



Strategic Plan 2017 - 2019

Executive Summary

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) has been assisting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families on Long Island for more than 50 years. During that time, we have evolved and grown, serving larger numbers of people and expanding the types of supports and services we provide. Our evolution has always been focused on delivering on our mission to help children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities experience growth and fulfillment.

This Strategic Plan was created to ensure we continue to fulfill that mission, taking advantage of new opportunities and positioning our agency to meet challenges arising from increasing demand for services while acknowledging a finite amount of financial resources from the governmental agencies we depend on to fund our programs.

This Strategic Plan acknowledges the significant changes and challenges agencies like ours are facing and it is focused on ensuring we remain a strong and healthy organization that can be depended on to provide innovative supports and services to the people who count on us. We have long been known for our research-based approaches for helping the people entrusted to us and this plan leverages the extensive expertise of our staff to push innovation even further as we pursue program excellence in all that we do.

The strategic planning process underscored that the road ahead is one that must be marked by new accomplishments, along with a commitment to strengthening DDI's infrastructure to better support our workforce and operations. The six pillars of our strategic plan: Workforce, Program Excellence, Information Technology, Facilities & Environment, Fundraising, and Public Image & Communications serve as cornerstones around which all of our planned strategic initiatives are carried out.

With the creation of this Strategic Plan, we at DDI are re-committing ourselves to our long-held mission of helping people of all ages with autism and other developmental disabilities to live more fulfilling lives.

We are pleased to share our vision and our plan with all of our stakeholders.

Sincerely,

John Lessard
Executive Director

Kevin Long
Chairperson,
On Behalf of the Board of Directors

DDI Overview

Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) was founded in 1961 to address the special education needs of children with autism and other developmental disabilities and provide therapeutic intervention. Today, DDI is a dynamic, non-profit, multi-site agency, each day serving hundreds of children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities, providing educational, residential, habilitative, vocational, transportation and service coordination support to the Long Island community.

DDI's educational, residential, day and vocational supports are as diverse as the people we serve. Through more than 50 years of sustained effort, DDI has grown substantially. Today, we are the leading provider of services and programs for children and adults with autism in Long Island, and we are acknowledged by the State and among our peers for our expertise in supporting both children and adults with the greatest service intensity needs due to complex and challenging behaviors.

We employ a dedicated staff of approximately 1,800 working to support children and adults.

Our agency recognizes the unique needs of each person for whom we care, and maintains the highest standards of teaching and training for our children and adults, their families, and our staff. We pride ourselves on utilizing research-based methods across all agency programs.

Our Mission:

We help children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities experience personal growth and fulfillment.

Our Vision:

To be Long Island's leading provider of innovative services for people with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Our Core Values:

- ❖ **Integrity** – We adhere to moral and ethical principles
- ❖ **Dignity** – We treat each other as being worthy of honor and respect
- ❖ **Compassion** – We act with caring and kindness
- ❖ **Teamwork** – We work together to achieve common goals

¹ Within this document the term “autism” is synonymous with “autism spectrum disorders.”

Summary of DDI Programs (as of July 2016)

Program	Description	Number Served
Early Intervention (Birth – 3 yrs.)	For infants and toddlers, our emphasis is on early evaluation, diagnosis and treatment. 3 locations, plus home-based services	61
Pre-School (3yrs.-5 yrs.)	Our goal of placing children in their home school district by the time they are ready for kindergarten has a success rate of greater than 90%. 3 locations	357
School Age (5yrs.-21 yrs.)	Older children whose challenges are beyond the capabilities of their own school district may enter our program designed to support their special education needs. 2 locations	245
Children’s Residential Program (5-21 yrs.)	Upon the recommendation of their own school districts, and with the approval of the State Education Department, some of our children are helped through our residential program, New York State’s third largest Children’s Residential services program, and designated by the State as a Center of Excellence. 2 locations	65
Adult Residential Program	Residential opportunities for adults with special needs beyond those that can be managed by their families have been developed across Long Island. 30 locations plus 1 more to open in 2016	183
Adult Day Program (including vocational programs)	Adult Day – Robust opportunities for the furtherance of education, skills training, vocational development, supported employment, family respite, service coordination and transportation help to ensure the most desirable pursuits are possible for the adults in our care. 6 service sites + over 50 participating employers	470
Transportation Services	For people receiving no other services from DDI	100
Service Coordination	Support to families in the community	405
Respite Services	Children’s and Adult’s Program families	120

The Strategic Planning Process

In 2015 the Board of Directors kicked off a planning process focused on navigating a course through 2019. A Strategic Planning Committee comprised of the Board's Chairperson, three Directors with diverse backgrounds and experience partnered with DDI's Executive Director, Associate Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, along with three senior managers representing DDI's major program and support areas to develop this plan.

Phase I of the strategic planning effort entailed the re-examination of the agency's Mission and Vision Statements, resulting in more direct language to express our purpose. This phase also helped us commit to Core Values which underlie all actions and decisions.

Phase II sought to involve as many DDI personnel as practicable, drawing upon their substantial expertise and experiences. This was an expansive effort involving senior managers from across the agency conducting and presenting Environmental Assessments that allowed the committee, senior management and the Board of Directors to undertake S-W-O-T (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analyses. The environmental assessments considered both present and projected impacts on the agency's services and supports.

Phase III identified the principle themes that emerged from the Environmental Assessment review. We call these themes our "Pillars" around which future planning is focused. In furtherance of this phase's work the following Pillars were carefully defined:

1. **Workforce** - DDI will become the preferred employer in its field where employees are seen as essential and valued contributors to the organization's mission.
2. **Program Excellence** - DDI will meet the emerging needs of the people we serve with fiscally viable, effective and innovative supports and services.
3. **Information Technology** - DDI will have a secure and reliable technology infrastructure to enable employees to work more efficiently and to enhance the supports and services we provide to our students and adults.
4. **Facilities & Environments** - Employees and the people we serve are provided with welcoming, well maintained, safe and energy efficient spaces.
5. **Fundraising** - DDI will have a sustainable process that ensures the availability of financial resources to meet its unfunded program or business needs and aspirations.
6. **Public Image & Communications** - DDI will differentiate itself from other providers in the eyes of all stakeholders – workforce, referral sources, families, payors, prospective employees and the community at large - in ways that reinforce its commitment to the values of Integrity, Dignity, Compassion and Teamwork.

Phase IV involves the detailed work of creating Goals, Objectives and Action Items for each of the Pillars, the implementation of accountabilities to which the agency will adhere, and the process for their monitoring and measurement as well as their revision, if necessary.

Assumptions

Assumptions were used to form the basis for the strategic thinking that went into this plan. While these assumptions relate to expected future conditions that are beyond our control, they nonetheless help to define many of the opportunities and the challenges we face.

Some of the key assumptions that have been identified are:

Demand for services – The overall demand for adult and children’s services will continue to increase for the foreseeable future, as evidenced by the reported increasing incidence of autism spectrum disorders.

Population served – The trend toward greater behavioral complexities of children and adults served will continue.

Regulations – State and Federal guidelines emphasizing less restrictive environments in special education, day and residential settings is an important driver of ongoing program development.

Information Technology – Innovations in the area of information technology offer opportunities to re-design work and service delivery.

Capital investment – Facilities and information technology are prominent drivers of expanded fundraising capability.

Managed care – Future reimbursement will evolve as it has in other parts of the healthcare industry, where payments to providers are driven by outcomes, supported by metrics, and aligned with service acuity.

Pool of workers – The pool of workforce candidates upon which DDI relies for its entry level positions is becoming increasingly competitive.

Salaries – Insufficient State funding for our services adversely affects our ability to pay salaries that are competitive.

Minimum wage and exempt overtime rules – Recent regulations affecting employer pay responsibilities is putting added salary cost pressures on us without relief from the State.

Unfunded regulatory mandates – New regulations without associated funding to cover costs will continue.

Revenue – Special education, residential and day program services reimbursement will likely not keep pace with the rate of inflation.