

December 6, 2013

Weekly Focus

The mission of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

Ohio Parent Agency Meeting Held

I participated in a conference call with the Social Security Administration (SSA) this week to discuss the Division of Disability Determination's (DDD) accomplishments and assess where we are as an organization moving forward with SSA.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) pushes DDD hard to achieve. Sometimes we are accused of only caring about the numbers. Certainly the overwhelming goal is to provide accurate and timely determinations for individuals seeking disability determinations. However, I believe that the numbers speak volumes about the work that is done by everyone working at DDD. It is easy to claim to be doing a great job and another thing altogether to make that claim and reinforce it with concrete numbers as undeniable proof.

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2013, DDD demonstrated an outstanding level of achievement and service to Ohio, despite budget uncertainties, ongoing attrition, and limited hiring and overtime. Total clearances in 2013 were 206,137. DDD met its workload goal and easily achieved the Continuous Disability Review (CDR) workload target and helped the region clear 100.1 percent of its initial claims target. More telling is the fact that Ohio was the only state in the region to reduce initial claims processing time in FFY 2013. Another statistic that reflects the work accomplished by DDD is that productivity per work-year (PPWY) increased from 371.9 in 2012 to 387.5 in 2013 while improving quality of determinations.

I am pleased to let everyone know that SSA announced to us that the Ohio DDD once again had the lowest cost per case in the Chicago Region. At the same time, the software that DDD developed for work sampling and consultative examination oversight generated numerous "demo" requests from other states and received national attention.

Not being content to lead many statistical categories only, Ohio DDD assisted Michigan with much needed help for their Hearings Unit and Ohio medical

contractors provided case review assistance to the Minnesota Disability Determination Services (DDS) and Disability Program Branch (DPB) in Chicago.

The Ohio DDD Cooperative Disability Investigations (CDI) Unit continued to be one of the most successful in the country. In FFY 2013, the CDI Unit achieved \$24.6 million in SSA savings and \$21.1 million in non-SSA savings.

Having cited those successes, Ohio DDD's greatest strength is in our people. Statistics back up the claim that we are one of the best, if not the best, DDD in the country in no small part to our human capital. Several adjudicators and supervisors were recognized with Commissioner Citations for outstanding work. Each recipient accepted the recognition while speaking of the outstanding work of their entire unit that made their award possible.

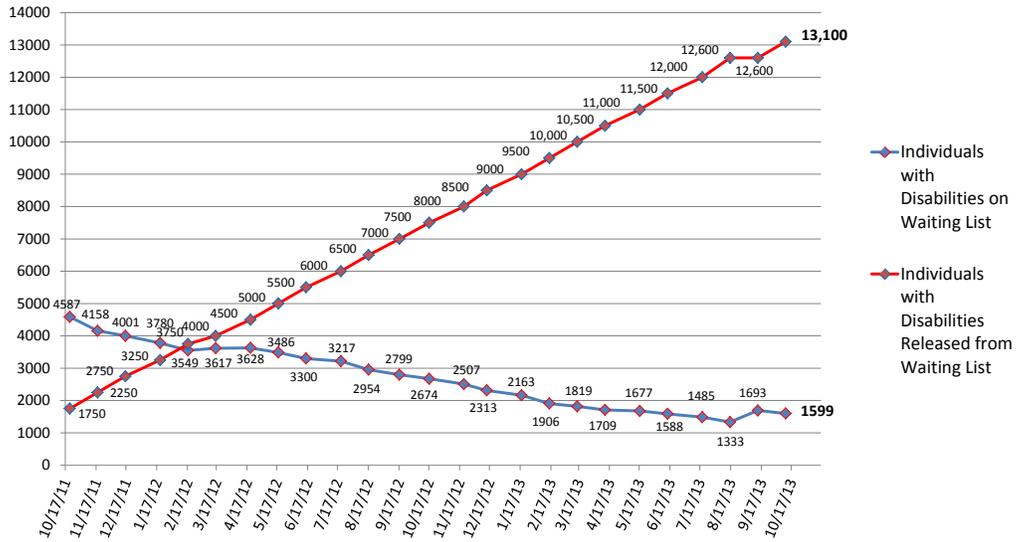
As we move into a new Federal Fiscal Year (started in October), SSA is still determining the goals for each DDD. It is my unwavering belief that no matter the goals that will be set, the Ohio DDD will rise to the challenge to meet and exceed its goals. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to make the Ohio DDD the best DDS in the nation.

RSA Draft Monitoring Report

Two weeks ago, OOD submitted its response to the Rehabilitation Services Administration's (RSA) draft monitoring report. In our response, we emphasized the value of state and local partnerships and our desire to continue such partnerships. RSA is reviewing our response now.

Moving forward, OOD is meeting with RSA next week in Washington, D.C. to receive technical assistance and guidance on third-party cooperative arrangements (TPCA). We are seeking RSA's direction, clarification and assistance on TPCAs to ensure that if we must change course, we have a model in place that is fully compliant with their interpretation of Federal Code.

Number of Individuals with Disabilities on Waiting List



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Produced by the Office of Communications, December 6, 2013.

