Secretary Miller Joins Panel to Discuss Employment for People with Disabilities

Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller joined a panel with Giant Food Stores Oct. 25 to discuss employment for people with disabilities and detail the support available for employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to mark October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

"Our goal at DHS, and the goal of the Wolf Administration, is to ensure that Pennsylvanians with disabilities have what they need so they can live longer, live better, and have more independence. Pennsylvanians with disabilities, including Pennsylvania's veterans with disabilities, are vital members of our society and of our workforces and we are proud to support opportunities to help them find gainful employment," said Sec. Miller.

"Pennsylvania is better off when we include the talents of all people, and we are proud to mark National Disability Employment Awareness Month with Giant and thank them for being an employer who shares this value," Secretary Miller added.

In June 2018, Governor Wolf signed the Employment First Act, and through this DHS has reviewed existing employment policies and expanded efforts to promote competitive integrated employment. In its first report, the Employment First Oversight Commission stated a goal to have 30% of working age individuals (18-64) who are on an ID/Autism waiver find competitive integrated employment by 2022.

From left to right: Shannon Grippin, Arc of Cumberland & Perry Counties; Rob Labatch, President of HOPE; Secretary Miller; Lauren Mercado, Special Education Teacher at Merakey; Matt Dickens, VP Sales of UniqueSource.

Employment in ODP (June 2019)
Adults of Working Age (18-64) enrolled with ODP (N=42,689)

6,775, 16%

35,914, 84%
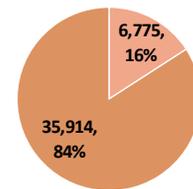
■ Total Employed   ■ Not Employed

Source: Pennsylvania Employment First Oversight Commission First Year Report October 1, 2019

If your organization is hosting webinars that anyone can attend, please send information to:
RA-PWODP_OUTREACH@pa.gov

ODP Pushes Imaginations at Technology Innovation Conferences

Top: At ODP's Technology Innovation Conference in Pittsburgh, Renee Kline of Carrolltown experiences Milestone HCQU West's virtual reality training program on prevention of choking. Bottom: Julio Nieves Outreach Specialist at Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care, tries out Medforall's face-mapping technology at the conference in King of Prussia.

Two day-long technology innovation conferences, held by ODP this October in Pittsburgh and King of Prussia, showcased advancements and opportunities for using technology to help better support those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The dual conferences featured presentations from both public and private sector leaders in the area of technological innovation. ODP encouraged participants, who encompassed professionals in the field of delivering supports and services, as well as others in the human services arena, to become innovators, as they imagine ways technology can be used to improve services and offer greater independence to individuals with intellectual and development disabilities.

Keynote speaker John Martin, former Director of Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, opened the conference with his presentation, "Searching for Prophets, Making Ohio a Technology First State." During his tenure and with the support of then Ohio Governor John Kasich, Ohio became a Technology First State. Through supporting technological innovation as a means of providing services and supports, Martin helped to create more opportunities for individuals with ID/A, as they were afforded independence, choice, and

opportunity to participate in more facets of community life. Martin likened his cause to evangelization, as encouraging providers to become innovators and prophets helps to "bridge the gap between the needs of the individual and the technology that can meet those needs."

Greg Wellems, executive director for Intellectual Disabilities at Keystone Human Services, emphasized the role technology can have in an organization's strategic plan by incorporating it into person-centered planning.

Merakey Technology and Innovation Manager Shaleea Shields presented a breakout session in which she discussed how Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are used to provide support for meeting the transportation needs of individuals, who rely upon the assistive technology to navigate through their communities. The familiar technology used by most attendees has multiple uses and can help to provide greater independence, as well as help to ensure safety of individuals. Through personalized visual or audio clues, individuals use the WayFinder app to navigate specific travel routes. Additionally, it enables remote caregivers to send text messages and receive an automatic text message back with a map link showing the
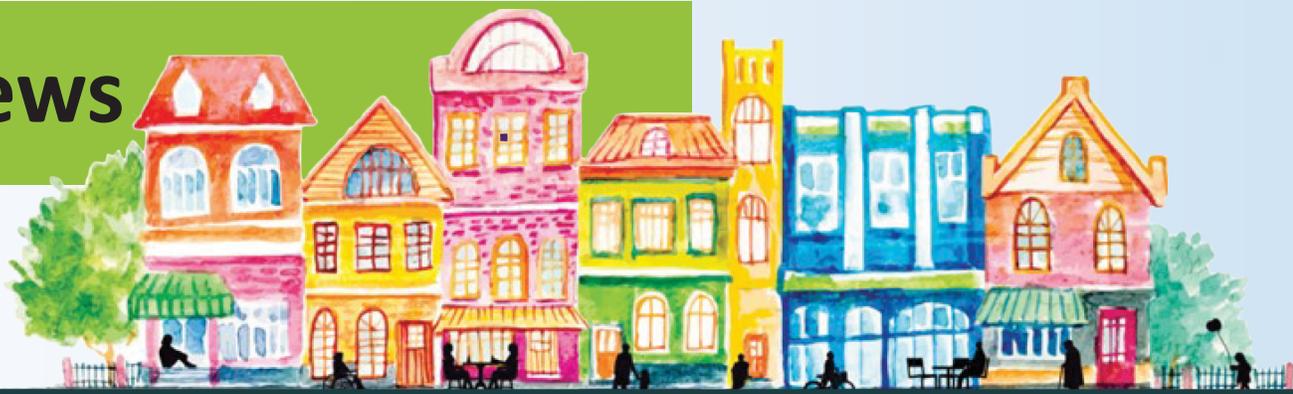
ODP Pushes Imaginations at Tech Conferences (continued)

individual's location. AbleLink software helps individuals more easily use iPads to take images and videos of their outings and share them with family and friends.

In addition to keynote and breakout sessions, the conference included "greenhouse" sessions that provided hands on demonstrations and more interactive content. These sessions proved most informative, as they revealed how providers are already using technologies in Pennsylvania and across the country. From relatively simple devices, such as Amazon's Alexa to the more sophisticated, such as Voiceitt's non-standard speech recognition, presenters demonstrated how assistive technologies make a difference in the lives of those who depend upon them. Voiceitt, for example, was used by a man whose verbal communication was limited, as he placed an order for breakfast at a local diner.

Additionally, Milestone HCQU West demonstrated the use of virtual reality to train support staff on preventing choking incidents, providing a safe and practical training environment. Medforall provided information on its remote monitoring capabilities that allowed for privacy, while maintaining the ability to alert staff if medical assistance is required. For privacy, an avatar or stick figure can be used to simulate an individual's actions instead of camera recordings, or artificial intelligence can identify when an anomaly occurs in a person's routine or via biofeed, thus activating an alert and camera montoring.

The Arc of Philadelphia presented off-the-shelf solutions that could be readily added to a support plan. Through a grant from the Coleman Institute Foundation, the organization created a showroom using technologies to show how common solutions such as Alexa and other smart technology can be readily used to provide support. Further, with funding from Comcast, the Arc was able to provide smart home starter kits to its program participants. Attendees praised the suc-

Keynote speaker John Martin, ODP Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens, Bureau of Community Services Director Sheila Theodorou, and Bureau of Policy and Quality Management Director Jeremy Yale help kick off the second of two ODP Technology Innovation Conferences.

cess of the conferences, responding overwhelmingly in post-conference surveys that they were more likely to move forward with adopting technology supports and services at their organization as a result of information obtained.

The conferences were presented as a part of ODP's Technology Initiative under the leadership of its Technology Task Force. Work of the Task Force continues, with a Virtual Office Hours webinar entitled "Open Dialogue on Technology for People with Disabilities." The free webinar is slated for two different dates: December 23, 10-11 a.m., and January 3, 2-3 p.m. You can choose which date on the registration page: https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/7923474817926019341

7th Annual Lifesharing Conference Held In Mt. Pocono

The Pennsylvania Lifesharing Coalition held its 7th Annual Conference at the Kalahari Resorts and Convention Center, on October 21st in Mount Pocono. More than 300 individuals, families and provider representatives attended, marking it as the coalition's highest attended conference to date. ODP Bureau Director of Community Services, Sheila Theodorou, provided the opening remarks and presented "Excellence in Lifesharing" Awards to four chosen recipients, each representing one of the regions in the commonwealth. (See Page 5)

Magician Joshua Lozof provided the keynote address, spreading the message of "Life is magic." His lecture, interspersed with magic tricks, emphasized the importance of effective communication, by being present, being genuine and being curious.

ODP staff provided information about pairing Lifesharing services and supports with other waiver services, on Charting the LifeCourse and employment, general information on medication administration for Lifesharing families, and more.

Tim Little, ODP Bureau of Community Services, shared an overview of the Lifesharing numbers across the commonwealth. Participation has decreased by about 2% from June 2014 to June 2019. However, the decrease was limited to licensed Lifesharing.
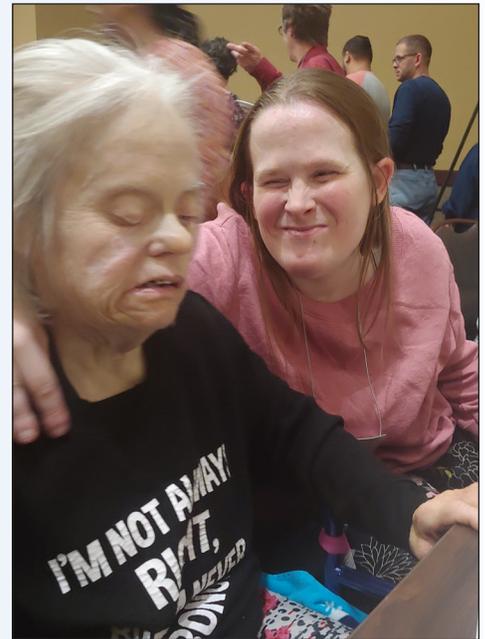
Carol Sue Ramsey and Jillian Honzo-Vassu helped create a painting of a tree made from handprints, which was auctioned off at the conference.

Lifesharing Participants

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Licensed Lifesharing	1,348	1,328	1,299	1,263	1,226	1,175
Unlicensed Lifesharing	227	232	236	246	246	262
Total Served	1,575	1,560	1,535	1,509	1,472	1,437
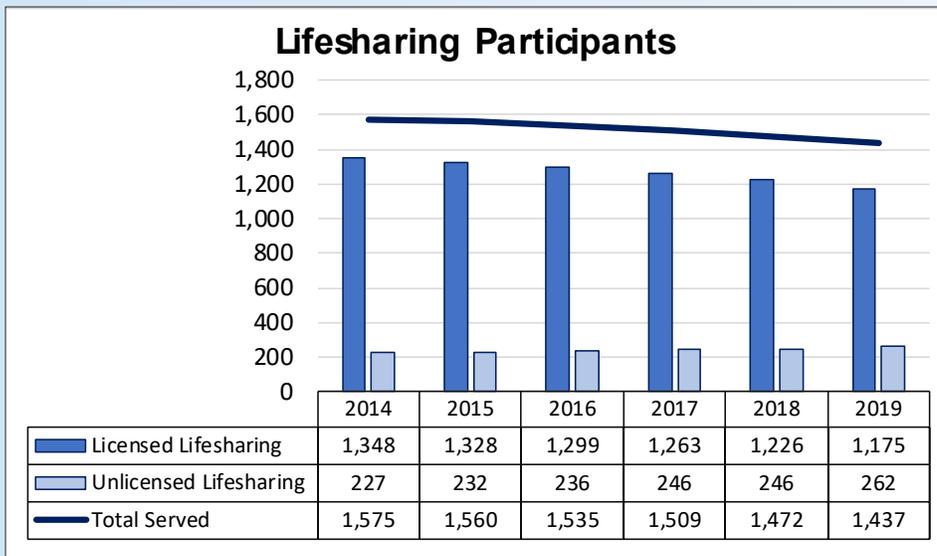
Source: HCSIS Census Data

Pictured are Lifesharing family Al Frierson and Junayd Hunafa.
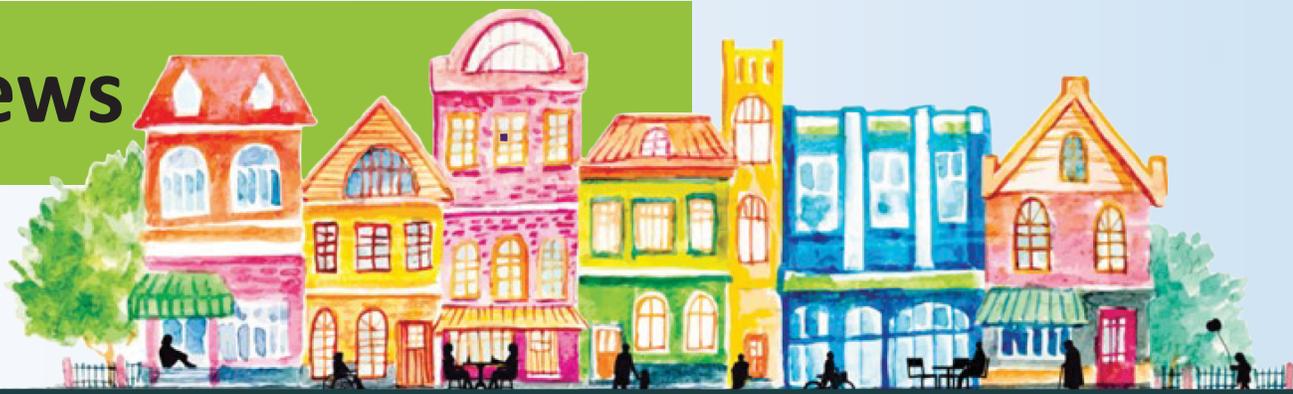
Western Region Excellence in Lifesharing Award

In the next few newsletters, ODP News will be highlighting winners of the Excellence in Lifesharing Awards, featuring providers from our four regions. This month we highlight Michele Konopisos of Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports Inc., and her family, who have been Lifesharing with "RL" for two generations. Michele's nomination letter reads as follows:

Michele Konopisos and her family are nominated for this award because of the love and dedication that they have shown RL. RL is an 83-year-old woman living with Michele and her family in Natrona Heights. In addition to being her Lifesharing provider, Michele is a licensed therapist and owns a daycare in Lower Burrell. Previously, RL lived with Michele's mother Elva for 17 years as her Lifesharing provider.

RL is one of six children but has little to no contact with her remaining relatives. Michele and her family have truly been the family for most of her later life that she has known and loved. She lived in a county home until September 1952 when she was moved to Polk State Center where she remained until 1975. She then was placed at Pittsburgh Mercy until October of 1981 when she was placed at an Achieva community home, where she met Elva.

She and Elva loved to watch TV, work in the yard, craft, go shopping, visit with family, and travel. Elva passed away on February 19, 2016. Michele and her family immediately began taking turns staying with RL and RL came to stay with them. It was quickly realized that Michele's current home was not set up for her to move in long term. They

Clockwise from top left: Excellence in Lifesharing Awards were presented to families in four regions. (Western Region) Michele Konopisos of Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports Inc., Krista Konopisos, "RL", Casey Konopisos, ODP Bureau of Community Services Director Sheila Theodorou, and Stacy Wadsworth of The Arc of Westmoreland.

moved into the new home where they currently reside in June of 2016.

Since moving in with Michele and her family, RL could not be happier. She has been to Disney four times, and traveled to Virgina Beach, Costa Rica, Las Vegas, Belize, Honduras, Jamaica, Cayman Islands, Bahamas and Mexico, and most recently Aruba. They are now planning to go to the UK next year. She loves to travel- even at 83 years young! When she is not traveling, she likes to spend time at home making potholders and doing other crafts.

Michele's daughter is also very involved in her care. She often goes with them to a daycare to volunteer with the kids and doing little jobs around there.

Dr. Salzer to Present Webinar on Community Integration

According to the 2017-2018 Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) statewide summary, the number of people who regularly go out in the community increased slightly from 2017, and the number of people who say they can visit friends when they want increased by nearly 10 percent. While any increase is good news, the fact remains that less than half of participants go out into the community on a weekly basis.

Dr. Mark Salzer
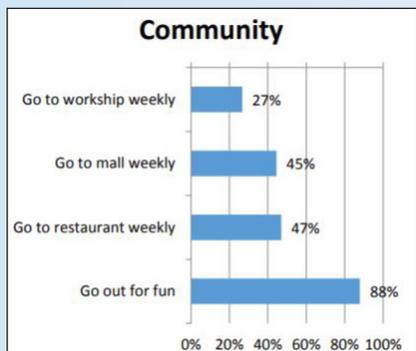
Source: 2017-18 Indendent Monitoring for Quality statewide summary

Discussion on community integration helps in understanding its importance. To that end, ODP is pleased to welcome Dr. Mark Salzer as he presents a webinar entitled, "Life in the Community Like Everyone Else: Fundamentals of Community Inclusion." Dr. Salzer was keynote speaker at the 2019 Pennsylvania Autism Training Conference. His webinar is being presented live December 9, 9 AM to 10:30 AM.

Dr. Salzer also recently contributed "Community Inclusion as a Human Right and Medical Necessity" to the latest edition of the Positive Approaches Journal (Volume 8, Issue 2). This article proves a valuable resource when describing the importance of community inclusion/participation as it introduces key conceptual, theoretical, and evidence-based fundamentals for the practice. Please see MyODP.org to take part in the webinar and learn how community participation and integration is vital to individuals having a healthy, everyday life.

Communication Corner

3 questions to ask yourself before every interaction:

1. How can I make this interaction about the other person?

2. How can I put the other person at ease?

3. How can I exceed the person's expectation of this interaction?

-Joshua Lozoff

As we head into the month of thankfulness, we want you to know that everything you do makes a difference in somebody's life. Be proud of the work you do, the person you are, and the difference you make. Thank you.

For any questions on the Communication Corner, please contact the Special Populations Unit at RA-ODPDeafServices@pa.gov

ODP News
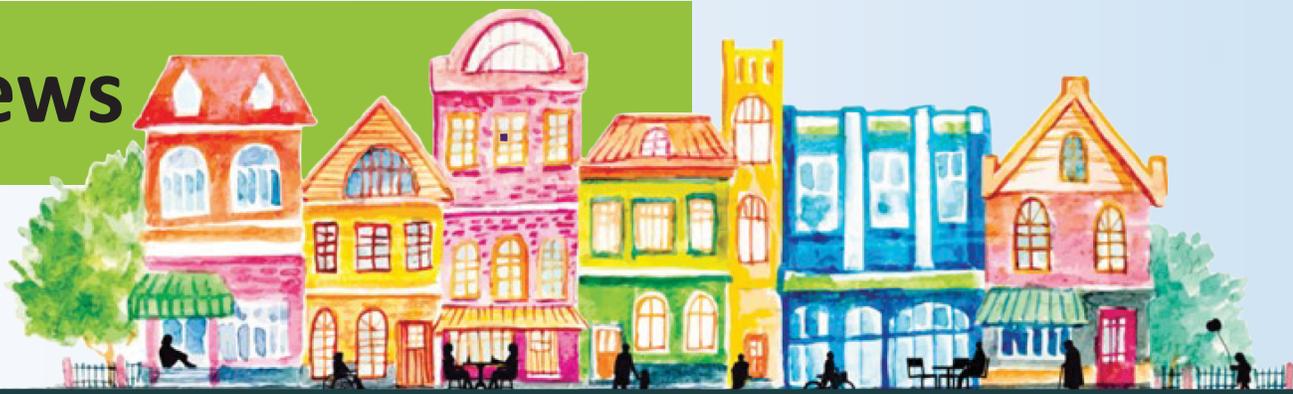
Roll Out of Health Risk Screen Tool (HRST) Continues

ISAC Recommendation 5. Promote Health, Wellness, and Safety

ODP implemented the Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) for individuals receiving waiver or base funded residential services.

The Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) is a web-based instrument used to detect health risks and destabilization early and to prevent deaths among members of vulnerable populations. The HRST assigns a degree of health risk or Health Risk Care Level (HCL) to individuals receiving care. The higher the HCL, the higher the level of risk of death or potential for harm experienced by the person being supported.

Full screenings produce Service and Training Considerations that are used to:
- Troubleshoot what may be causing health risks
- Give action steps to teams on how to pursue/manage health risks
- Offer training topics for staff to minimize risks
- Give talking points for staff when attending medical appointments with persons they support

HRST implementation process began July 2019. Annually, approximately 14,000 individuals currently receiving residential services will be screened. The first several months have involved an active onboarding process whereby providers identified people to become raters for the tool. At the start of the month, 2,555 people had completed the Online Rater Training necessary to complete screenings on individuals. About 1,400 people are in the process of completing the online training and 1,922 individuals have been screened. We would like to thank all stakeholders who have contributed to the screening process thus far; a great deal of effort has gone into the implementation of this important initiative.

Positive Approaches Journal Survey Open

In an effort to learn more about how rights, risks, and restrictions are perceived in the community, the editorial board of Positive Approaches asks for your participation in a survey exploring the words or phrases you feel correspond with rights, risks, and restrictions as these relate to work, experiences, and priorities.

Information, Events, and Resources

UPDATE: Hillary McFadden, was recently featured in Business Woman PA (http://www.businesswomanpa.com/speeding-toward-her-goals/) for her entrepreneurship in founding a company that translates local menus to Braille. Ms. McFadden was profiled in June by ODP News.

YAHOO PICKS UP BLOG POST: Kathy Hooven, Justice System Consultant with the ASERT (Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training) Collaborative, authors a blog entitled The AWEnesty of Autism. A recent post *"The Many Hats I Wear as the Parent of a Child on the Autism Spectrum,"* was picked up by Yahoo and Autism Speaks.

HATE CRIMES: House Bill 1344, introduced by Representative Kristine Howard, would classify attacks against people with disabilities as hate crimes.

ODP News

Summary of ODP Communications Issued October 2019, With Links

1. ODP 19-127: Investigations by an ODP-Certified Investigator Required by Chapter 6100

2. ODP 19-127: REVISED Investigations by an ODP-Certified Investigator Required by Chapter 6100: ODP's Expectations and Implementation Strategy

3. Support Group for Families that have a School Age Student with a Disability

4. ODP 19-128: College of Direct Support Webinar (CDS): "Using CDS to Support More Culturally Responsible Organizations"

5. ODP 19-129: Publication of New Chapter 6100 Regulations and Revisions of Licensing Chapters

6. ODP 19-130: Now Available-- Amendments to the Consolidated, Community Living and P/FDS Waivers Approved by CMS

7. ODP 19-131: Residential Individual Support Plan (ISP) Staffing Training

8. Community Health Choices (CHC) Fact Sheet: Transportation

9. ODP 19-132: New ODP Regulation Update Trainings Announced for October

10. ODP 19-133: Registration Open for a Certified Investigator Forum on November 8

11. Money Follows the Person (MFP) Initiative : Dual Diagnosis Professional Conference Series--Mindfulness Tools and Movement Practices

12. ODP 19-134 (UPDATE): Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST)Training November 2019 – FINAL OPPORTUNITY

13. ODP 19-135: Support Coordinators' Guide to the Communication Assessment and Reassessment

14. ODP 19-136: Amendment to the Adult Autism WAiver Submitted to CMS

15. ODP 19-137: Additional Information for eCIS Business Partner Transition

16. ODP 19-138: Approved Program Capacity (APS) and updated Noncontiguous Clearance Form

17. ODP Newsletter October 2019

18. ODP 19-139: Office of Developmental Programs' Virtual Training Offerings November 2019

19. Polk and White Haven Center Closure Communications

20. ODP 19-140: New ODP Regulation Update: Trainings Announced for November

21. ODP 19-141: Community Participation Support Train the Trainer Sessions in November 2019

22. ODP 19-142: Delegated Admin Registration Reminder - CIS to eCIS Transition

23. ODP 19-143: Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) Error Status Codes (ESCs) to Become Active November 1, 2019

24. ODP 19-144: Bureau of Autism Services - New Name Announced

25. ODP 19-145: Free Online Orientation Training Meets Regulatory Requirement

26. ODP 19-146: Health Risk Screen Tool Statewide Progress Update

27. ODP 19-147: Clarification of the Billing Process of Respite Services in Non-Residential Setting