



Community Branch

Partnering with Individuals and the Community

Volume 1, Issue 1

Special points of interest:

- New organizational structure
- New Logo

- Focusing on partnerships, outreach & education
- Focusing on efficiency of internal systems
- Helping you get informed and get involved

Letter from Superintendent

From all of us at Knox County Board of MRDD, we wish you Happy Holidays. We hope that you and those you care for remain happy, safe and healthy during this holiday season. This time of year is a time for change and renewal and the Knox County Board of MRDD is using this time of transition as an opportunity to reevaluate ourselves and focus on partnerships, outreach, education, efficiency of internal systems and the principles of self-determination.

If I have not yet had the opportunity to speak with you in person, I look forward to doing so in the coming months. We want to hear from you about what you value from the County Board, what your concerns are and what suggestions you may have.

Over the last few months, we have received input from staff, individuals, families, providers and community members. We have used this feedback to construct our goals for the coming year. Following this letter, you will receive our *Agency Focus: 2007 Annual Report to the Community and 2008 Annual Action Plan*. That document details what we have accomplished in 2007 and what we plan to achieve in 2008. It is, in essence, our contract with the community for the benefit of individuals we serve, their supports, and the community by addressing the concerns that you have voiced and the areas of improvement we have identified.

We feel that the County Board has already made great strides towards improving the lives of individuals with disabilities in Knox County over the last year. We recognize that crucial transitions occur for school aged children. Therefore we have created a

Child Team. We have begun offering massage therapy for Early Intervention children, we offer a Saturday respite program once a month for adults and children not on a waiver, and individuals now enjoy more choice than ever with six Adult Day Service providers that offer a wide variety of experiences and opportunities. We honored Knox County's committed and caring providers on December 10th by holding a Provider Recognition Dinner.

We have also already begun to implement efficiency goals. We have cut Administrative costs and internally re-organized duties. Details concerning agency structure can be found on the back of this report.

We look forward to opening the doors of communication to help you get informed and get involved. We have re-created our website, and in response to feedback from parents of individuals with disabilities we plan to create an online resource and news "Blog" that will help you locate information on topics that concern you. A Parent Chat Forum will also be available where you can go to connect to other families receiving services. We are also developing a Parent/Family Action Group. In addition, the efforts of Citizens for Individuals with MRDD of Knox County (CIMKC) are helping to spread awareness about disability services. More information about CIMKC is in the following story.

This newsletter is to inform you of the changes that we have undertaken, and how you can get involved. So please take the time to learn about us, and teach us about you.

- Steve Oster,
Superintendent

Awareness Activities

Citizens for individuals with Disabilities of Knox County (CIMKC) recently presented Knox County Board Members with their efforts to support awareness for the County Board's March 2.75-mill levy that include a Benefit Festival, a Benefit Concert and participation in the Christmas Parade. These awareness and fundraising events were made possible by community collaboration, generous donations from area businesses and volunteers.

CIMKC has several more events in the planning stages. They continue to recruit community support for their efforts. Their efforts enhance the community's awareness about individuals with disabilities and the services available.

If you would like to join a levy committee, or donate money, contact Media Committee chair, Andrea Perry at knoxmrddelevy@gmail.com

More information or access CIMKC feedback forum can be found at their website www.knoxmrddelevy.org

New Logo

As you can see at the top of this document, we have re-created our logo. We feel that this new logo reflects *growth* both in the agency and in the individuals we serve. It also represents *community roots*. *Strong community roots* is a concept that is important for community-based individuals to live self-determined lives. *Community roots* is also an important concept for us as an agency. We started as a group of Knox County family members of individuals with disabilities over 50 years ago and we continue to rely on community input and resources to serve individuals.



11700 Upper Gilchrist Road
Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050
www.knoxmrrdd.com

Congratulations to Betty Flack, Marsha Ernst and Rose Cole for their years of service and their retirement

Agency Structure

The Knox County Board of MRDD has reduced administrative costs by reorganizing their internal structure and reassigning duties.

Rose F. Cole retired and Molly Wobbecke has been promoted from Service and Support Administrator (SSA) into the Director of Community Options and Medicaid Services vacancy.

Marsha Ernst retired and Rob Mahle has been promoted from Federal Funds Manager to Director of Quality Assurance.

Deb Carpenter resigned as SSA.

Three new SSAs will be hired after January 1st to fill vacant positions; James Cree II, Sherrie Simmons, and Kristin Miller

At no additional cost to the County Board, Andrea Perry has been promoted from SSA to the new position of Director of Public Relations.

CONTACTS:

Service & Support: Jeffrey Williams, SSA Manager, 740-397-4647

Medicaid Services: Molly Wobbecke, Director of Community/Medicaid Services., 740-397-4621

Quality Assurance: Robert Mahle, Director of Quality Assurance, 740-393-6978

Provider Billing: Fiscal Specialist, Darlene Baker, 740-393-6975

MUI/Nursing: Kelly Gardner, Manager of Medical and MUI Services, 740-397-4651

Financial: Mark Kohlman, Director of Business Operations, 740-397-4701

Human Resources/Provider certification: Virginia Harden, Director of Human Resources, 740-397-4712

Information Systems: Jeanette Carpenter, Director of Information Systems, 740-397-4475

Transportation: Bob McNamee, Transportation Manager (*Part-time*), 740-397-4656

Public Relations: Andrea Perry, Director of Public Relations, 740-263-1034

Administration: Steve Oster, Superintendent, 740-397-4617

Get Informed & Get Involved

Contact: Jeff Williams, SSA Manager, to suggest training topics you are interested in or join Parent/Family Action Group.

Visit: www.knoxmrrdd.com to learn about the County Board services.

Contact: Jeanette Carpenter to get information concerning Aktion Club sponsored by Kiwanis

Visit: www.knoxmrrddlevy.org to volunteer or donate to Citizens for Individuals with MRDD of Knox County