

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Family Members,

**Who we are:**

**The Minnesota Families and Advocates Coalition (MNFAC)** was formed in January 2016 as a volunteer organization of parents and family members concerned with protecting the rights of individuals with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities in Minnesota.

MNFAC's Mission is faithful to the US Supreme Court's Olmsted decision and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Olmsted clearly states that individuals’ desires are paramount in determining residential and day placement. It is with this legal foundation that MNFAC asserts that the Minnesota Department of Human services **must offer a range of residential habilitation and employment options** to meet the diverse needs of individuals with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities.

**What we are doing:**

Currently, some of MNFAC’s primary concerns are with the **Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS)** and the **healthcare workforce crisis**. The Disability Waiver Rate System changes currently will take effect in 2019 and could dramatically reduce rates for traditional center-based day programs and for some traditional group homes. As a result, these pending rate cuts could jeopardize the survival of many programs and ultimately eliminate *choice* for individuals. The healthcare workforce crisis is another focus for us, with the lack of movement in pay and the approximately **8700 open positions** in Minnesota alone, finding quality care will become increasingly difficult.

**How you can help:**

MNFAC’s goals include **statewide advocacy, awareness, and advisement**, and this is an invitation for all interested parents, guardians, and family members to join and support the work being done on behalf of our loved ones with disabilities.

To receive more information and/or to join MNFAC, email your name and email address to:

mnfacgroup@gmail.com

Regards,

MNFAC Steering Committee

[www.MNFAC.org](http://www.MNFAC.org) is our new Website!

**What we are currently working on:**

1. Meeting and Communicating with Parent and Family member forums across the state, to provide our position on emerging initiatives that are going to dramatically change the availability and delivery of services to our loved ones. Our current focus is on DWRS and the Healthcare Workforce Crisis, but we are concerned about changes coming in HCBS, WIOA.
   1. Encourage parents and family members to **Know Their Numbers** – Rate Management System new individualized rates, a.k.a. “screen shots”. Inform them that these are available from Case managers and/or Service Providers.
   2. Encourage parents and family members to meet with their **Service Providers**, and find out what the impact of the new rates will have on them. Support these providers in whatever they need to do under DWRS.
   3. Encourage parents and family members to **meet with their local legislators**, to educate them about the impending impact of DWRS. There will likely be statute changes to DWRS in the 2017 and 2018 sessions, so it is vital that parents and family members meet with their local legislators to get them on board to support changes to DWRS.
2. Develop a close relationship with **Disabilities Services Division** within **Minnesota Dept of Human Services.** Participate in public comment periods, attend advisory councils, invite them to our meetings, and get our membership to do the same.
   1. Get DSD/MnDHS to establish a new advisory council, specifically for parents, family members, guardians, and self-advocates.
   2. Attend and become members of related councils including Mn Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities, State Quality Council, DWRS Advisory Council and others.
3. Work with legislators, groups, and agencies like MOHR, ARRM, MDLC and MnDHS to help shape statute changes where possible, to DWRS in the 2017 and 2018 sessions.

**Glossary:**

**DWRS – Disability Waiver Rate Setting**

**RMS – Rate Management System within DWRS, also known as the “framework”**

**HCBS – Home and Community Based Services Medicaid Waiver requirements**

**WIOA – Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act**

**DHS – Minnesota Dept of Human Services**

**CMS – Center of Medicare and Medicaid Services – including waivered services funding**

**DEED – Mn Dept of Economic and Employment Development**

**VRS – Vocational Rehabilitation Services, within DEED**

**DOL – Dept of Labor, responsible for VRS and 14c special minimum wage permits**

**DOJ – Dept of Justice**

**HHS – Health and Human Services Committees, in state Senate and House**