

December 2012

VOR's Quality in the Community Initiative

Introduction

Beginning in 2013, the VOR will launch its "Quality in the Community" initiative to proactively address the negative outcomes associated with unprepared community settings for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

The need for VOR's Quality in the Community Initiative is urgent. Deinstitutionalization – the closure of federally-licensed specialized settings – continues in earnest. As a result, individuals with profound I/DD, multiple disabilities, serious medical problems, and behavior challenges are removed from specialized settings to "community-based" settings often with poorly trained staff and inadequate health and safety measures in place. Predictable tragedies are well-documented and widespread. VOR's Quality in the Community Initiative aims to address this widespread concern by developing and promoting community care standards.

Project Objective:

Identify best practices and promote these high-quality, person-centered community based services for all individuals with I/DD through advocacy and legislation to ensure uniform, humane quality standards in community settings across all states.

2013 Goals:

- (1) In the 113th Congress, introduce federal legislation that provides (a) findings associated with the health and safety risks faced by individuals with I/DD due to unprepared, underfunded community options; (b) offers a "best practice" uniform standards to be adopted at a state's option, including but not limited to staffing criteria.
- (2) Disseminate to state administrations, providers and provider organizations, the best practice model and standards.
- (3) Associated media and public awareness outreach activities.
- (4) Coalition building to include disability advocacy organizations, provider organizations, professional groups (including accreditation agencies), and individuals.
- (5) Explore process of achieving accreditation for best practices model.