

Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living

DAIL Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability, with dignity, respect and independence.

We promote and support self-determination, respect for all, and full inclusion in the life of the community. Our principles:

- The individual will be at the center of all plans and services.
- Individuals, families, providers and staff are treated with respect.
- The individual's personal and economic independence will be promoted.
- Individuals will direct their own lives.
- The individual's services and supports will promote health and well-being.
- Individuals are able to work, volunteer, and participate in local communities.
- Individual needs will guide our actions, requiring flexibility.
- Individuals' needs will be met in a timely and cost effective way.
- Individuals will benefit from our partnerships with families, communities, providers, and other federal, state and local organizations.

Department Overview

DAIL is a diverse department with a broad range of roles and activities. In our role as the State Unit on Aging and Disability, we support the Older American's Act services in Vermont. We manage individualized service programs that support choice, health, independence and quality of life including Choices for Care for older people and people with physical disabilities; Developmental Disabilities Services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and services for people with Traumatic Brain Injuries. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired help people with disabilities in maintaining employment and self-sufficiency. Adult Protective Services seeks to reduce the rate and impact of abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults while Survey and Certification safeguards the quality of care in licensed facilities and home health agencies. The Office of Public Guardian provides guardianship services to people who cannot represent themselves, and do not have family or friends to represent their interests. As a team, we try to represent the interests of older people and people with disabilities in pursuing full, inclusive lives in their chosen communities.

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Staff and Partners

DAIL includes 281 staff positions across five divisions and in the Commissioner's Office. Our partners are numerous and diverse, representing the diversity of our funding and our roles:

1. People...also known as consumers or participants: the people served, whose choices we support and whose lives we work to improve. The people are the focus of what we do.
2. Advocates: Advocates, family members, caregivers, and guardians all help to support the people we serve.
3. Providers: Many our services are provided by community providers. Our community partners are the people who make a difference directly in people's lives.
4. State partners: DAIL collaborates with a variety of state partners, both within our Agency of Human Services and outside our agency, for example, the Department of Labor, the Green Mountain Care Board, and the Vermont legislature. This helps to make all our work more effective and efficient.
5. Federal partners: DAIL actively partners with several federal partners and funders including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the Administration for Community Living. Without federal funding, many of our services would shrink or disappear.

Recent Developments and Accomplishments

DAIL's recent accomplishments include:

1. Vermont ranked #1 in Vocational Rehabilitation outcomes (Rehabilitation Services Administration), #2 in Senior Health (United Health Foundation), and #2 in serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as ranked by United Cerebral Palsy.
2. DLP Survey and Certification received a perfect score from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on their annual performance review. This rating shows that the Vermont State Survey Agency is providing timely, appropriate, and balanced oversight to a wide range of facilities.
3. In March 2016, Governor Shumlin signed an Executive Order establishing a "Disability Employment Working Group" comprised of representatives from DAIL, the Department of Human Resources and members of the Governor's Workforce Equity and Diversity Committee. They are charged with developing a model to help State agencies recruit, train and retain workers with

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disabilities to both diversify and meet the needs of Vermont's "greying" workforce.

4. The DDS Supported Employment Program has been recognized by the Zero Project, based in Vienna, Austria, for the ZERO PROJECT INNOVATIVE POLICY 2017 award. This award recognizes out transition from workshops to full community integrated employment.
5. The Vermont legislature approved support for the NFB-Newsline service. This service gives access to more than 400 local and national newspapers and magazines in an accessible format that can be accessed using a regular telephone or smartphone to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
6. Linking Learning to Careers Project (LLC): In September 2016 DVR won a \$9M, 5-year Federal grant to implement and evaluate an innovative model for the transition of students with disabilities to early career success. This includes competitive employment, postsecondary school enrollment, and improved confidence to achieve career goals.
7. DAIL reached department-wide use of Results-Based Accountability Scorecards, increasing our focus on performance measurement and performance accountability.
8. DAIL implemented screening for substance use disorders and suicidality by all DAIL staff with direct service responsibilities.
9. We successfully expanded and strengthened the DAIL Advisory Board, ensuring representation across our diverse populations to more effectively contribute to our future progress.

Future Directions

As in the past, DAIL will continue to be engaged in a wide variety of activities across our divisions. These will include:

1. Continued work on Supported Decision Making, which helps people with disabilities or cognitive impairments to make informed and meaningful choices about their own lives while reducing the pressure to pursue guardianship.
2. An increased focus in DVR and DBVI on transition age youth and relevant performance measures, under changes in federal rules (WIOA). Continued expansion in DBVI for the Learn, Earn, and Prosper (LEAP) program for high school students. This includes workforce readiness training during school vacations.
3. Active participation and partnering in Vermont health reform including alignment with the All Payer Model (APM) and the Vermont Model of Care.

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Key considerations include person-centered care and service integration, with the goals of improving outcomes while controlling costs.

4. DAIL will continue efforts to address limited federal funding. Level funding in the Older Americans Act has not kept pace with the increasing numbers of Vermonters over the age of 60. In Vocational Rehabilitation, federal re-allotment funds were decreased by 76% (\$4.4 million).
5. Work on compliance and alignment with recent federal HCBS (Home and Community Based Services) rules that affect Choices for Care, Developmental Disabilities Services, and the Traumatic Brain Injury Program.
6. Revisions to the Vermont Home Health Agency licensing regulations.
7. Work with our own staff, partners and stakeholders to focus on performance measurement and performance accountability.
8. DAIL will continue to work with partners and stakeholders to plan for the demographic changes in our state. These changes include an aging population, increasing numbers of people with dementia, increasing numbers of working age people with disabilities, and increasing demands for a limited workforce including challenges in ensuring an adequate health and human services workforce.

Results

DAIL continues to develop and improve our use of performance measures and performance accountability. The DAIL Performance Measures Scorecard includes highlight measures that document our performance:

<http://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8865>

DAIL also contributes to the Agency of Human Services Scorecard. This Scorecard addresses the population-level outcomes of well-being for Vermonters established by the legislature, with indicators that quantify these outcomes. The Agency of Human Services collects and reports this population-level data annually to the Legislature through the Chief Performance Officer.

<https://app.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8131>