



September 4, 2009

Dear Senator Haridopolos,

The Family Care Council of Area 15, which includes Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin and Okeechobee Counties, remains concerned about the wait list for the Home and Community Based Services Waiver. Full and sustainable funding for this Medicaid Waiver will provide individuals with developmental disabilities needed services and supports.

Since 1984 the Medicaid HCBS Waiver has given about 30,000 Floridians choice in where they live, where and how they receive services and who provides those services. We thank you for your foresight in assisting people with developmental disabilities through this Waiver. However, since fiscal 2006-07, only a small number of those in crisis have been moved from the wait list onto this Waiver.

Throughout the state 18,939 people cannot access the Waiver, even though it has been a proven cost savings to Florida for those clients of Agency for Persons with Disabilities who waive more costly services in an ICF/DD or institutional residence.

Families on the wait list for the Waiver need this tool to plan for their family members future. They know that selecting providers that work where their loved one lives, is employed or participates in the community is a vital resource. Families waiting need the assurance of continuity of care the Waiver provides when they can no longer care for their family member due to their own age or infirmity.

As of June 2009, a total of 1,298 Floridians with developmental disabilities are on the Medicaid Waiver wait list in Indian River, St. Lucie, Brevard and Osceola Counties.

The number of people waiting for services from the HCBS Waiver is determined solely by legislative appropriation. How can the Family Care Council assist you in eliminating the wait list for individuals in your community during the next legislative session?

Sincerely,

Ruth Wingate
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