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Fort Fairfield
LD 769

Transparent monitoring prevents abuse and ensures that behavior support plans prioritize the individual's well-being.

4. The Benefits of Person-Centered Approaches vs. The Harms of Restrictive Interventions

Person-centered planning empowers individuals by focusing on their strengths, preferences, and unique needs, leading to improved quality of life and community participation.

In contrast, unnecessary restrictive interventions can result in physical injuries, psychological trauma, and the exacerbation of behavioral issues, creating a cycle of harm rather than support.

5. The Need for Improved Training and Standardized Curricula for Direct Support Professionals

Organizations providing services to individuals with disabilities must ensure that staff receive adequate training in de-escalation techniques, trauma-informed care, and person-centered planning.

Maine currently utilizes training programs such as the Mandt System, Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), and College of Direct Support curricula, but more needs to be done to standardize and improve training requirements across all service providers.

6. Strengthening LD 769 with Additional Protections

To further enhance the bill's impact, I recommend the following amendments:

Mandatory Data Collection & Public Reporting: Requiring the collection and publication of data on restraint usage, behavioral interventions, and adverse incidents will promote transparency and accountability.

Independent Oversight & Advocacy Involvement: Including third-party disability rights organizations in the oversight process ensures unbiased evaluation of behavioral intervention practices.

Enhanced Staff Training & Certification Requirements: Standardized and ongoing training will equip direct support professionals with the skills necessary to implement ethical and effective behavioral support strategies.

Prohibition of Certain High-Risk Interventions: Establishing clear guidelines on the types of interventions that are strictly prohibited will further protect individuals from harm.

Whistleblower Protections & Anonymous Reporting Systems: Creating secure channels for reporting misconduct will empower staff, families, and individuals to voice concerns without fear of retaliation.

Conclusion

LD 769 is a vital step toward ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of adults with disabilities who require behavioral health supports. By prohibiting harmful interventions, requiring medical assessments, and establishing oversight, this legislation promotes a system of care that is ethical, effective, and person-centered. Strengthening the bill with additional protections will further enhance its impact and create a safer, more supportive environment for individuals with disabilities in Maine.

I urge the committee to support LD 769 and consider additional measures to reinforce protections for this vulnerable population. Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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