

THE PANDEMIC AND WNY PROVIDERS

15 DDAWNY member agencies responded to a survey on how COVID-19 has affected WNY I/DD providers. These not-for-profit providers represent approximately \$750 million in annual revenues.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE ... OFFSET BY ENORMOUS COSTS

Responding WNY providers received about \$19.5 million in federal assistance, of which \$750,000 is in loans that will need to be repaid, and \$18.8 million is in grants or loans likely to be forgiven

The same WNY providers reported spending \$18.9 million in COVID-related costs, including wage enhancements for frontline staff, new positions, COVID-related technology needs, and PPE

MASSIVE DECLINE IN SERVICES AND REVENUE

WNY providers have seen a stunning drop in units of service in OPWDD-funded programs in 2020 due to the pandemic; even after transportation cost savings of about 50%, providers saw a \$20 million dropoff in revenue from these OPWDD services from 2019 to 2020

From 2019 to 2020, Day Habilitation units declined 22%; prevocational units declined 31%; Community Habilitation units declined 3.5%; and respite units declined 41%, all due to limitations caused by the pandemic

Respondents reported that their Article 28 clinics lost \$1.3 million in 2020, while Article 16 clinics lost \$1.5 million; total clinic revenue declined 5.3% from 2019 to 2020

In preschool and school-age special education programs funded by NYSED, direct costs have declined in the COVID period (3.1% in school-age and 0.3% in preschool), but indirect costs have shot up 3.3% in school-age and 8.1% in preschool due in large part to health and safety requirements

Respondents reported that, as of December 31, 2020, preschool special education enrollment was down 16.7% over the previous year

EFFECTS ON A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

The survey confirmed that women and BIPOC are the backbone of the I/DD workforce. In the OPWDD-funded direct care workforce among the 15 responding organizations: 6,310 (77.7%) are women 3,527 (41.5%) are BIPOC 2,647 (31.9%) are women of color

With declining state reimbursement causing stagnant wages, and competition with enhanced unemployment benefits in the larger workforce, responding providers saw a 19.8% increase in vacant staff positions from 2019 to 2020, with 2,295 vacant positions as of January 2021

Staffing challenges caused overtime costs to jump 11.9% from 2019 to 2020, with overtime costs totaling \$19 million in 2020

Responding providers have been forced to furlough or lay off 600 FTE employees during the pandemic due to lost revenue and service capacity

CHARITABLE SUPPORT

Responding organizations saw a staggering 43.5% decline in special events revenue from 2019 to 2020, a year-over-year reduction of nearly \$650,000; a 3% increase in annual giving revenue added only \$77,000 – not nearly enough to offset the loss of special events support

Non-governmental COVID-19 grants from the philanthropic community were a bright spot, generating \$1.9 million in 2020 and filling a small part of the gap left by a lack of state resources



The Developmental Disabilities Alliance of Western New York is a collaborative group of member voluntary agencies that provide services to people with developmental disabilities. While honoring individual agency missions, it is the intent of the Alliance to assist agencies to develop relationships, promote unified strategies and share risks for the mutual gain with and for the benefit of people with developmental disabilities.