

**HOT TOPICS**

# NH Values and the New Hampshire Advantage

*as They Relate to Our Support System for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities*

---

**Personal and Family Responsibility** - roughly 8 of 10 adults with disabilities continue to live with family well beyond the age of 18. Some parents are still the primary, hands-on caregivers for their *children* well into their own senior years. Siblings and other extended family are often part of the core family support network.

**Economic Sensibility** - Families continue to offer selfless contributions of free hours of direct support, housing, food, transportation, private health insurance and dental care, and more for many years after these *children* reach adulthood, saving the state *hundreds of millions of dollars*. In return, families need to depend on caring, well-trained, professional staff to support and assist their loved one, enabling them to confidently work each day and earn the means to support the family.

**Local Control** - New Hampshire's 10 Area Agencies are private, non-profit corporations, not arms of State government. Each is governed by volunteer Boards of Directors, the majority of whom are people who have disabilities or their family members. All decisions for the agency are made at the local level by those who utilize the system. Board members see to it that available funds are allocated wisely and ensure that the bulk of that funding goes to direct supports for those they serve.

**Employment for New Hampshire's Citizens** - The Area Agencies and vendor agencies privately employ hundreds of New Hampshire citizens. These are skilled jobs supporting some of our state's most vulnerable people. Many citizens with disabilities are employed themselves, assisted by these well-trained professionals.

**New Hampshire Leadership** - Beginning with our being the first state in the nation to completely close its institution for warehousing people with disabilities. New Hampshire continues to be a leader in the field. New Hampshire has consistently ranked as one of the top performing states in the nation in overall satisfaction, quality, and outcomes while being considered fiscally responsible according to **The Case for Inclusion** reports. The extraordinarily high return for dollars spent is due directly to the dedication and long-term commitment of families combined with the thoughtful oversight of the community-governed Area Agencies.

**Public/Private Partnerships** - The Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS), under the NH DHHS, partners with the privately run Area Agencies and vendor agencies to offer citizens with disabilities true choice, individualized planning, professional supports, and assistance in living quality lives in their own, chosen communities.

**Regular, Ongoing Monitoring of Quality Outcomes** - The legislatively created NH Developmental Disabilities & Acquired Brain Disorders Quality Council meets bi-monthly to monitor, analyze, and oversee the service delivery system. Council membership consists of representatives from a wide range of stakeholder groups including self-advocates, family members, and direct support workers. The Council makes recommendations to the BDS and legislature regarding our Medicaid Waivers and Administrative Rules as well as national best practices in an effort to strengthen NH's position as a leader for developmental services.