



Virginia Network of Private Providers, Inc.

Building Meaningful Lives for Extraordinary People

<http://vnppinc.org>

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on behalf of the members of the Virginia Network of Private Providers. We wish to express our concern and frustration with the barriers being placed in the discharge process.

Let me begin by saying that we feel strongly that the system for community care is under-funded and we will be taking whatever steps we can during the upcoming Session of the General Assembly to work with our elected representatives to add needed resources. We do not accept the premise that a solution can wait until a study is done.

We worked well with staff early on to have input in to the discharge process and the multiple layers of oversight in the pre-move and post move monitoring; more recently we have adjusted to the frequency and the disruptions caused by the more intensive monitoring by the Case Managers.

However, we are now faced with a variety of “rules” and “mandates” which are being imposed by Training Center staff outside of the established flow of the discharge process. The expectations appear arbitrary, frequently unrelated to the individual being discharged and are nearly always offensive and demeaning to the provider and/or their staff.

The material shared as part of the “training” is always institutionally oriented and requires “translation” into the language, practice and policy of a community organization.

There is also a significant cost involved – I have heard that there is discussion of using “carry-over” bridge funding to offset costs; this is one-time funding and we are not willing to accept requirements which become more unfunded mandates. For budgeting purposes one can generally assume that each hour of training will cost slightly more than three times the hourly wage for the average DSP not including travel expenses.

Our real concern is this – we were not involved in the planning, we were not part of the discussion of the need, and there has been no official communication concerning the plans for adding steps to the Discharge Process.

The responsibility for assessing the ability of a provider to provide the supports necessary for a specific individual lies **first** with the provider, **second** with the family, **third** with Licensing (\$590), and **last** with the Training Center.

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An association for persons or organizations with an interest in or that provide support for persons who have mental illness, developmental delay or substance use disorder, and who are licensed by or funded by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

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