scale (SIS). This assessment can be tied into the existing waivers and start the assessment at an earlier age to plan for the needs of clients needing services and support. At this time, it is unclear how the SIS will be used to determine client needs and what the impact could be. We are concerned that it will lead to a decrease in clients' voice. We have many clients who experienced the SIS assessments in the past, which cost the state over \$3,000,000 for a system that was never implemented and these completed assessments were never used. Those clients, who experienced the assessment, are now expressing fear of having to go through the SIS assessment again.
3. If DHHS moves to a care coordination service, modeled after Section 20, we have significant concerns that we would not be able to provide this services. The MaineCare Section 20 billing rate in Care Coordination is \$7.50 less per quarter hour than what is paid for Section 13 services. The Care Coordinator's primary job is office based, separate from the client and focused on the required process and forms. Clients need face-to-face support, they need trusted providers who offer consistency and help to the clients so that they understand how to get the help they require and make the right decisions for themselves. We have experienced an increase in clients with a higher risk of police involvement, homelessness and exploitation. Maine needs to support clients and their families with services that provide support in all domains of life. Section 13 Case Management supports clients and their families to have inclusion in their own communities. This invaluable service should not be put at risk. By eliminating this service more clients and citizens will be at risk of being in jeopardy.

Please consider the thoughts and experience of those who are delivering the Case Management services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Shaw, LSW
Vshaw@woodfords.org

Anna Godin, LCSW
Agodin@woodfords.org

Main Office
15 Saunders Way, Ste. 900
Westbrook, ME 04092
(207) 878-9663

Central Maine Office
747 Western Ave., #2
Manchester, ME 04351
(207) 680-4790

Southern Maine Office
5 Fletcher St., Ste. 2
Kennebunk, ME 04043
(207) 878-9663