

February 4, 2016

Senator Kathy Campbell  
District #25  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

RE: LB1033

Dear Senator Campbell,

LB1033, creates an advisory committee relating to persons with disabilities within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). While the DHHS has no position on this bill, we would like to bring the following technical concerns to the committee's attention.

The terminology used in LB 1033 of "placing" individuals in the most integrated community-based setting is of concern. We do not "place" individuals, the Medicaid Home & Community Based Waiver programs offer funding to allow the individual to choose from the service array which meets their needs in the community.

At this time, a request to leave an institution is not a priority reason outlined in Nebraska revised statute § 83-1202., Nebraska administrative 404 regulations, or the DD waivers approved by CMS.

In addition, I would like to share with the Committee initiatives currently underway.

First, DHHS would like to make you aware that since the Nebraska Behavioral Health Reform Act (NBHRA) of 2004, Nebraska's behavioral health system has been engaged in a process of reform. This reform is designed to monitor and improve outcomes, reduce reliance on state operated inpatient facilities, and promote person-centered, recovery-oriented services throughout the system. As part of this process, the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) has retained the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to conduct a limited evaluation of DBH's activities in the context of community integration, and to provide guidance regarding ways that DBH can strengthen its approach to supporting community integration within the overall implementation of its strategic plan.

A Strategic Supportive Housing Plan will be developed by June 30, 2016 as result of the TAC's work with the Division of Behavioral Health and related State agencies. It is anticipated that the plan's recommendations will align DHHS' policy to promote supportive housing and community integration as two foundational aspects of the behavioral health service system. These aspects are to ensure effective and evidence based practices and services are available to promote successful tenancy and community integration; establish sustainable funding sources for supportive services to individuals living in supported housing settings, and strengthen provider workforce capacity.

The Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC) recently launched its long-term care redesign project with the release of the Nebraska Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports Redesign concept paper. This concept paper outlines the current challenges in the Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) system, the Department's guiding principles for the redesign, and solicits the input of stakeholders in several key areas. MLTC will continue working with LTSS

stakeholders exploring opportunities for improving the LTSS system. A copy of the concept paper is available at [dhhs.ne.gov/LTSSredesign](http://dhhs.ne.gov/LTSSredesign).

DHHS recommends that the bill incorporate and continue to build on the momentum of the current agency initiatives.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,



Sheri Dawson, R.N., Director  
Division of Behavioral Health  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services