Waiting List Clean Up Initiative

Overview
Over the past several months, Maryland’s Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has conducted a process of updating their Waiting List for funding. This process is a result of surveys sent out by the DDA beginning in 2008. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that people are at the correct priority level in relation to their situation.

Information from these surveys has resulted in some people being removed from the Waiting List while others may have had their priority status changed. A series of letters were developed by the DDA to be sent to different groups of people, depending on what action was taken regarding their Waiting List status. Please see below for more information on the different letters that were sent.

Letter 1: Notice of the Additional Services Request Process
The first letter was mailed on 11/1/10 to people who are already in a DDA funded service (residential, supports, or employment services). It informed them that they would no longer be on the Waiting List, because a new process had been put in to place for them to request an additional DDA service.

FAQs for Letter 1:

Q. Why is the DDA sending out letters?
In 2008, the DDA sent surveys to everyone on the Critical Needs list for services (Waiting List). The purpose of the survey was to ensure that each person on the List was at the correct priority level in relation to their situation.

As a result, the DDA has made some changes to the Waiting List and is in the process of letting people know how the changes are going to affect them.

Q: My letter says that I currently receive services from DDA and am requesting an additional service. I am not requesting another service now. What does this mean?
You are currently receiving at least one service that is funded by DDA. In the past, when you applied to DDA, you or your family member were placed on the state’s Waiting List for the services you were requesting, including those
you wanted in the future. The service you want in the future is what is referred to as the “additional services”.

Q: My letter says, that as a Medicaid Waiver participant, I have the right to request a change to services at any time. What does this mean?
People currently receiving services from a Medicaid Waiver program are able to request access to additional services through the Request for Change to Services process as their needs change. Individuals funded through a DDA Waiver may receive any waiver covered service for which there is a documented need.

Q: My letter says that as a recipient of DDA funding, I have the right to request a change to services at any time. What does this mean?
People currently receiving DDA funded services, but are not in a Medicaid Waiver, are able to request access to additional services through the Request for Change to Services process as their needs change. State funding is limited by state appropriations and budget, so additional services may be approved, but not able to be funded.

Q: My letter says that if I am in need of additional services, I should ask my resource coordinator to schedule a team meeting. Do I need to schedule a meeting if I am not requesting a new service now? If I do not, will I be able to get services later? Should I request services now so that I do not lose my chance to get the services I need in the future?
No, you do not need to schedule a team meeting or request additional services now. When your needs change, you can contact your Service Coordinator to help you with this process.

Letter 2: Rise in Priority Status

The second letter was also mailed on 11/1/10, and went to people who will rise to a higher priority status on the Waiting List.

Note: A person’s ‘priority status’ refers to the urgency with which someone needs a service. People with the most urgent need are awarded funding ahead of those with less urgent needs.

FAQ’s for Letter 2:

Q. What does this letter mean?
You’ve received this letter because the DDA has determined that your priority should be at a higher, more urgent level.

Q. Why is the DDA sending out letters?
In 2008, the DDA sent surveys to everyone on the Critical Needs list for services (Waiting List). The purpose of the survey was to ensure that each person on the List was at the correct priority level in relation to their situation.
As a result, the DDA has made some changes to the Waiting List and is in the process of letting people know how the changes are going to affect them.

Q. Does this letter mean that I can apply for services now?
Anyone on the Waiting List can apply for DDA funded services at any time. However, DDA funding is limited and is not an entitlement like Medicaid or SSI funding. People are currently being awarded funding according to their priority level.

Q. My situation’s changed since I sent back the survey, and I think I need a new priority level. How do I request a redetermination?
Your Service Coordinator can help you submit a request to have your priority level reviewed. You will need to provide some information to your Service Coordinator about your situation and how it’s changed since you completed the 2008 survey.

Q. What is “LISS”?
LISS stands for Low Intensity Support Services, which is a DDA funded program for anyone with a developmental or intellectual disability who is not in residential services. It does not take your priority level into account. LISS can provide up to $3000 to pay for eligible services and equipment. As with other DDA services, this is not an entitlement program and funding is not guaranteed.

** At the present time, LISS funds have been exhausted until January 1st 2011, but we can assist you with applying when more funds are available. In addition, we can attempt to locate and apply for funds from other sources in your community.

Q. What is The Service Coordination Impact Fund?
Service Coordination, Inc. has established a fund with a challenge grant from the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation that can help pay for a variety of products and services for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities. If you are interested in applying to The Service Coordination Impact Fund, please let your Service Coordinator know, or follow this link to a copy of the application:
http://www.servicecoordinationinc.org/pdf/SC_Fund_Grant_Application.pdf

Letter 3: No Change in Priority Status

Letter 3 was sent on 11/15/10 to people whose priority status on the Waiting List will remain the same.
FAQ’s:

Q. What does this letter mean?
You’ve received this letter because the DDA has determined that your current priority level will remain the same.

Q. Why is the DDA sending out letters?
In 2008, the DDA sent surveys to everyone on the Critical Needs list for services (Waiting List). The purpose of the survey was to ensure that each person on the Waiting List was at the correct priority level in relation to their situation.

As a result, the DDA has made some changes to the Waiting List and is in the process of letting people know how the changes are going to affect them.

Q. Does this letter mean that I can apply for services now?
Anyone on the Waiting List can apply for DDA funded services at any time. However, DDA funding is limited and is not an entitlement like Medicaid or SSI funding. People are currently being awarded funding according to their priority level.

Q. My situation’s changed since I sent back the survey, and I think I need a new priority level. How do I request a redetermination?
Your Service Coordinator can help you submit a request to have your priority level reviewed. You will need to provide some information to your Service Coordinator about your situation and how it’s changed since you completed the 2008 survey.

Q. I think the priority listed on the letter is incorrect. What can I do?
Your Service Coordinator can check your file to see what your most recent priority status is. If it’s different than what is in the letter you just received, we can help you contact the correct person at the DDA who can resolve the discrepancy.

Q. What is ‘LISS’?
‘LISS’ stands for Low Intensity Support Services, which is a DDA funded program for anyone with a developmental or intellectual disability who is not in residential services. It does not take your priority level into account. LISS can provide up to $3000 to pay for eligible services and equipment. As with other DDA services, this is not an entitlement program and funding is not guaranteed.

**At the present time, LISS funds have been exhausted until January 1st 2011, but we can assist you with applying when more funds are available. In addition, we can attempt to locate and apply for funds from other sources in your community.**
Q. What is the Service Coordination Impact Fund:
Service Coordination has established a fund based on a challenge grant from the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. This fund can help pay for a variety of products and services for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities. If you are interested in applying to the Service Coordination Impact Fund, please let your Service Coordinator know, or follow this link to a copy of the application:
http://www.servicecoordinationinc.org/pdf/SC_Fund_Grant_Application.pdf

Letter 4: Change to a Lower Priority Status

Letter 4 was sent on 11/29/10. It informed the recipient that their priority on the Waiting List will be lowered to a less urgent status. This letter went out to people who were eligible only for DDA funded individual support services.

Note: An identical letter will be sent to people who are eligible for all DDA funded services, and will be moved to a lower, less urgent priority on 12/13/10.

FAQ's:

Q: What does the letter mean?
The letter you received is informing you that your priority status will be moved from a higher priority to a lower, less urgent status, 30 days after the letter was postmarked.

Q. Why is the DDA sending out letters?
In 2008, the DDA sent surveys to everyone on the Critical Needs list for services (Waiting List). The purpose of the survey was to ensure that each person on the Waiting List was at the correct priority level in relation to their situation.
As a result, the DDA has made some changes to the Waiting List and is in the process of letting people know how the changes are going to affect them.

Q: How will the change in status affect my child and/or my family in the future?
The effect this change will have will depend on what priority you’ve been moved to.

If you have been moved to the Crisis Prevention or the Current Request statuses, you will remain on the Waiting List, and will be able to access services in the future.

If you have been moved to the Future Need status, you will be moved off the Waiting List and into a new category called the Registry. People on the
Registry will not be able to access services, including, unless their status is reviewed and they are placed back on the Waiting List.

Q: **Does this mean I may not get services when I need them?**
If your situation changes and you believe you are in urgent need of services, you can request that your situation be reviewed. If you have a Service Coordinator, you can request that they submit an update on your situation to the DDA.

If you do not have a Service Coordinator, you can contact Darren Clark at the Central Maryland Regional Office of the DDA at 410-234-8200 and request that they re-evaluate your priority status based on your current situation.

Q: **Can I change the priority status listed in the letter?**
You may contact Donna Shreve-Will at the Central Maryland Regional Office of the DDA at (410) 234-8262 or by email at ShreveD@dhmh.state.md.us **within 30 days of the postmark on your letter** and provide information pertaining to your current situation.

You will receive another letter after 30 days, reiterating your new priority. If you still believe your priority status is incorrect, you may file an appeal within 45 days using the information provided in the second letter. We can resend this information to you if necessary.

Q: **I have spoken to the eligibility unit, and they have not agreed to change my priority status. What are my options?**
You will receive a letter after 12/29/10 which will notify you again that your priority status has been lowered. You may file an appeal within 45 days after the date the second letter was post marked.

Q: **What is “COMAR Regulation of Hearing”?**
COMAR stands for the Code of Maryland Regulations, which governs how all Maryland state agencies, including the DDA, operate.

All decisions made by the DDA can be appealed by the person affected. The second letter you will receive will contain instructions on how to file an appeal. We can resend this information to you if necessary.

Q: **Can my Service Coordinator help me with the appeal?**
Yes. If you are interested in appealing a decision and require assistance, please contact your Service Coordinator and they will assist you with the process.

Q: **I have spoken to the eligibility unit and they have agreed to change my priority status. What now?**
You should receive a follow up letter after documenting your new priority status.
Q: Will my status change again?
A priority status can change at any time based on current situation and urgency of need. It is extremely important that you keep us and the DDA updated on any changes to your situation which may affect your priority status.

With that being said, we don’t anticipate any further changes being made as a result of the Waiting List Clean-up Initiative.

Q: Will people who applied after me get services before I do?
The DDA awards funding according to priority status. Those people who have the most critical need for services (i.e., in danger of being homeless, abused, or neglected) will have the first opportunity to get funding.

Q: The letter states,” In order to assure that the DDA has current information... please contact anytime your situation changes.” What does this mean?
Should you have a change of address or phone number, it is your responsibility to let the DDA know of the changes. By providing this information, it allows DDA to contact you and provide you with updated information when required.

Q: My son/daughter is 19, how can I be assured that they will get services once they are an adult.
Unfortunately, there is no guarantee of services at any time. Each year, there is a certain amount of money allotted for students who are transitioning from school into adult services (commonly referred to as Transitional Youth). Funding is based on priority but there are many additional resources available that may meet your needs.

Please contact your Service Coordinator for more information on these services and the Transitioning Youth process.

Q: Will I get to keep my Service Coordinator?
If, after the change described in your letter, you remain on the Waiting List, it is anticipated that you will continue to receive our services.

However, the DDA is currently redesigning resource coordination services (Service Coordination is a resource coordination provider) with an anticipated implementation date of July 1st, 2011. As DDA works through the re-designing of our services, they will be identifying those who will continue to receive resource coordination services.

It has been identified that those on the Registry will no longer receive resource coordination services after July 1, 2011.
Q: What is LISS?
LISS stands for Low intensity Support Services, which is a DDA funded program for anyone with a developmental or intellectual disability who is not in residential services. It does not take your priority level onto account. LISS can provide up to three thousand dollars to pay for eligible services and equipment. As with other DDA services, this is not an entitlement program and funding is not guaranteed.

**At the present time, LISS funds have been exhausted until January 1st, 2011, but we can assist you with applying when more funds are available. In addition, we can attempt to locate and apply for funds from other sources in your community.**

Q: What is The Service Coordinator Impact Fund?
We have recently started a fund that can help pay for a variety of products and services for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities. If you are interested in applying to The Service Coordination Impact Fund, please let your Service Coordinator know, or follow the link below to a copy of the application:
http://www.servicecoordinationinc.org/pdf/SC_Fund_Grant_Application.pdf

Letter 5: Notification of Inactivation

This letter was sent on 11/29/10 to people who are being ‘inactivated.’ People who are inactivated will not be assigned a priority status and will be removed from the Waiting List.

FAQs:
Q: Why am I being ‘inactivated,’ and what does that mean?
The DDA will be placing you on inactive status because it has been unable to reach you to discuss your need for services. You will not be able to request funding or other DDA services while you are on inactive status.

Q: Will I still be able to receive resource coordination while I’m inactive?
No. Unfortunately you will not receive any DDA funded services while you are inactive.

Q: How can I get out of the inactive status and back on the Waiting List?
You will need to contact Darren Clark at the Central Maryland Regional Office of the DDA by calling 410-234-8250 or emailing Mr. Clark at clarkd@dhmh.state.md.us.

Note: You must contact Mr. Clark within 30 days after your letter was postmarked.
Q: I have tried to contact an eligibility worker, but have been unsuccessful in reaching someone. What do I do?
Continue calling and leaving messages. We can assist you with writing emails and/or letters, if necessary.

Q: I have spoken to the eligibility unit and they have agreed to change my priority status. What now?
You should receive a follow up letter documenting your new priority status.

Q: I have spoken to the eligibility unit and they have not agreed to move me off of inactive status. What are my options?
You will receive another letter after 12/29/10 which will notify you that you have been inactivated. You may file an appeal within 45 days after the date the letter was post marked.

Q: What is “COMAR Regulation of Hearing”?
COMAR stands for the Code of Maryland Regulations, which governs how all Maryland state agencies, including the DDA, operate.

All decisions made by the DDA can be appealed by the person affected. The letter you received contained instructions on how to file an appeal. We will be happy to send you another copy of the appeal information if you need it.

Q: Can my Service Coordinator help me with the appeal?
Yes. If you are interested in appealing a decision and require assistance, please contact your Service Coordinator and they will assist you with the process.

If you do not have a Service Coordinator and need help with your appeal, feel free to request our assistance.