

NH Council on Developmental Disabilities easy read annual report 2022



Our 5-year plan

Our mission

We are committed to

dignity

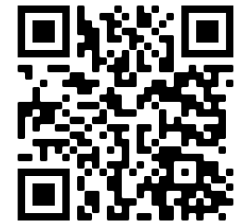
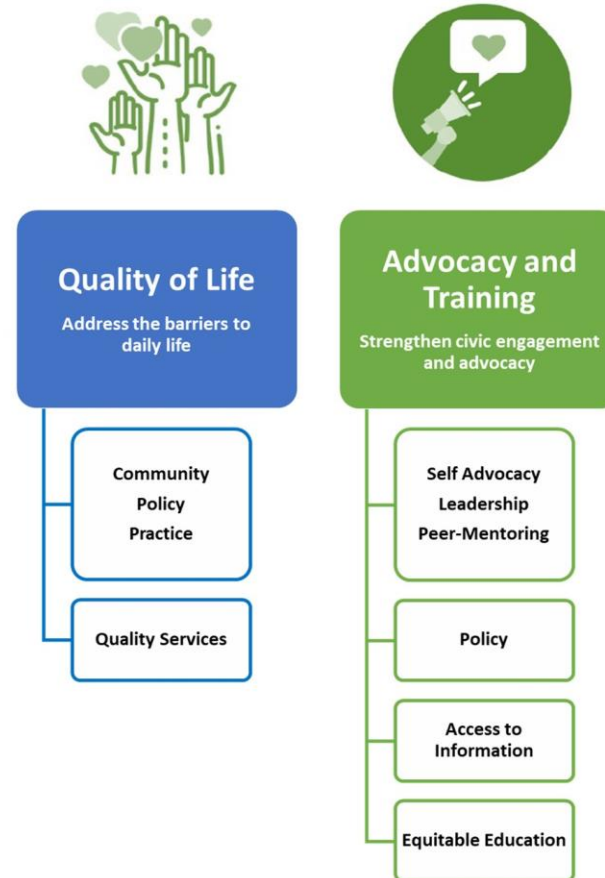
full rights of citizenship

cultural diversity

equal opportunity

full participation

for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.



A message from our Chair, Jim Piet

Greetings to our readers! As the Chair of the Council during this past year, it has been wonderful to see the development and progress in the first year of our new state plan. It's also impressive how the Council didn't miss a beat during the pandemic and has continued to improve our strategic planning and carry forward our mission.



It is important to me, as a person with lived experience of disability, that the Council continue to engage in the advocacy, capacity building, and systems change work that make NH a better place for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, work, and play in their community.

The Council has continued to support innovative initiatives that improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities in the Granite State. Some of our accomplishments include the development of a brand-new project that brings awareness and appreciation for the direct support workforce and family caregivers that make a meaningful community-based life possible for people with developmental disabilities.

Together with our legislative advocacy work and our contributions to improvements in our service delivery system, I am proud of the events and activities that we have sponsored and supported over the past year.

As the outgoing Chair of the Council, I am excited to pass the torch to other members and to support the leadership development of other advocates in NH. It has been a wonderful experience to serve as the Chair and I encourage other individuals interested in advocacy to get involved with our work. Thank you!

Council staff

Executive Director

Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

Policy and Planning Director

Ronnieann Rakoski

Project Manager

Vanessa Blais

Senior Account Tech

Mary Lawson

Executive Assistant

Pamela Stiles

Administrative Assistant

Patricia Vincent-Piet

Office Clerk

Miles Trier

Social Media Outreach Assistant

Blake Tyler

Council members

Community Member Seats

Tim Houle, Vice-Chair

Michele Petersen

Forrest Beaudoin-Friede

Joshua Madison

Denis Greenwood

Deborah Opramolla

Krista Gilbert

Nate Webb

Shawanna Bowman

Michael Phillips

Tammy Mills

Sara Gray

Frank Vinceguerra

Carrie Duran

Agency Seats

Jim Piet, Chair, NH Voc. Rehab

Jean Crouch, NH Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services

Jennifer Pineo, NH Family Voices/Title V

Stephanie Patrick, Disability Rights Center NH

Mary Schuh, Institute On Disability/UNH

Danielle Pelletier, NH Dept. of Education

Sarah Menard, Private Provider Network

Vacant, Bureau of Developmental Services

Policy

Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The council aims to build stronger relationships with policy makers by engaging in legislative and administrative education. The council provides training and information in best practices to inform policies that have a positive impact on the lives of all individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families across the lifespan.

The council supports advocates with lived experience in testifying to legislators and other policy makers on the impact that policies have on their lives.

Legislative Successes

- **Special Education Eligibility extended to age 22**

Students with disabilities will now receive school-based supports and services until the age of 22. This bi-partisan effort expands necessary funding to bring New Hampshire into compliance with existing federal law and provides students with more time to transition from high school into post-secondary education, employment, or other community-based activities.

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billinfo.aspx?id=2139&inflect=2

- **Students with disabilities participating in co-curricular activities**

This bill ensures that sufficient funds are used to encourage and establish unified co-curricular activities in schools that currently have no unified program.

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billinfo.aspx?id=1846

- **Assistance to students with disabilities in registering to vote**

This bill provides for students with an individualized education programs or accommodations to discuss including voter registration in the student's plan.

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billinfo.aspx?id=1403&inflect=2

Supporting Advocacy

NH Leadership Series



The Council continues to support the Institute on Disability/UCED and its leadership program through scholarships and as a resource for attendees.

The training series uses the Partners in Policymaking model.

The program helps to develop and strengthen advocacy skills for people to bring about systemic change in the communities.

Advocacy Groups

[People First of NH](#) (PFNH) and [Self Advocacy Leadership Team](#) (SALT)

- The Council, members of SALT, and other collaborators spent the year supporting SALT in moving from a Council task force to an action group of People First of NH.
- The Council joined the IOD and DRC-NH in hiring a facilitator to evaluate the membership needs of both groups and help to transition SALT to People First. They also helped to set up fiscal agency with Community Bridges, a NH DD service provider organization.
- The Council's support includes grant funding for facilitator compensation, programs, trainings, and activities. Other support includes transportation for advocates to attend meetings at the council office and making office space available for meetings and work.
- The Council sponsored and supported advocates attending the PFNH retreat.

[ABLE NH](#)

- ABLE NH was established through the efforts of the Federal DD Act partners in order to meet the need for an organized state-wide advocacy presence.
- The council provides sponsorships for ABLE's annual membership event and other initiatives. The council also provides office space, meeting space, and occasional administrative support to the group.

Grants and Sponsorships

Community grants

The council provides funding to support **inclusive** community projects or educational programs including:

- Covid-19 vaccinations programs
- Disability Day of Mourning Vigil
- Spark! Community Center integrated programming
- Improving access to the Woman's Club of Concord
- Public health workforce supports

Information on our grants can be found at:

<https://www.nhcdd.nh.gov/grants>

Community Sponsorships

The council sponsors **inclusive** community programming including:

- Caregiver's Conference
- Transition Conference
- People First/SALT annual retreat
- Go Baby Go cars for tots with mobility issues
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Pride Events
- NAMI NH Suicide Prevention Conference
- Employment Leadership Awards

Grants and Sponsorships

\$85,000 Large Grants/Contracts

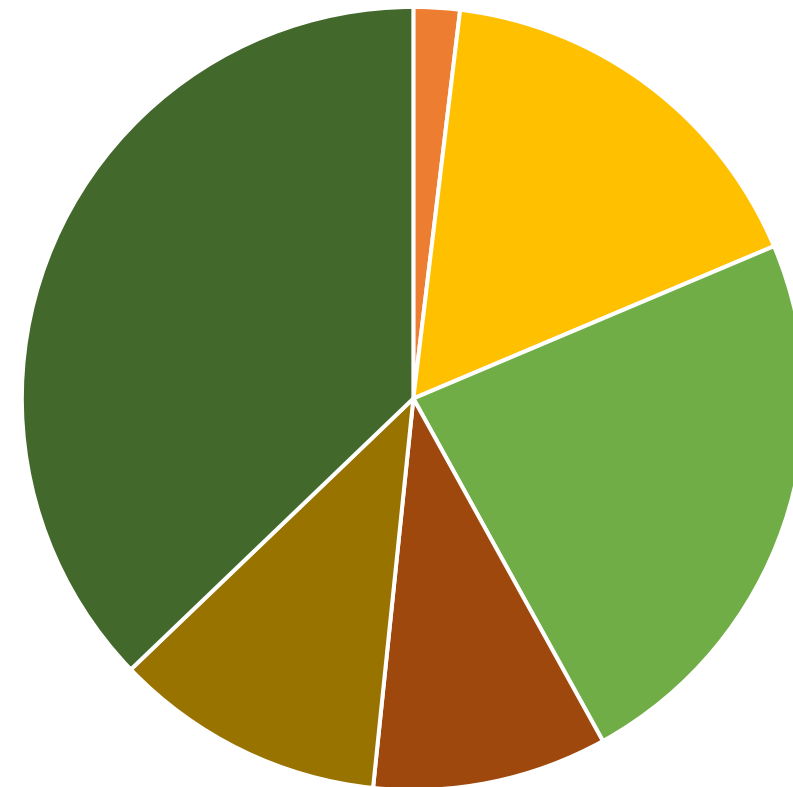
- IDD/MH (Dual Diagnosis)
- Supported Decision Making Training
- Public Health Workforce Initiative

\$15,000 NH Leadership Series Scholarships

\$25,000 Community Education

\$28,500 programs and events throughout the state of NH.

Community Access Grants



- Personal Technology \$409
- Employment and Post-Secondary Education \$3588
- Emerging Needs \$5000
- Personal Education and Leadership \$2077
- Accessibility \$2400
- Community Projects \$7970

Grant Spotlight

IDD/MH (Dual Diagnosis)

Center for Life Management and Community Crossroads [Continuum of Collaborative Care](#) Model.

Implementing a holistic, person-centered approach to meeting the needs of people with ID/DD and mental health challenges.

250 individuals with a disability are/were served through this model.

This initiative has been so successful that other state DD service provider organizations are consulting on using this model in their programming.



Supported Decision Making

Disability Rights Center NH [Supported Decision-Making](#) initiative.

- Increase awareness of guardianship alternatives among the judiciary, New Hampshire Bar, service providers, school personnel, and families.
- Increase the use of supported decision-making agreements or other less restrictive alternatives.
- Promote integration of supported decision making into the system of service delivery and planning.



Council Workgroups

Information Access for All

The Council is making an intentional effort to reduce barriers to information through supporting language which is culturally and linguistically competent and is accessible via technology, plain language, and interpreters.

To address information access, this workgroup has:

- Created an online resource library to help people get started on developing accessible print and e-content materials. [Resource Library](#)
- Served as consultants on conference materials and other print promotions for adjacent organizations.
- Hosted a training presented by Neighborhood Access, introducing stakeholders and advocates to the concept of information access and how to get started.

LGBTQ+

To bring awareness to the intersection of disability and LGBTQ+ identity, this workgroup has:

- Provided sponsorships and maintained vendor tables for Queen City Pride, Manchester and Seacoast Outright Pride, Portsmouth.
- Provided funding and support to Seacoast Pride on making event more accessible.
- Hosted Seacoast Outright's Practical Allyship 101 training to the council members and staff during the annual meeting.

<https://www.seacoastoutright.org/>

<https://queencitypridenh.org/>

Council workgroups

Workforce Workgroup

The NHCDD works to address the barriers to the daily life of all diverse individuals with ID/DD, family members and caregivers to improve the lived experiences of people with disabilities.

There is a workforce crisis across the country. The availability, qualifications, and training of the workforce impacts the quality of life and often presents barriers to individuals with ID/DD and their loved ones in NH.

To address the workforce crisis, this workgroup has:

- Provided written recommendations to the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) to address the need for funding for training and education of DSPs, career ladders and specialty certifications, and cross training.
- Collaborated with stakeholders and provided input on legislation regarding reimbursement for family caregivers.
- Monitored BDS redesign work relative to the DSP wages and provider reimbursement rates.

New Project Highlight

DSP Appreciation Week Lamp Post Banner Display



The council lead a new initiative aiming to bring about **community awareness** to direct support professionals and all paid and unpaid caregivers.

- 20 disability network sponsors participated in the lamp post banner display in downtown Concord, NH.
- The DSP and Home Provider of the Year awards were presented at the State House Lawn.
- Community Bridges, a state DD service provider organization, presented the Governor's proclamation naming the week of September 11-17, 2022, as DSP Appreciation Week.



Sponsorship/Collaboration Highlights

Audubon All Access Trail

The council staff and members of the DD community continue to serve as consultants in making trails at the McLane Concord Audubon Center more accessible.

The first all access trail has now been completed. Plans have been set in motion to improve access to another trail in 2023.



Employment Leadership Awards

- In collaboration with NH Vocational Rehabilitation and the Governor's Commission on Disability.
- Awards 5 NH businesses who show initiative in developing inclusive workforce.

Dream Big! Train the Trainer

- As part of the Living Well: NH Quality Frameworks Grant led by the Institute on Disability/UNH.
- ABLE NH, People First of NH, and the NHCDD developed this program to eliminate ableism and support person centered services.

Dream Big! DSP Train the Trainer

The NHCDD, ABLE NH, and People First of NH collaborated on a train the trainer plain language manual with the aim to build capacity for the Dream Big! DSP Training throughout the state. The train the trainer workshop is free and available upon request.

Part of the [Living Well: NH Quality Frameworks Grant through the Institute on Disability/University of NH](#)

- People with ID/DD are fully embodied human beings with preferences and talents who deserve to be valued members of society.
- People with ID/DD continue to be segregated from everyday activities and employment opportunities that people without disabilities experience.
- Direct support professionals play a critical role in supporting people with disabilities to have meaningful choices and a robust community-based life.
- The work of a direct support professional is to empower individuals to make their own choices to lead the life they desire.

Supported Publications

Disability RAPP

[The Disability RAPP - The latest in Research Advocacy Policy and Practice DRCNH](#)



Stepping Stones Magazine

[SteppingStones 21-22 \(zmags.com\)](#)



The council continues to collaborate with the Institute on Disability and the Disability Rights Center-NH on Disability RAPP magazine. This magazine encourages conversation around the barriers to inclusive living and how to address those barriers through collaboration and innovation.

Stepping Stones Magazine is our annual publication that aims to show what authentic, integrated community living really looks like. This is done in collaboration with Business NH Magazine.

Key Partners

[Disability Rights Center-NH](#)

protects, advances, and strengthens the legal rights and advocacy interests of all people with disabilities

[Institute on Disability/UNH](#)

provides a university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of people with disabilities

[People First of NH/SALT](#)

multi-cultural champions of equality who advocate for people with disabilities to achieve their full potential

[ABLE NH](#)

advocates for the civil and human rights of children and adults with disabilities

[NH Governor's Commission on Disability](#)

provides technical assistance relative to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability laws

[NH Department of Education](#)

committed to helping students, parents, and educators meet the educational needs of each student

[NH Family Voices](#)

works to assist parents and professionals in navigating the systems of care that deliver services

[Parent Information Center](#)

guides and encourage families in supporting the unique learning potential of their children, including children with disabilities

[Community Support Network, Inc.](#)

supports agencies that serve individuals with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders

[Granite State Independent Living](#)

assist people with tools for living life independently, so they can change their lives for the better

[Brain Injury Association](#)

works for a better future through brain injury prevention, education, advocacy, and support

[Private Provider Network](#)

represents private agencies that provide community-based supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders