



FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, INC.

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Supporting Individuals with Developmental Disabilities to Live in the Community

Developmental Disability waiver programs are essential for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and must be expanded. These waivers help include people with developmental disabilities in their communities, so that they are able to grow, learn, work and develop into fully-realized citizens capable of making valuable contributions.

As of September 2006, 13,000 Floridians with developmental disabilities were still waiting for needed supports and services, despite major increases in funding for services over the last few years.

This past year, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) estimates that about 1,000 people will be enrolled in the Medicaid waiver program. Most of these enrollees will be in crisis situations or foster care. Many of the people waiting for services now live at home with aging parents who fear the day they can no longer provide the care and support their sons and daughters need.

Another 1,174 people with developmental disabilities (including those in forensic units) are residents in the three remaining state institutions, requiring less restrictive placement for many of the individuals who call those institutions home. The proposed Settlement Agreement in the class action *Brown v. Bush* lawsuit calls for further reductions in the populations of these institutions over the next several years, which will continue to increase demand for community residences, services and supports.

To address this growing need for services, the State has adopted several initiatives, one of which was the expansion of the Home and Community Based Waiver (HCBW) program, under which the majority of individuals now receive services. Florida also continues to need funding for the Family and Supported Living Waiver. This waiver provides a smaller scope of home and community services and supports for individuals who live in their own home or family home and is capped at \$14,282 per person each year.