

My name is Mary Dantin and I have a son with special-needs who is 24 years old. I had not expected to speak, so I will write what I remember from my improvised speech.

The first issue of which I spoke was the sharing of comm-hab staff, which until now, was, for example: 3 people going out with one comm.-hab staff for 6 hours would have to divide the times into periods of two hours each that would be paid out of their budget. The other 4 hours (because they were not able to pay a share each hour) they would not be covered, which created a huge liability issue. This problem, after speaking about it for months, miraculously, was resolved the following morning in a meeting already scheduled with my DDRO. Thank you.

The second issue was oriented more to the irrationality of the decision-making processes of OPWDD and CMS. As much as the issue has been about the sustainability of services, OPWDD and supposedly CMS have consistently opposed innovative ideas that were allowed under CSS and not approved under the new Self-Direction. New possibilities of delivering excellent services costing far less, are not considered, leaving the same old, tired choices as before, only couched in new terms. These entities are ignoring the enormous universe that we special-need families inhabit, therefore losing the possibility of using our collective intelligence to resolve problems that they seem to know nothing about.

Thank you,

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