



MENTAL RETARDATION BULLETIN

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

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SUBJECT:

**SPECIAL INNOVATIVE SERVICES EXPENDITURES
UNDER FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

BY:

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SCOP:

County Mental Health and Mental Retardation Administrators'
Base Service Unit Directors

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide direction for counties regarding the approval process for expenditures for "special innovative services" in State-approved family-driven family support services pilot projects.

BACKGROUND:

In Fiscal Year 1987-88, the Office of Mental Retardation funded eleven family-driven family support services (FD/FSS) pilot projects resulting from the Request for Proposals application process. During Fiscal Year 1989-90, an additional fifteen projects were funded using a similar process.

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. In a family-driven model, family members also have a primary responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating, and setting priorities for services to address their specific needs.

DISCUSSION;

The implementation of FD/FSS pilot projects has provided increased flexibility to persons with mental retardation in obtaining the services they need in order to live at home with their families. The projects have also made it possible for families to secure traditional as well as non-traditional services for their member with mental retardation both through the recognized mental retardation service system and on their own.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

Appropriate Mental Retardation Program Manager

Traditional family support services include those services identified in 55 PA Code Chapter 6350 pertaining to Family Resource Services, Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 99-83-24 titled, "DFW Policy on Support Services for Persons with Mental Retardation and Their Families," and Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 99-84-21 titled, "Supplement and Amendment to the DFW Policy on Support Services for Persons with Mental Retardation and Their Families."

Other services eligible for funding as family support services fall under the category of special innovative services. The procedures for implementing special innovative services are provided under Section 6350.27 of 55 PA Code Chapter 6350. However, since the Office of Mental Retardation has established family-driven family support services within the context of pilot projects, the Office is providing additional guidance for counties in approving and seeking State approval for expenditures for services which may fall within the special innovative service category.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR COUNTIES:

1. These general directions apply exclusively to special innovative services provided within the context of a State-approved family-driven family support services pilot project.
2. State-approved refers to an FD/FSS project that was categorically funded as a result of the submission of a proposal in response to Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 00-87-15, issued October 6, 1987, and titled, "Request for Proposals to Develop Family-Driven Family Support Services Pilot Projects," or Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 00-89-09, issued April 19, 1989, and titled, "Request for Proposals to Develop or Expand Family-Driven Family Support Services Pilot Projects." The FD/FSS pilot projects initiated in Fiscal Years 1987-88 and 1989-90 are eligible for 100% State financial participation up to the level they were funded as pilot projects, including any cost of living increase provided in ensuing years, in accordance with Section 6000.162 of Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 6000-90-01, issued on December 12, 1990, and titled, "Family-Driven Family Support Services."

When a county uses its 90% State/10% county funding to expand a State-approved FD/FSS pilot project, the county may assume that (a) State approval is extended to the components of the pilot project which are funded on a 90/10 basis and (b) that 100% State financial participation for the pilot project will remain intact as per Mental Retardation Bulletin No. 6000-90-01 cited above.

3. Counties that did not receive categorical funding in Fiscal Years 1987-88 and 1989-90 to initiate an FD/FSS pilot project may also obtain State approval to use their 90% State/10% county financial resources for the implementation of an FD/FSS pilot project. This requires the submission of a Proposal to Implement a Family-Driven Family Support Services Pilot Project to the appropriate Regional Mental Retardation Program Manager. If Regional approval of the proposal is obtained, funding of these State-approved pilot projects will be on a 90% State/10% county matching basis. Counties interested in pursuing this course of action should contact their Regional Office for further direction.

4. Funding for special innovative services which are not integrated into a State-approved family-driven pilot project will continue to be reimbursed by the Department on a 90% State/10% county matching basis, and such services continue to require Regional approval prior to implementation as per Section 6350.27 of 55 PA Code Chapter 6350.

SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS PERTAINING TO SPECIAL INNOVATIVE SERVICE REQUESTS IN APPROVED PILOT PROJECTS:

1. Within the context of a State-approved FD/FSS pilot project, counties have the latitude to approve expenditures for special innovative services up to \$1,500 per eligible client/family per year without having to obtain the approval of the Region Mental Retardation Program Manager. Counties also retain an option- of seeking Regional approval and/or advice for expenditures up to the \$1,500 limit.
2. Approval of expenditures for special innovative services exceeding \$1,500 per client/family per year within the context of a State-approved FD/FSS Program continues to be the responsibility of the Regional Mental Retardation Program Manager.

SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR COUNTY APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURES FOR SPECIAL INNOVATIVE SERVICES IN APPROVED PILOT PROJECTS;

The scope of discretion as to what is or what is not fundable as a special innovative service up to the \$1,500 limit in a State-approved FD/FSS pilot project will be with the county. The Office of Mental Retardation suggests that counties use the following concepts as standards in making decisions about expenditures for special innovative services:

1. The person with mental retardation must be the primary beneficiary of the special innovative services. If the benefit to the person with mental retardation is not greater than the benefit to any other member of the household, the expenditure would not be eligible for reimbursement. That would not preclude incidental benefit to other family members. This standard should be used by county and State personnel for expenditures below, at and above the \$1,500 limit.
2. This funding is not to be construed as a bonus to raise the standard of living for the family.