



# MENTAL RETARDATION BULLETIN

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

DATE OF ISSUE

October 6, 1987

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 6, 1987

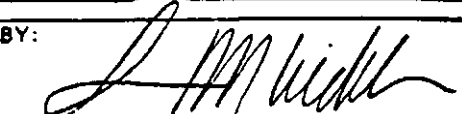
NUMBER

00-87-15

SUBJECT:

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP  
FAMILY-DRIVEN FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES  
PILOT PROJECTS**

BY:

  
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Deputy Secretary for Mental Retardation

SCOPE:

Regional MR Program Managers  
County MH/MR Administrators  
Base Service Unit Directors

PURPOSE:

To announce that the Office of Mental Retardation will accept proposals from counties for funding to initiate family-driven family support services pilot projects.

INTRODUCTION:

A primary mission of the Department of Public Welfare is to promote, improve, and sustain the quality of family life. The basis of this mission is that the family is the primary unit for nurturing emotional support, economic support, socialization, and care of its members, including those with mental retardation. County mental retardation programs should acknowledge and enhance the role of the family as the primary responsible unit for caring for members with mental retardation and should assist families in providing a supportive, nurturing environment so that out-of-home placements are minimized.

The Office of Mental Retardation expects that community mental retardation programs, which focus on families, will be designed and managed in order to achieve optimal quality. The Office of Mental Retardation will oversee and support county management towards achieving this goal.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

**Appropriate Regional Program Manager**

BACKGROUND:

It is the goal of the Office of Mental Retardation and the Department to assure that parents and caretakers have the supports necessary to accept responsibility for providing a nurturing environment for their family members with mental retardation.

Nationally, Pennsylvania is recognized as having a comprehensive array of support services for families. These family and client services include, but are not necessarily limited to: respite care, sitter/companionship services, homemaker services, in-home support, aural rehabilitation, hearing aid evaluations, sign language training, physical therapy, occupational therapy, mobility training, behavioral programming, home rehabilitation, adaptive appliances, and special diets. With the assistance of these types of services, many persons with mental retardation have been able to live successfully in the community.

Within the service system, however, there frequently exists a lack of direct and meaningful family involvement in the decisions about the services the family needs, receives, is aware of or has access to. For a variety of reasons, families often have little choice in regard to which services are planned or delivered because their needs are frequently identified and assigned priority by others. OMR intends to enhance family participation in decisions regarding which services will best address family needs by stimulating the development of family-driven family support services projects in a number of counties throughout the state.

During June of 1987, as an important component of this effort OMR, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Association of Resources for People with Mental Retardation, sponsored four seminars across the state to acquaint counties, providers, parents/families, advocates, and consumers with the family-driven method of providing family support services. OMR has also established a broadly representative subcommittee of its Planning Advisory Committee to assist the Office in designing new ways to make family support services available to persons with mental retardation and their families. The Subcommittee on Family Support Services will continue to have an important role in the initiation of family-driven projects throughout the state. Through the issuance of this Request for Proposals (RFP), OMR is now providing county mental retardation programs the opportunity to apply for funding to initiate a family-driven family support services pilot project.

NOTICE OF PREPROPOSAL CONFERENCE:

The Office of Mental Retardation will conduct a preproposal conference to review and clarify the purpose of this effort and the requirements of the Request for Proposals and to respond to questions which potential applicants may have regarding this effort. The preproposal conference will be held on October 15, 1987 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room B of the Department of Education Building, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

All counties interested in applying for these special funds should have a representative attend this important meeting. Due to the tight timeframe for initiating projects, there will be no opportunity to send records of discussion at the proposal conference to counties not in attendance.

THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):

I. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to request proposals from counties for categorical funding from the Office of Mental Retardation to initiate family-driven family support services pilot projects. Through these projects, counties should demonstrate service expansion to currently unserved and/or underserved persons with mental retardation and their families.

II. Definitions

For the purpose of the RFP, the following definition is applicable:

- A. Family-Driven - refers to a method of providing services whereby the family and the person with mental retardation, rather than the service system, are given the responsibility for deciding which services will best address the family's specific needs.

III. Eligible Applicants

Applications will be accepted only from County Mental Retardation Programs and must be signed by the County MH/MR Administrator.

IV. Funding

The Office of Mental Retardation intends to make a total of \$658,000 in half-year funding available to support eight or more family-driven pilot projects in eight or more different county programs beginning in the third quarter of Fiscal Year 1987-88. Funding for each project will be provided on a 100% State funding basis. Categorical funding for projects initiated in Fiscal Year 1987-88 will be annualized on a full-year funding basis for Fiscal Year 1988-89. It is expected that funded projects will be operational by the end of the third quarter of Fiscal Year 1987-88. During Fiscal Year 1988-89, OMR will evaluate each project. On-going funding for the projects beyond Fiscal Year 1988-89 will be based on the results of the evaluation and will be included in the non-residential base allocations of participating counties.

V. Required Guiding Principles for Proposals

All proposals must demonstrate the following principles in their plans for empowering families in the provision of support services to them:

- A. Families must be directly and meaningfully involved in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the provision of supports to them.
- B. Families must be consistently educated about which services exist and are available initially and throughout the project.
- C. Good human services should be guided by a clearly stated mission/purpose.
- D. Local community resources and informal supports typically used by or available to all members of a given community should be used to the extent feasible to avoid service duplication or the creation of another layer of specialized services.
- E. Service delivery should promote client growth and development and result in family/client satisfaction.

VI. Suggested Models

The Office of Mental Retardation has identified four family-driven approaches which would be eligible for funding as a pilot demonstration project. County applicants should propose to initiate a project which demonstrates one or more of these models. OMR would also consider proposals which describe other family-driven approaches not described below if such models clearly demonstrate the guiding principles listed above in Section V of this RFP. The four family-driven models suggested by OMR are:

- A. Cash Payment - this method involves providing a cash payment directly to the family. The family may use the money only for services eligible under the MH/MR Act of 1966.
- B. Voucher - this method involves establishing a voucher system to be used as payment for services. The voucher might be used for payment, or payment could be made to the family after submission of a receipt for services.
- C. Traditional Funding/Preapproved Service Plan - this is the model currently being tested widely in Allegheny County. It involves an allowance for a certain amount of services based on an annual need review and a preapproved plan. Payment for the services is made by the County or its designee. The family receives no money or vouchers to purchase services.

- D. Informal Supports - this method involves making funds available to hire a community organizer who would develop a system that would provide services, material or financial assistance for the family through friends, relatives, or community groups. Service clubs and church groups would be prime candidates for providers of informal supports such as friendly visiting, shopping assistance, respite care co-ops, companion services, etc. Informal supports would be provided in addition to, and not as replacement for, traditional services.

#### VII. Timeframe for Submission of Proposals

To be considered for funding, two (2) completed proposals (applications) must be sent or delivered to the appropriate Regional MR Program Manager so that they are received in the Regional Office by 5:00 p.m. on November 4, 1987.

Counties must also send or deliver a copy of each proposal to Mr. Arthur R. Geisler, Office of Mental Retardation, Room 302 Health & Welfare Building, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17120, by 5:00 p.m. on November 4, 1987.

#### VIII. Proposal Format and Application Requirements

Counties should use the attached application to submit a proposal for funding to initiate a family-driven family support services pilot project described in this RFP. Insofar as it is possible, applicants should respond to each question within the space limitations provided. Responses to the questions should be consistent with the policies and procedures set forth in Mental Retardation Bulletin #99-86-08 entitled Quality Assurance in Community Mental Retardation Programs.

#### **Attachment**

COVER PAGE

APPLICATION FOR FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES PILOT PROJECT FUNDING

1. Name of County MH/MR Program \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of County Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_
3. Title of Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_
4. Telephone Number of Contact  
Person \_\_\_\_\_
5. Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_
6. Projected Number of Families  
to be Served in the Pilot  
Project \_\_\_\_\_
7. Type of Model Project will  
Demonstrate \_\_\_\_\_
8. Total State Funding Requested  
for the Project for FY 1987-  
88 \_\_\_\_\_

County MH/MR Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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PROJECT NARRATIVE  
(Maximum Point Values are Indicated in Parenthesis)

1. Describe the purpose of the project. (20 Points)

2. Describe the target population to be served. (i.e., who, how many, any special characteristics, etc.) (20 Points)

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3. Describe the type and nature of the family-driven project to be implemented (i.e., the model) and the extent families are/will be involved in designing and implementing the model. (100 points)



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4. Describe how the county will implement the project. (60 Points)

5. Describe the accounting mechanisms and fiscal procedures the county will implement to ensure accountability in managing the model chosen for the pilot project. Identify any waiver of financial regulations that would be required, i.e., Title 55 Chapter 4300 County MH/MR Fiscal Manual. Attach a budget which details the funding request for the start-up year and the amount of state funds requested for the annualization year. (100 Points)

6. Summarize below the work plan for implementing the project. (60 Points)

Activity	Key Personnel	Start Date	Completion Date

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7. Describe how families participating in the project will be directly and meaningfully involved in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the provision of services to them and how this will be documented on an on-going basis. (100 Points)

8. Describe how families will be educated about which services exist and are available initially and throughout the project and how this will be documented. (60 Points)

9. Describe how and the extent to which the project will specifically use local generic community resources and informal supports typically used by or available to all members of the community. (i.e., the general public) (100 Points)

10. Describe how the county will evaluate the project and specify the extent to which families will be involved in the evaluation. The evaluation must include, but not be limited to, issues such as reduction of stress, prevention of out-of-home placement, extent to which the families manage their needs better, family satisfaction, etc. (60 Points)