

**Achieve Services**  
**Parents & Families Meeting**  
**February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020**



**PRESENTED BY TOM WEAVER**  
**CEO – ACHIEVE SERVICES**

# WELCOME!!

2

## Meeting Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Update on Achieve Services
  - DWRS background/update
  - MN-TAP
  - Threats to Center-Based work
- MNFAC Stephanie Peterson, Jim Clapper
  - Who is MNFAC?
  - Things in Motion
  - Advocacy
- Q & A

# DWRS Background

3

- Our services are paid for primarily through “waivers,” with 50% state \$\$ and 50% federal \$\$
- Because federal dollars are used, the federal government through the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) must approve our rate structure.
- In 2008, CMS instructed MN to change its rate system from a county-by-county system to a uniform system that better reflected the costs of services provided.

# DWRS Background

4

- In 2013, the Legislature passed the Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS), which totally restructured how rates are set for disability services.
- The DWRS creates a major shift in funding for many, creating some “winners” and many “losers.”
- To maintain some stability in the system, the legislature included a 5-year banding period, during which rates wouldn’t change by more than .5 – 1%/year. The 5-year banding period expired on 12/31/18.

# DWRS Background

5

- The legislature later added a 6<sup>th</sup> year of banding, pushing it out to 12/31/19;
- Banding protection has expired, and Achieve Services is expected to lose around 20% of our rate revenue:
  - Loss of \$560,000 this year;
  - Loss of \$800,000/yr next year and beyond.

# DWRS Impact on Achieve

6

- Achieve's historic rate enabled us to pay staff better wages and benefits.
  - Achieve's staff turnover rate in 2018: 12%
  - Achieve's staff turnover rate in 2019: 25%
  - Nationwide DSP turnover rate: Over 45%
- The DWRS is a “dumbing down” of programs like Achieve, and will continue to cause high staff turnover until meaningful changes to the rate formula occur.

# What are WE Doing?

7

- Looking for opportunities to collaborate and/or share services
- Increasing fundraising (gifts & grants)
- Creating new revenue streams:
  - ACHIEVE CLEAN!!
  - Achieve Endowment
- Building reserves
- Exploring new/expanded service opportunities
- Continuing to seek legislative relief

# Update on MN-TAP

8

- Achieve is part of a grant through the U of M and the U of Massachusetts called the MN Technical Assistance Project (MN-TAP).
- MN-TAP provides technical assistance to help increase the number of people being employed in more individualized competitive, integrated community jobs.
- We believe we can improve at finding jobs in the community for individuals, but we also realize that this is *not the path everyone wants*.



# THREATS TO CENTER-BASED WORK

9

Many Achieve workers are hired to do work, for a variety of companies, on-site at Achieve. Unfortunately, there are “advocates” in Minnesota and around the country who are trying to eliminate this opportunity.

# THREATS TO CENTER-BASED WORK

10

## What is Center-Based Work?

- Piece-work performed on-site at Achieve for a variety of employment partners;
- Examples include packaging greeting cards and ink cartridges, picking foam bricks, sorting rubber gaskets, etc.;
- Wages are based on productivity: the Dept. of Labor requires we time-study each job, and wages must be commensurate with productivity.

# THREATS TO CENTER-BASED WORK

11

## What is Center-Based Work? (cont'd)

- The federal regulation that allows the payment of “subminimum” or “commensurate” wages is commonly referred to as section **14c** (of the Fair Labor Standards Act) work.
- Achieve has about 70 participants who regularly do center-based work under 14c.

# THREATS TO CENTER-BASED WORK

12

## Threat 1: DHS is redefining “Day Services”

- Employment Services were already carved out;
- DHS proposing to redefine what’s left of day services; and
- Redefine center-based work as “pre-vocational,” and time-limits it to 3 years, with possible 1-yr extension;
- Effectively ends center-based work as a long-term option.

# THREATS TO CENTER-BASED WORK

13

Threat 2: HF 3433 (Cantrell)/SF 3561 (Cohen)

- This bill eliminates subminimum wage work as of August 1, 2024, and creates a task force to plan for the phase-out of that work.

# The Truth About Center-Based Work

14

## ACHIEVE PARTICIPANTS ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE!

- Achieve workers have the option of seeking competitive, integrated community-based employment; or
- Performing subminimum wage work in accordance with US Dept. of Labor guidelines that ensure compensation is commensurate and fair; or
- Performing volunteer work and receiving other life-enriching services; or
- Some combination of the above.

# The Truth About Center-Based Work

15

- As part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Center for Independent Living assessed over 9,900 people with I/DD last year, and only 17% of those surveyed said they wanted to pursue employment in a competitive integrated setting.
- That means 83% chose center-based work and other life-enriching services, not competitive integrated employment.

# The Truth About Center-Based Work

16

- While it's true that “commensurate” wages are sometimes less than the state's minimum wage, our more productive workers earn wages that are much higher than the minimum wage.
- Workers/families/guardians frequently *choose* center-based work because:
  - They are working in a safe, supported, well-staffed environment;
  - They enjoy working with their friends and peers;
  - They have complicated support needs and don't feel comfortable working in the community; and
  - They feel much more vulnerable out in the community



# The Truth About Center-Based Work

17

- If subminimum wage work is eliminated, thousands of people with I/DD will lose their jobs – *and most will have no other employment options.*
- They will lose much more than a paycheck. They will also lose:
  - Their sense of purpose, and piece of their identity
  - An important connection to a social peer group
  - An opportunity to contribute
  - An opportunity to be valued
  - The dignity of having and performing a job

# The Truth About Center-Based Work

18

- At Achieve, we believe we should all be working to provide *more* employment choices, *not fewer*; and
- We should respect and honor individual choices instead of dictating what's best for others.

If your and/or your family member at Achieve value center-based work, please ask your legislator to OPPOSE HF 3433 and SF 3561.

# What Can YOU do?

19

## Become an informed advocate!!

- Join MNFAC!!
- Join the Best Life Alliance
- Share your story
- Sign up to testify
- LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD
- Grassroots input from FAMILIES is critical!!

# What Can YOU do?

20

## Support Achieve!!

To offset the cuts in government subsidies being implemented this year, fundraising has become a top priority! You can help by:

- Contributing to Achieve
  - ✦ Attend and/or contribute to our Spring Gala on April 17th
- Include Achieve in your will
- Buy/subscribe to Achieve Clean
- Join our newly formed Parents' Committee

# Resources

21

- Achieve's "Advocate" web page (under "Support Us" tab)
  - [www.achieveservices.org](http://www.achieveservices.org)
- Best Life Alliance: <http://bit.ly/BestLife4All-Signup>
- MNFAC: [www.mnfac.org](http://www.mnfac.org)
- MOHR Advocacy web page: [www.mohrmn.org](http://www.mohrmn.org)
- MN-CCD (Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities)
  - [mnccd.org/](http://mnccd.org/)

## Resources (cont'd)

22

- Who are my legislators?
  - <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>
- Where can I find the language/status of bills in the legislature?
  - [https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/status\\_search.php?body=House](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/status_search.php?body=House)

# Achieve Clean Laundry Detergent

23

- We launched a new design and a new website. It's also easier than ever to order and subscribe!
- We continue to employ Achieve participants who label and fill bottles, fulfill orders, and help with sales and marketing.
- **Subscribe TONIGHT and receive your first bottle FREE!**



**A C H I E V E C L E A N . O R G**

**QUESTIONS?**