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Independent Living Centers

FY15 Activities Report to House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means

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The eleven Independent Living Centers (ILCs) play a key role in Massachusetts in assisting people with disabilities to maximize their independence and self-determination in all of life’s activities. This includes a focus on assisting people to move from institutions into the community, and to attain personal goals related to independence and self-sufficiency. As consumer-controlled organizations, this work is done through a wide range of services which are based on a peer role modeling approach.

Federal regulations dictate the composition and activities of ILCs, and require all ILCs to provide four ‘core services’. Many ILCs provide other services, most notably Personal Care Attendant services under MassHealth, Transition Coordination under the Money Follows the Person Demonstration grant, Transition to Adulthood services, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living services with funding from the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The core services are:

Peer Counseling – the opportunity to tap the experience of other people with disabilities who have successfully strived to lead productive and meaningful lives in their communities through a peer role modeling approach. Peer counseling issues include: personal growth, problem solving, socializing or issues faced specifically by persons with disabilities.

Skills Training – the acquisition of skills needed for living independently, such as how to find housing, Personal Care Attendant management, budgeting, self-advocacy or managing entitlements or benefits.

Information and Referral – providing information and referrals related to disability such as where to look for accessible housing, adaptive equipment, medical providers, legal assistance and a large number of other programs and resources.

Advocacy – helping persons with disabilities to know and assert their rights with, for example, the health care system, landlords, accessing financial benefits and in the community in general.

Information on the services and achievements of the Independent Living Centers in FY15 is provided below. This information is based on reports filed by the ILCs for the federal fiscal year (10/1/14 – 9/30/15), the last 12 month period of ILC performance available.

FY15 Independent Living Center activity

In FFY15 25,928 consumers requested and received services from the ILCs. The specific types of services requested and received were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Services** | **Consumers Requesting Services** | **Consumers Receiving Services** |
| Peer Counseling Services | 1,358 | 1,336 |
| IL Skills Training | 8,344 | 8,314 |
| Information and Referral | 11,257 | 10,974 |
| Advocacy/Legal Services | 2,415 | 2,379 |
| Personal Assistance Services | 10,757 | 10,527 |
| Housing, Home Modifications | 845 | 840 |
| Assistive Technology | 668 | 380 |
| Youth Transition Services | 503 | 487 |
| Transportation Services | 262 | 241 |
| Other – Intake, Service Coordination, Options Counseling, etc. | 9,950 | 9,897 |

Assisting individuals to transition from institutions to the community is an integral element of the ILCs mission. In FFY15 the total number of consumers assisted with this goal were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living** | | |
| **Goal Set** | **Goal Achieved** | **In Progress** |
| 713 | 228 | 365 |

The Independent Living Centers assist individuals with identifying and working towards other personal goals, which are identified in each individual’s Independent Living Plan. The types of goals and achievements during FFY15 were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Significant Life Area** | **Goals Set** | **Goals Achieved** | **In Progress** |
| Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment | 1,400 | 454 | 886 |
| Communication | 414 | 131 | 256 |
| Mobility/Transportation | 811 | 230 | 505 |
| Community-Based Living | 1,241 | 575 | 688 |
| Educational | 719 | 210 | 458 |
| Vocational | 893 | 241 | 579 |
| Self-care | 12,400 | 7,067 | 10,404 |
| Information Access/Technology | 799 | 310 | 566 |
| Personal Resource Management | 1,645 | 473 | 1,097 |
| Transition from Institution to Community | 713 | 228 | 365 |
| Community/Social Participation | 2,338 | 714 | 1,521 |