



**Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities**

Managed Care Assessment: Project Overview and Final Recommendations

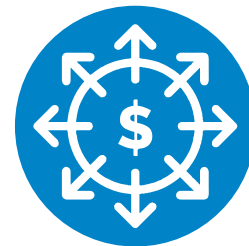
September 2024



Plain Language

Why we studied managed care

For years, OPWDD has thought about changing the way it pays for services for people with developmental disabilities.



OPWDD has thought about using something called “managed care” to pay for services.

Managed Care means that a Managed Care Organization gets a set amount of money for each person to provide the supports the services they need.

OPWDD has not yet decided if it will make this kind of change.

OPWDD hired a company called Guidehouse to study different ways that OPWDD could pay for the services it provides.



The study will help OPWDD decide if changing the way it pays for services would be a good thing to do or not.

How the study was done

Guidehouse collected information from many people to understand what is good about each possible way to pay for services and what is not good about each way.



Guidehouse held online meetings and surveys to collect information from:

- People with developmental disabilities
- Their family members



- Service provider agencies
- Care Coordination Organizations
- Managed Care Organizations
- Advisory groups,
- OPWDD staff



Guidehouse spoke with other state governments and experts to hear what they think is the best way to pay for services.



Guidehouse put what it learned in a Final Report. The Final Report says how OPWDD can improve how it meets the needs of people with developmental disabilities.



What the study found

Some things are working well –



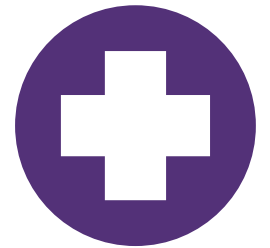
- Some people have had a good experience with Care Coordination Organizations. They found a care manager who has supported them well for a long time.
- Many people said that community habilitation or personal care, day services, residential and Family Support Services have helped them meet their goals.
- People like the self-direction program because they can get support the way they want to get it.



Some things are not working well -



- Some people are having trouble getting services because of worker shortages, complicated steps to get approval and long wait times to get approved for services.
- People with complex needs and those who live in rural areas have the hardest time getting services.
- It can be hard for people to find medical care.
- Some people have been denied hospital care because of their disabilities.
- Some people have been denied care because they have behavioral needs.
- People with complex needs who need dental care have had to wait a long time or travel far for services.



What people said about Managed Care

- Some people said managed care could speed up approval of services, especially if service providers have more flexibility in how they support people.
- Other people do not believe that managed care will make services better. They worry that it will make problems such as worker shortages and long approval processes even worse.
- Some people think Managed Care Organizations will not know how to support people with developmental disabilities and will limit their services.



- Some people said limiting rates for Managed Care Organizations could make staffing challenges worse.
- Some people think the costs of running the Managed Care Organizations could mean less money for provider agencies.



Study Recommendations

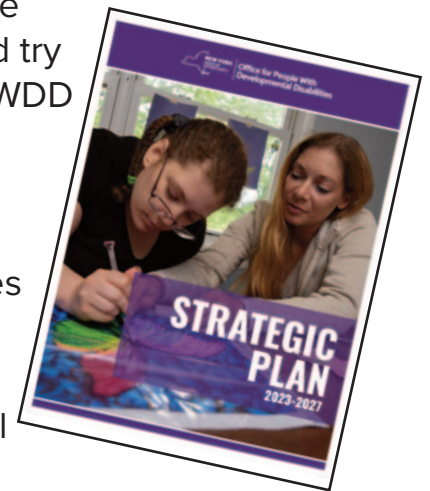
Guidehouse did **not** recommend that OPWDD use managed care to pay for all services.

Guidehouse **did** recommend some things OPWDD should do now and some things it should do if it ever chooses to change the way it pays for services.

Things to do now

Guidehouse said OPWDD should continue to work toward the goals of its Strategic Plan. They also said that OPWDD should try to improve services even if there are no changes to how OPWDD pays for services.

- The concerns listed in the Strategic Plan are the same concerns people told Guidehouse about. Getting services was the main concern.
- OPWDD's Strategic Plan describes things the agency will do to help people get services more easily.
- The Strategic Plan also says that OPWDD will help more people become employed or have things to do during the day that they enjoy, improve access to healthcare and improve our ability to serve people with complex needs.



Things to do if OPWDD ever decides to change to managed care

Only use managed care for:

- Medical and behavioral health services, including services for mental health, social work, intensive behavioral health
- Clinical services offered by public health facilities that are licensed by the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, the NYS Department of Health or the NYS Department of Mental Health. (known as Article 16, Article 28 and Article 32 clinics).

Long-term services and supports like Home and Community-Based Services (OPWDD's Waiver services) and Family Support Services should not move to managed care.



OPWDD should only require managed care be used for people who have Medicaid only for insurance and who are not already in managed care for their healthcare.

OPWDD and DOH should work together to be sure managed care is cost effective for everybody.

OPWDD should hold a competitive process to create a small number of Managed Care Organizations that know how to support people with developmental disabilities.



OPWDD should ask people who get services, family members and service providers to help identify the requirements for Managed Care Organizations.

OPWDD should create an advisory board for managed care that includes people with developmental disabilities and Care Managers.

OPWDD should require Managed Care Organizations to work with service providers who serve people with developmental disabilities, including community-based organizations and federally qualified health centers.



OPWDD should include services for Health-Related Social Needs that are part of New York State’s Medicaid Program goals.

OPWDD should start managed care slowly in specific regions to learn how it is working for people before it expands wider.

When starting managed care, OPWDD should provide lots of training and information to help people understand the changes.

Most Important Conclusions

People with developmental disabilities, their family members and service providers must be part of any decision made about managed care.



- Changing to managed care will not fix the current problems in the OPWDD service system. OPWDD should keep working to make improvements.
- Managed care can make it easier for people with developmental disabilities to get both OPWDD services and non-OPWDD services such as medical and behavioral health services.

More information about OPWDD’s Study of Managed Care is on OPWDD’s website. www.opwdd.ny.gov/strategic-planning/managed-care-assessment

www.opwdd.ny.gov

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