

Agency Preparation

Technology Needed

The College of Direct Support is easily accessible and available through the internet 24 hours per day 7 days per week but requires some basic technology:

- IBM-compatible computer usually called a PC. CDS is not Mac compatible
- 500 MHz processor, running Microsoft Windows 98® (second edition) or later
- 128 MB RAM
- 56k modem or high speed-connection. A high-speed connection such as DSL is highly recommended
- Color monitor capable of 800 x 600 resolution
- Audio sound card with amplified speakers
- Printer
- Internet Explorer® (preferred) or Netscape Navigator® version 4.0 or later
- Macromedia Flash Player 6® plug-in
- Window Eyes® screen reader is the recommended screen reader for Flash compatibility

Choosing a CDS Administrator

The CDS will be the management system used by the state to track training—requiring each agency to have a CDS administrator. The primary duties of the administrator will be to manage learners (employees) for his/her agency by creating and entering user IDs and to assign courses to those DSPs who are on the career path.

All current employees within DDD HCBS waiver funded agencies will need to be entered into the CDS. DDD will be sending Excel Spreadsheets to each agency requesting a list of current staff. A bulk upload will be arranged through MCStrategies (the company that runs the CDS) eliminating the need for agencies to enroll current staff. After this is completed agency administrators will need to enter all new hires into the CDS.

Your CDS Administrator should be someone from your Human Resource or Training Department with moderate computer skills. He or she does not have to be a computer genius to manage the CDS! Training on how to administer the CDS will be offered free of charge and will be announced. In addition to having some computer knowledge, your administrator should have the following qualities:

- Be a good communicator
- Be a multi-tasker
- Pay attention to detail
- Be a good planner
- Be organized
- Be motivational and empowering

The amount of time required to administer the CDS will depend on how large your staff is but should not take up more than a few hours per week. Most of the time invested will be early in the learning and start up process.

The Career Path

The ability to offer NJ's Career Path in Developmental Disabilities is one benefit of the College of Direct Support. Planning ahead is crucial to successful implementation of the Career Path. Agencies interested in offering the Career Path to their staff need to choose a person to coordinate the project, determine a method for selecting DSPs and mentors to participate voluntarily, and determine the amount of the salary increase awarded after completion of each level. The Boggs Center will be offering informational sessions on how to implement the Career Path regionally starting in 2009 and upon agency request.

