

Modernizing Ohio's Developmental Disabilities System

A Path to Better Value, Better Lives



Why Modernization Matters

Ohio's developmental disabilities (DD) system supports more than **110,000 people and families** across all 88 counties. Yet access, funding, and quality vary widely depending on where people live. The system's **complexity, workforce crisis, and outdated funding structures** make services **unpredictable and unsustainable**.

A modern, value-driven system will ensure that every Ohioan can access the right supports, at the right time—wherever they live.

System Snapshot

People

110,000+ Ohioans served statewide, with rising acuity and more complex needs.

Providers

13,600 total providers — 1,500 are agencies; the rest are independents.

Pressures

- Spending has grown **8.5% annually**, outpacing state revenue.
- Local levy match rates range from **0% to 60%**, driving inequity.
- Rates fail to keep pace with costs, making **competitive DSP wages** difficult to sustain or reliably increase over time.
- Duplicative regulations, audits, and monitoring increase **administrative load** and reduce capacity for direct service.

Our Vision

A **coordinated, predictable, and value-driven system** where:

- People enter through a single, consistent “no wrong door.”
- Payments and planning are guided by one statewide assessment.
- Shared administration reduces duplication and cost.
- Oversight focuses on outcomes and learning.
- Data, technology, and workforce investment drive quality and sustainability.

The Path Forward: Five Priorities for Modernization

1. **Access:** Create a consistent statewide entry and eligibility system. Move from 88 county processes to *one coordinated continuum* that guarantees equitable access and predictable services statewide.
2. **Case Management:** Align planning and funding with quality and outcomes—not volume. Simplify processes with a single statewide assessment and predictable, tiered payments that reflect individual needs.
3. **Sustainability:** Build a financially stable system that supports reinvestment. Shift from fee-for-service to *value-based payment* and redirect savings into workforce, technology, and innovation.
4. **Quality & Accountability:** Move oversight from rule citation to outcomes and learning. Use data and transparency to drive improvement, not punishment.
5. **Efficiency:** Reduce duplication so dollars flow to direct support. Modernize technology, standardize tools, and streamline reporting across agencies.

The Result

A coordinated, sustainable DD system that delivers **better value, better outcomes, and better lives**—for the people we serve, the professionals who support them, and the communities that depend on them.