



# Division Update for Individuals, Families and Providers

February 27, 2025

# Agenda

- Next DDD Update Webinar
- NJ State Budget
- Federal Funding
- Choking Prevention Awareness Month
- National Core Indicators (NCI) Surveys
- VF/EA Transition Updates
- Peer EDUcation Series Webinar
- Virtual Peer-to-Peer Networking Session
- New Office of Licensing Bulletin
- New Driver's License Designation for Residents with Autism Spectrum and/or Communication Disorder
- H5N1 Bird Flu Information
- Resources

# Next DDD Update Webinar

- March Update Webinar:
  - Thursday, March 27, 2025 – 10:30 am
  - [Register for the March Webinar](#)
- The 2025 schedule of DDD Update Webinars, including registration links, is available on the Division's [Public Update Meetings](#) webpage

# NJ State Budget

- The Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Proposed Budget has been released. FY26 spans July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Highlights are:
  - **~142M of growth** in state funds to the Division's budget:
    - ~\$5.1M added to enhance behavioral health infrastructure, comply with statutory obligations, and fund increased healthcare benefit costs in the Division's Agency with Choice Self-Direction model
    - ~\$18M of state and federal funds for a January 1, 2026 Direct Support Professional and Supervisor Wage increase to account for a projected inflationary increase of ~.48 cents to NJ Minimum Wage
    - ~\$8.5m included to remove 318 people from Priority Waiting List
    - Remaining funds directed to Division Growth (e.g. new clients)
    - Elimination of certain contracts and pending requests for proposals ~\$3M
    - Capping new enrollments of Supported Housing Connection Vouchers for third-party rentals (restricted to 115 new vouchers in FY26)

# Federal Funding

- Congress is currently considering potential changes to Medicaid that would impact the services provided by our Division
- We understand the importance of staying informed about any potential changes, and the Division wants to reassure you that we are actively monitoring these discussions
- No changes have been enacted yet and Division services are unaffected at this time
- Stay connected with your Congressional representatives so they understand how to best represent your interests and those of the people you may serve
- The Division has been asked by numerous stakeholders about the potential impact of proposed funding changes and provides the following information

# Federal Funding

- A reduction in federal matching funds for the five State Operated Intermediate Care Facilities (i.e., Developmental Centers) from the current 50% to 37.72% would result in the following:

	Total	State Share	Federal Share at 50% (Current)	Federal Share at 37.72% (Potential)	(Loss)
Hunterdon DC	\$133,005,754	\$66,502,877	\$66,502,877	\$50,169,770	(\$16,333,107)
Green Brook RC	\$39,154,166	\$19,577,083	\$19,577,083	\$14,768,951	(\$4,808,132)
New Lisbon DC	\$91,676,619	\$45,838,310	\$45,838,310	\$34,580,421	(\$11,257,889)
Vineland DC	\$87,997,387	\$43,998,694	\$43,998,694	\$33,192,615	(\$10,806,079)
Woodbine DC	\$93,008,627	\$46,504,313	\$46,504,313	\$35,082,854	(\$11,421,459)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$444,842,552</b>	<b>\$222,421,276</b>	<b>\$222,421,276</b>	<b>\$167,794,611</b>	<b>(\$54,626,665)</b>

# Federal Funding

- A reduction in federal matching funds for the Community Care and Supports Program from the current 50% to 37.72% would result in the following:

	Total	State Share	Federal Share at 50% (Current)	Federal Share at 37.72% (Potential)	(Loss)
Community Care Program	\$2,786,615,262	\$1,393,307,631	\$1,393,307,631	\$1,051,111,277	(\$342,196,354.17)
Supports Program	\$658,291,612	\$329,145,806	\$329,145,806	\$248,307,596	(\$80,838,209.95)
Grand Total	\$3,444,906,874	\$1,722,453,437	\$1,722,453,437	\$1,299,418,873	(\$423,034,564.13)

- Collectively, these cuts would value **~\$478M**. While the Department of Human Services and Division would do all we can to sustain services, devastating cuts to services would be unavoidable



# Choking Prevention Awareness Month 2025

- March 28 is National Choking Awareness Day
- The Division is once again dedicating the month of March to raising awareness about this important issue

## THE DDD RESOURCE TEAM PRESENTS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL: CHOKING PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

National Choking Awareness Day is March 28, 2025

### In-Person Trainings for Stakeholders

**Two Sessions in March** | 10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Join Licensed Speech Pathologist staff for a comprehensive day of mealtime-related trainings at 5 Commerce Way, Hamilton, NJ. Live demonstrations on preparing modified diet textures and liquid consistencies will occur. Learn about resources available from our Choking Prevention Unit to assist in preventing choking incidents, including individualized consultations, tips, and trainings.

*Please utilize the links below to register for live, in-person trainings. Space is limited.*

- [Tuesday, March 11, 2025](#)
- [Thursday, March 27, 2025](#)

#### Trainings will include:

- Managing Dysphagia in the Community
- Diet Textures
- Liquid Consistencies
- Mealtime Risks of Regular Diets
- Mealtime Supervision



### Virtual Workshops

Can't make it to a live-in-person training? No problem! There will also be virtual workshops throughout March. In addition to the topics above, additional trainings will include:

- Managing Dysphagia in the Community
- The Choking Risk of Regular Diets
- Mealtime Supervision
- Diet Textures
- Liquid Consistencies
- Mealtime Safety and Documentation
- Adaptive Mealtime Equipment
- Choking IRs & Choking Checklist Webinar
- Intro to Pica
- Prevention of Food Grabbing
- Gastronomy Tube Care
- Danielle's Law Refresher (including English and Spanish sessions)

### Choking Round Table Discussion (invite only)

Select Residential Providers and Support Coordination Agencies will be invited to join a group discussion to share experiences with the prevention of choking events. This interactive dialogue will allow attendees to share best practices regarding mealtime safety, discuss staffing needs and challenges, and explore the intersect between providers and SCAs.

Please see our website for a complete list of Choking Prevention Awareness Month events and registration links:  
[www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/healthsafety/](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/healthsafety/)

Contact [ddd.resourceteam@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:ddd.resourceteam@dhs.nj.gov) if you have additional questions.



State of New Jersey  
Phil Murphy, Governor | Tahesha L. Way, Lt. Governor



Department of Human Services  
Sarah Adelman, Commissioner



Division of  
Developmental  
Disabilities





# Choking Prevention Awareness Month 2025

- During March, our DDD Resource Team is providing two in-person workshops for agency staff and self-directed employees, and virtual webinars open to anyone. Advance registration is required
  - See the full [Choking Prevention Awareness 2025 Schedule](#)
  - Visit the DDD [Health and Safety](#) web page for more information

# Choking Prevention Awareness Month 2025

## In-Person Workshops for Agency Staff and Self-Directed Employees

<b>Tuesday, March 11</b> 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	5 Commerce Way Hamilton, NJ 08691 (Room 199A & B)	<a href="#"><u>REGISTER NOW for March 11 In-Person Workshop</u></a>
<b>Thursday, March 27</b> 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	5 Commerce Way Hamilton, NJ 08691 (Room 199A & B)	<a href="#"><u>REGISTER NOW for March 27 In-Person Workshop</u></a>

# Choking Prevention Awareness Month 2025

## Webinar Trainings OPEN TO ALL!

DATE	TIME	TITLE (Click on the Title to Register!)
Monday, March 3	2 – 3:15 p.m.	<a href="#">Managing Dysphagia in the Community</a>
Tuesday, March 4	10 – 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Choking Risks of Regular Diets</a>
Wednesday, March 5	10 – 11:30 a.m.	<a href="#">Mealtime Safety and Documentation</a>
Monday, March 10	2 – 2:45 p.m.	<a href="#">Choking Incident Reporting and Checklist</a>
Wednesday, March 12	10 – 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Liquid Consistencies</a>
Thursday, March 13	10 – 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Danielle's Law (English)</a>
Monday, March 17	10 – 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Diet Textures</a>
Wednesday, March 19	2 – 3 p.m.	<a href="#">Gastronomy Tube Care</a>
Thursday, March 20	10 – 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Danielle's Law (Spanish)</a>
Monday, March 24	2 – 3 p.m.	<a href="#">Mealtime Supervision</a>
Tuesday, March 25	2 – 3 p.m.	<a href="#">Adaptive Mealtime Equipment</a>
Wednesday, March 26	10 – 10:45 a.m.	<a href="#">Introduction to Pica</a>
Wednesday, March 26	2 – 2:45 p.m.	<a href="#">Preventing Food Grabbing</a>

# National Core Indicators (NCI) Surveys

## NCI State of the Workforce Survey

March 2025 – DDD will email NCI State of the Workforce Survey invitations to eligible provider agencies that employ Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)

Invitations will be sent to the email address on file in iRecord and will include a survey link and instructions

Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025

To learn more, visit [National Core Indicators®](#) or review the DDD [NCI State of the Workforce Survey Overview](#)

If providers have questions or do not receive the email, they can email [DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov)

# National Core Indicators (NCI) Surveys

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## NCI Family Survey

March 2025 – DDD will mail letters to family members of individuals who receive at least one DDD-funded service in addition to Support Coordination services

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The letter will include a personal link and instructions for the family member to complete the Family Survey online

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All Family Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025

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To learn more, visit [National Core Indicators®](#) (NCI) or review the DDD [NCI Family Survey Overview](#) ([RESUMEN: Encuestas de Indicadores básicos nacionales](#))

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If you have questions or want to request a hard copy of the survey in English or another language, email [DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov)

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# VF/EA Fiscal Intermediary Transition

- The Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent (VF/EA) Self-Directed Services Model is transitioning this spring/summer from Public Partnerships, LLC (PPL) to Acumen Fiscal Agent
  - This transition ***does not impact*** individuals participating in the Agency with Choice Self-Directed Services Model through Easterseals NJ
- We anticipate Acumen will begin mail outreach to VF/EA participants in March to initiate participant, employer of record, and Self-Directed Employee (SDE) enrollment

# VF/EA Fiscal Intermediary Transition

- **Until notified otherwise:**
  - Support Coordinators will continue to submit new referrals for SDE and/or community vendor services through the VF/EA Model to PPL.
  - SDEs and community vendors who are paid through PPL will continue submitting timesheets and invoices to PPL
- Acumen will host an introductory webinar covering key aspects and a projected timeline of the upcoming transition



# VF/EA Fiscal Intermediary Transition

- Acumen webinar details
  - [Transition of the DDD Vendor Fiscal/Employer Agent \(VF/EA\) Self-Direction Model from PPL to Acumen](#)
  - Friday, February 28, 2025, from 10 AM to 11 AM
  - Anyone may attend but the target audience is:
    - Individuals and families who have one or more SDEs and/or vendor services (for example, Goods & Services) that are paid through PPL
    - Support Coordinators
    - Supports Brokers
  - A recording of the Acumen webinar will be available afterward

# Peer **EDU**cation Series

## **EDUCATION DIRECTED BY US**



- DDD and The Boggs Center are offering the first [Peer EDUcation Series](#) webinar for adults with disabilities
- This inaugural webinar will discuss the Peer EDUcation Series and include insights from adults with disabilities who use their experiences to guide and support others through their work as peer educators. It will also discuss the [Personal Preference Program](#) (PPP) and explore how it can be a helpful resource for people with disabilities in New Jersey

# Peer **EDU**cation Series

## **EDUCATION DIRECTED BY US**



**Webinar Date:** Thursday, March 20, 2025

**Time:** 2 – 3 p.m.

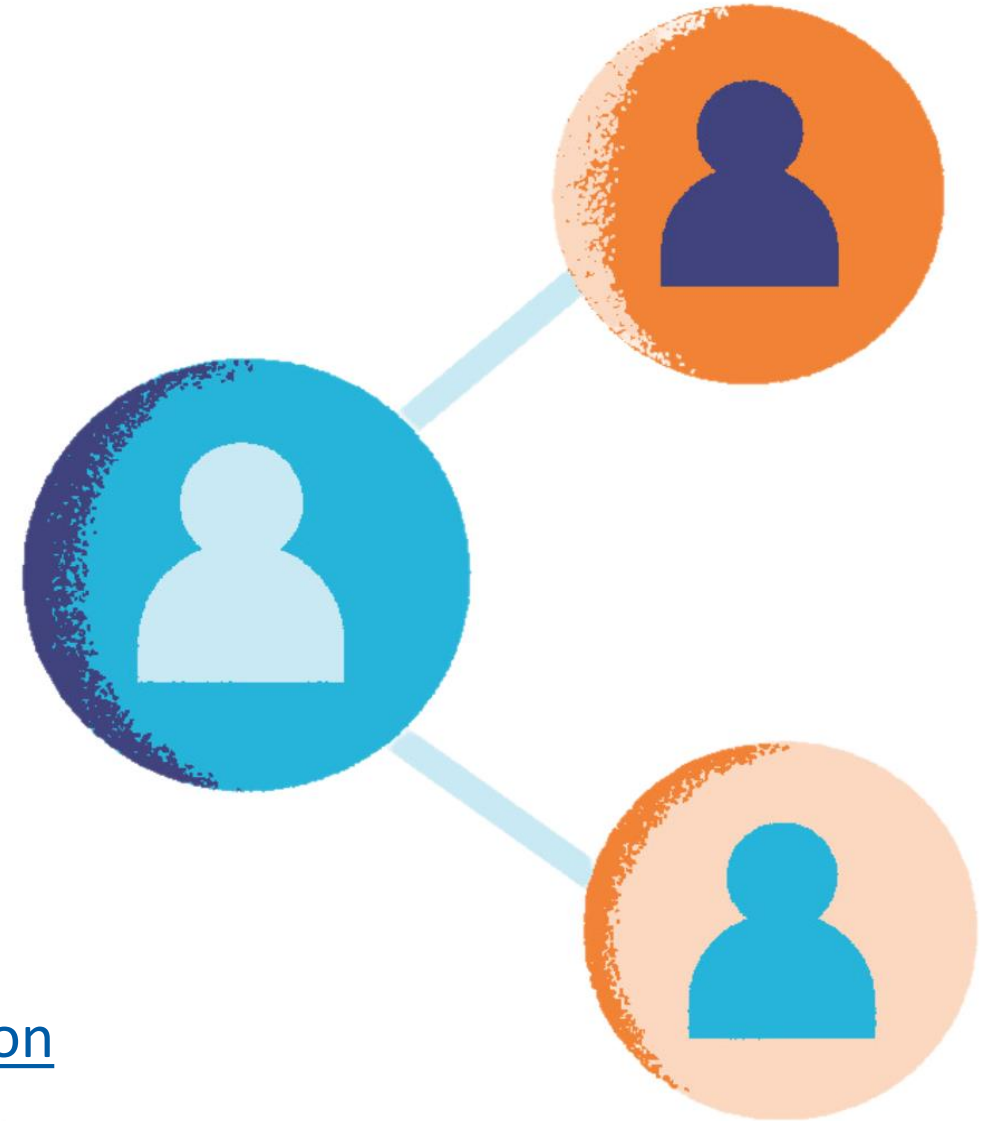
**Register:** [Sharing Strengths: Peer Education and the Lived Experiences of Self-Advocates](#)

# Virtual Peer-to-Peer Networking Session

- For adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are self-directing some or all of their DDD-funded services or who are interested in learning about self-direction

## MARCH PEER-TO-PEER NETWORKING SESSION

- Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 6-7:30 p.m. on Zoom
- [Register for March Peer-to-Peer Networking Session](#)



# New Office of Licensing Bulletin

- Bulletin: [History of Service Provision to Operate Licensed Residential Settings](#)
  - Clarifies the service experience requirement for agencies seeking initial licensure
  - Also available on the [Office of Licensing](#) web page

# New Driver's License Designation

- As announced in a [February 21 press release](#) ([comunicado de prensa del 21 de febrero](#)), the NJ Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Motor Vehicle Commission and the Office of the Attorney General, has launched the driver's license/non-driver State ID designation for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and/or a communication disorder, as well as law enforcement guidance

# New Driver's License Designation

- Information about adding the optional designation to a driver's license is found on the MVC's [Autism Spectrum and/or Communication Disorder Designation](#) web page
- Related law enforcement guidance, including a printable download, is found under the [Communicating with Individuals with Autism Spectrum and Communication Disorders](#) heading on the Attorney General's Behavioral Health Initiatives web page
- There is also a [Deaf or Hard of Hearing Driver's License Designation](#) for deaf motorists or those with a hearing impairment of 41-db loss or more



# H5N1 Bird Flu

- H5N1 bird flu is currently widespread in wild birds worldwide and has caused outbreaks in poultry and dairy cows in the U.S.
- H5N1 bird flu is a type of influenza virus different from human seasonal influenza viruses
- While the risk of H5N1 bird flu to the general public is low, we are sharing information and resources, especially given that the first case of H5N1 was detected in a bird in Burlington County last week, and dozens of dead geese in at least three Monmouth County parks were found to have died from the H5N1 virus

# H5N1 Bird Flu

- The State of New Jersey the [H5N1 – Bird Flu](#) website , with information and updates about H5N1
  - Includes links to information from the NJ Departments of Health, Agriculture, and Environmental Protection, as well as links to information from federal resources
- Providers and other caregivers should become familiar with the information available on New Jersey's [H5N1 – Bird Flu](#) website to understand how to reduce exposure of individuals and employees to avian influenza A viruses from sick animals or contaminated environments
- Anyone with questions or concerns should contact their [local health department](#)

# Resources

## Community Resources

- [Disability Rights New Jersey](#)  
800-922-7233 (toll-free in New Jersey only)
- [Ombudsman for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their Families](#)  
609-984-7764
- [New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities](#)  
800-792-8858
- [The Boggs Center](#)  
732-235-9300

## DDD Resources

- For issues, call the DDD [Community Services Office](#) for your county or 800-832-9173.
- For routine questions:  
[DDD.FeeForService@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDD.FeeForService@dhs.nj.gov)
- To report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation: call 800-832-9173, then press 1.