**Moving Towards Outcomes**

**(Rethinking the ISP Process)**

Ohio’s Developmental Disabilities System has benefitted from the historical application of person centered planning processes. As a result more and more individuals have increasing opportunities to pursue meaningful life experiences. The emergence of self-advocate leaders is bringing welcome pressure on professionals to deliver responsive supports and there are a number of exciting new system initiatives that support true self determination. All of these are welcome introductions into our system of supports.

Yet the development of a functional individual service plan (ISP) that leads to productive outcomes for the individual remains elusive. Complicating this is an inconsistent planning process across counties that often frustrate all involved. The ISP is frequently written as a provider instruction tool overloaded with regulatory elements that are required and covered elsewhere rather than a guide to achieve an individual’s life goals.

At the program director/ direct support professional level the emphasis on regulatory requirements shifts efforts from focus on outcomes to one of compliance. A voluminous, compliance oriented ISP document simply does not lend itself to enthusiastic embrace by those who must implement it and does not easily translate into a guide for improving the lives of those served.

OPRA firmly believes that both provider and county board staff are committed to the best life possible for all individuals served. The proposed new SSA rule reinforces the collaborative aspect of service planning and encourages team creativity. Implementation of this new rule may offer the system a unique opportunity to begin anew conversations on the effectiveness of current ISP planning processes and the possibilities inherent in moving more towards outcome based processes.

As such, the OPRA membership intends to pursue the realization of life goals on behalf of individuals, their families and their friends though best practice planning and; whether specific goals are articulated through the person-centered process or not-a responsible ISP will address an individual’s wants and needs regarding his/her health and management of finances and; to achieve the above close cooperation and communication among all stakeholders is necessary.