

September 30, 2024

TO: Representative Will Carpenter and Special Committee on Targeted Case Management

FROM: David Phillips, Case Manager, Lakemary Center

RE: Impact of Conflict-Free rule on Targeted Case Management for Kansans

Thank you, Chair Carpenter and members of this committee, for your support for Kansans with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and your time in reviewing the testimony.

As a Targeted Case Manager with over 27 years' experience, the last 18 ½ years at Lakemary Center, I work with individuals and their families/guardians who receive a mix of just case management and paid support services from a variety of providers, some who include Lakemary Center. Now, because of a mandate intended to ensure their freedom of choice in providers, they face having to choose whether to find a new case manager or change providers as the mandate states they cannot have both case management and any other service from the same provider. For some people, this is a major disruption of effective working relationships of 18+ years.

One individual and family have stated they would rather keep me as their case manager and try to obtain job coaching services from the only other provider in Johnson County. Several individuals and their guardians and families stated they want to give up neither, as they are pleased with the services and the long-term case management relationship due to an understanding of their complex needs, trust, and advocacy for their best interests. Some individuals switched from previous case management providers to Lakemary Center and feel they have received better service for it.

Individuals currently having case management and support services from other providers may face making this choice in the future. Last year an individual's day and residential providers both closed suddenly, and while a residential provider with another agency was able to be found, after failing to find any other day service provider able to meet her significant needs she chose Lakemary Center.

One proposal suggests agency-based case managers become independent licensed Targeted Case Managers. This assumes that I or others feel the time and expense of obtaining a new TCM License – requiring the development of policies and procedures and a written business plan, affiliation with the appropriate CDDO(s), enrolling as a Medicaid Provider, and contracting with the Managed Care Organizations for the possibility of earning income is viable. The only revenue would be from billable Targeted Case Management functions – which do not include the time spent in managing a business. It would require an increase in taxes paid for the portion of Social Security, etc. normally paid by the provider. Gone is paid time off from work; time taken off means no income. Gone is provider assistance with health and life insurance. As I approach the age of 54, I question the risk to benefit of this approach for myself. Other advantages lost are coverage from other case managers while off, and sharing expertise between other agency-based case managers, to the detriment of individuals served.

Targeted Case Management systems are strained in many areas of Kansas. What further strain might result in existing case managers deciding to leave Kansas and work in Missouri, as an MCO care coordinator, or change careers?