

Quarterly: Governance Committee  
Date/Time: 04/23/2025 10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Facilitator: Division of Developmental Disabilities

## Current Meeting Agenda 04/23/2025

Agenda Item	Presenter	Time
Welcome & Meeting Etiquette	Joe Trentacoste	3 Minutes
Opening Remarks	Zane Garcia Ramadan	2 Minutes
Olmstead Update	Christina Hedges	10 Minutes
Budget/Legislative Updates	Zane Garcia Ramadan	30 Minutes
Strategic Plan Update	Thelia Morris	70 Minutes
Call to the Public	Zane Garcia Ramadan	4 Minutes
Future Meetings and Closing	Zane Garcia Ramadan	1 Minutes

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### **Introduction - Joe Trentacoste**

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for joining us at this Governance Committee Meeting. This is our second meeting of 2025. We have three topics today: Olmstead Update, Budget/Legislative Update, and Strategic Planning Update.

### **Olmstead Update - Christina Hedges**

#### **Strategy 1: Effective Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for members to successfully reside in the community**

1. Units in Bullhead City that are in the process of being pre-leased
2. 100 Division members are currently living in subsidized homes through the 811 program and Coffelt, or receiving subsidies in various voucher programs
3. The Division has hired two new Housing Coordinators

#### **Strategy 2: Reach-in discharge planning for hospital settings**

1. CommunityCares is Arizona's statewide closed-loop referral system - this is a tool available to help AHCCCS healthcare providers and community-based organizations quickly and efficiently screen and refer members for Health-Related Social Needs
2. The Division continues to work towards the implementation of CommunityCares - Arizona's closed-loop referral system

#### **Strategy 3: Reach-in discharge planning for the justice system**

1. DDD currently has 195 members being monitored by the DDD Justice Reach-In Program
2. Division's Justice Outreach Coordinator is actively scheduling presentations for correctional facilities, crisis response teams, and police departments

#### **Strategy 5: Workforce Development Initiatives**

1. ARPA Dual Diagnosis Virtual Instructor-Led Training is on Relias for BH Providers
2. The 2025 Arizona Healthcare Workforce Goals and Metrics Assessment (AHWGMA) survey is now open.

#### **Strategy 6: High-quality network to ensure members are served in the most effective and least restrictive manner**

1. DDD BHA will be offering Lunch and Learns monthly for QVAs and BH Providers on different topics related to supporting dually diagnosed members
2. Solicitation to Qualified Vendors remains open for over 10 HCBS services statewide.

#### **Strategy 7: Person-centered planning enhancements**

1. National Committee for Quality Assurance for Case Management for Long Term Services and Supports Accreditation
  - a. Support Coordinators began training in February on the new member needs assessment process.
2. Nursing Support Coordination Unit is getting positive feedback

#### **Stay Connected with Olmstead**

- Visit [www.azahcccs.gov/Olmstead](http://www.azahcccs.gov/Olmstead). Here, interested parties have the option to:
  - Subscribe to updates to receive the latest news regarding the Olmstead Plan,
  - Receive information about open public comment periods, and
- Review quarterly updates in the Olmstead Plan. Find out when these updates occur by subscribing to updates via the Olmstead web page.
- Input and feedback on the Olmstead Plan may be provided during any of the above events or sent separately via the Olmstead email address throughout the year ([Olmstead@azahcccs.gov](mailto:Olmstead@azahcccs.gov))

[Contract Information for Qualified Vendors](#)

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**Of those 33 DDD Members who currently are incarcerated, how many were DDD/ALTCS Members before incarceration?** 30 are ALTCS, two are Target Eligible, and one is DDD only.

**Are the lunch and learns emailed out to vendors to sign up or is there a website to sign up?** These cater to the Behavioral Health providers contracted with Mercy Care and UnitedHealth. An announcement is being sent through their network.

**Thanks. It completely baffles me how DDD/ALTCS Members are competent to be incarcerated. I understand it's AZ...**

### **Budget/Legislative Update - Zane Garcia Ramadan**

On Tuesday, April 15, two identical bills were passed out of the House Appropriations and Senate Appropriations committees that would provide the supplemental funding DDD needs for FY 2025. Additional amendments to that bill will likely occur before it receives a final vote and goes to the Governor for signature. There is continued progress towards securing the supplemental funding before DDD's existing funding for this fiscal year runs out. DDD is working directly with Qualified Vendors, considering time-sensitive decisions related to their continued ability to provide services.

It has not been an easy time for anyone associated with DDD, whether you are a member, family member, provider, advocate, or staff member. It's the ongoing negotiations between our Governor and Legislature, and everything else. What has been amazing to see is how this community has rallied around these causes and demonstrated exceptional advocacy. Some of you have been directly involved; we sincerely thank you for those efforts to support the DDD members.

The urgent issue is the agreement between the Legislature and the Governor to provide the supplemental funding DDD needs for the rest of this fiscal year. As we shared in the previous meeting, DDD's growth has exceeded the projections in the budget established around this time last year. As a result, we do need supplemental funding to continue paying claims for services provided in May and June.

The bill to provide supplemental funding will be discussed today in the Committee of the Whole in the Legislature. Progress is being made, and we hope the Legislature can pass a bill to provide the supplemental funding. It is concerning that we have gotten to this point in the calendar without an agreement. The area where our focus is, from an operational standpoint, is providing support in any way we can to the provider community. If May comes without agreement, we would ask our qualified vendors to put much trust in the system.

Governor Hobbs has stated that she will not sign any more bills in this Legislative session until the supplemental funding is approved. DDD is taking this as a sign that the funding will come through and that it's a matter of timing. We hope that despite the uncertainty and challenges this situation has caused, our vendor community can stick with us and not make premature decisions. DDD recognizes that we are asking for a lot.

DDD has set up a system to collect outreach from qualified vendors who have expressed concerns and been responsive. We have provided the most up-to-date information. A few vendors have requested meetings, and our team has met with them to understand their situation better. Some of those vendors have told us they can't go more than a couple of weeks without funding. We are keeping that information confidential so as not to break trust. At the same time, it allows us to be prepared if we reach that worst-case scenario. This is to ensure we are working together to ensure they can continue providing services for as long as possible.

**Questions from participants are in bold.** Responses from the Division are not...

**What has changed within DDD's processes to better track and trend authorization vs. utilization? Does the Governor's proposed FY26 DDD Budget include a better estimate of the FY2026 fiscal needs of DDD?** Yes, the

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budget projections are developed to incorporate any historical data, trends, etc, that would inform what that capitation rate should be. What happened in this past year was that we had member growth that significantly exceeded our projections, as well as service utilization growth. We recognized this early in the fiscal year and made that known to the Legislature and the Governor's office. As a result of this additional year's worth of data, when the actuaries at AHCCCS develop the capitation rate for DDD, they consider that extra information. Predicting how things will be in the year ahead is also difficult. As mentioned previously, an area that we have seen the highest rate of service utilization growth is among the under-18 DDD member population. One of the changes that will be implemented by October 1st is updates to the assessment tool to better account for extraordinary care. In the first week of May, DDD should be releasing new policies and assessment tools that better allow us to factor in extraordinary care. It should give us a better sense of what those authorizations and utilization will look like moving forward.

**How many DDD QVA Vendors have announced they are leaving the network as of today? What member transition procedures is DDD following? What happens if a DDD QVA does not follow the DDD Member Transition procedure? If they do not follow the DDD Member Transition process will they be put on the SAM List?** In terms of the Vendors that have notified DDD that they are leaving the Network directly due to these funding issues, to our knowledge, there are zero. We have heard vendors say that if the funding doesn't come through by a specific date, they will have to stop providing services. That said, in a normal year, the Division has vendors enter and leave the network. We have had a handful of vendors, probably less than 5, that have left in the last 2-3 months.

Regarding the transition process, DDD has a standard procedure for when a vendor reduces the scope of the services or if they want to terminate a contract. DDD doesn't view this as a compliance action, considering some scenarios where some vendors may find themselves in this unexpected situation. We would guide them on how we would transition and approve the communication going out to the families. If a qualified vendor doesn't follow the member transition procedure and escalates to a contract action, it doesn't put someone on the [SAM list](#).

**About a month ago, there was a specific meeting about the budget and legislative factors. I believe someone had asked about this gross increase in membership that wasn't necessarily forecasted. There was mention of the influx of out-of-state families and individuals moving to Arizona, gaining residency here, and contributing to the growth. That also brings revenue to the state, and I think that would help to increase the budget for these programs. Are there earmarked percentages of residency overall, or is there a formulaic process for allocating this new revenue to DDD?** No, there is no specific bucket that tax revenue would go to specifically for DDD. It typically goes to the State General Fund. It is up to our elected officials to determine how to distribute those funds.

**To assist, There is a virtual Town Hall for Arizona's Disability Community on Friday, April 25 - hear from local disability leaders and officials. 1-3pm [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#). There are several agencies that formed committees and that are continuing to meet with legislators. Several of us have also gone to DC to advocate.**

**What will happen to all of these families if we can't continue to care for them??**

**Some vendors might be closing others are lowering their wages by \$5 or more.** As mentioned, we would follow our transition process and work with the vendor.

**How long will it take for the Support Coordination training to be completed?** DDD has implemented a new version of SC101, the multi-day training that all Support Coordinators go through. As things change within the Division, we continue to update that training. We are also getting accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Our program will improve many things through the results we achieve through this accreditation process. We started a new training for Support Coordinators at the beginning of February

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2025. Three districts have completed the training, while another is in the process, and another is still to go. We are improving the needs assessment and the totality of the Person Center Service Plan (PCSP). More training will be provided as AHCCCS works on updated policies regarding Parents as Paid Caregivers (PPCG). The other resource implemented last December is the resource handbook available to all Support Coordinators. This handbook is very comprehensive and guides them. **How do we handle the escalation process? How long should a Support Coordinator or Supervisor be given to respond realistically?** Within our requirements, it should be a 48-hour turnaround if not sooner. If there are concerns, you can contact the Customer Service Center or email Cindy with examples of what is occurring. **Transition for Support Coordinator: Are they aware that providers can transition people out? Yes. We have a systemic issue with that right now; I will send you specifics.** There are processes by which vendors can request to be released from an authorization, but it depends. DDD would have to evaluate those situations individually. If there are concerns, please escalate, and DDD will evaluate. **I don't want to come to you guys always, but we have been getting them a lot lately, and I am concerned. There are Support Coordinators who are not following what we are being told to follow, and will then turn around and say to a provider, You have to keep this person. I will send those to you guys.**

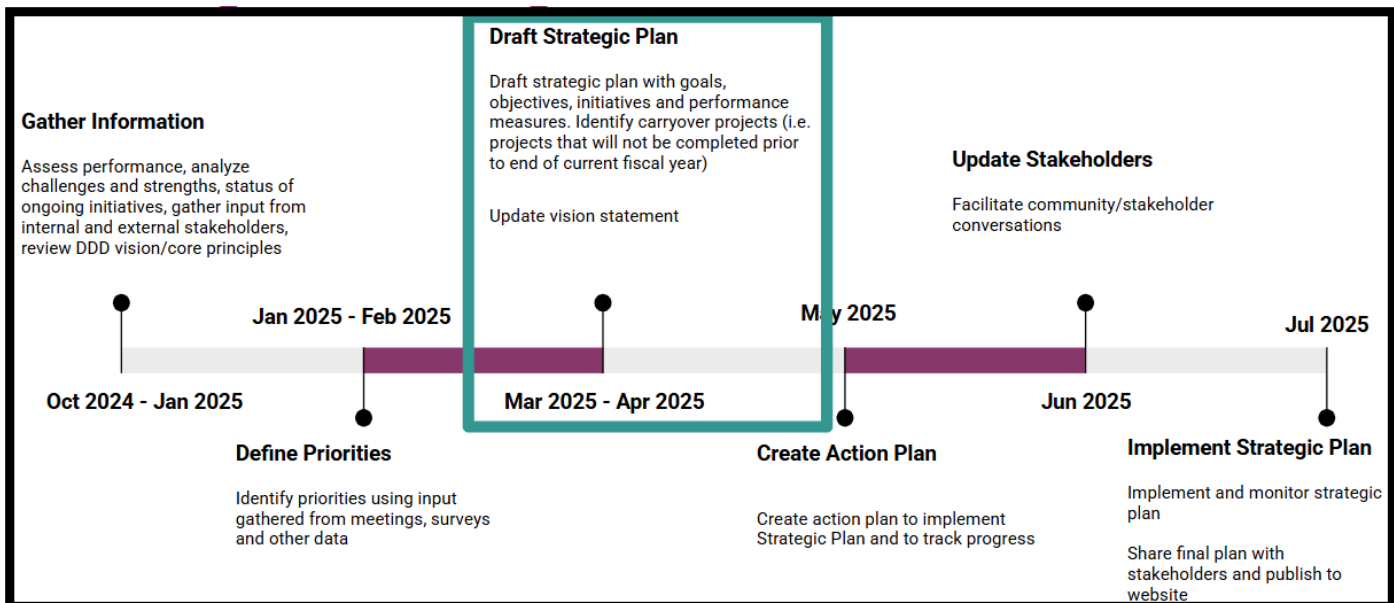
**Strategic Plan Update - Casey Padilla**

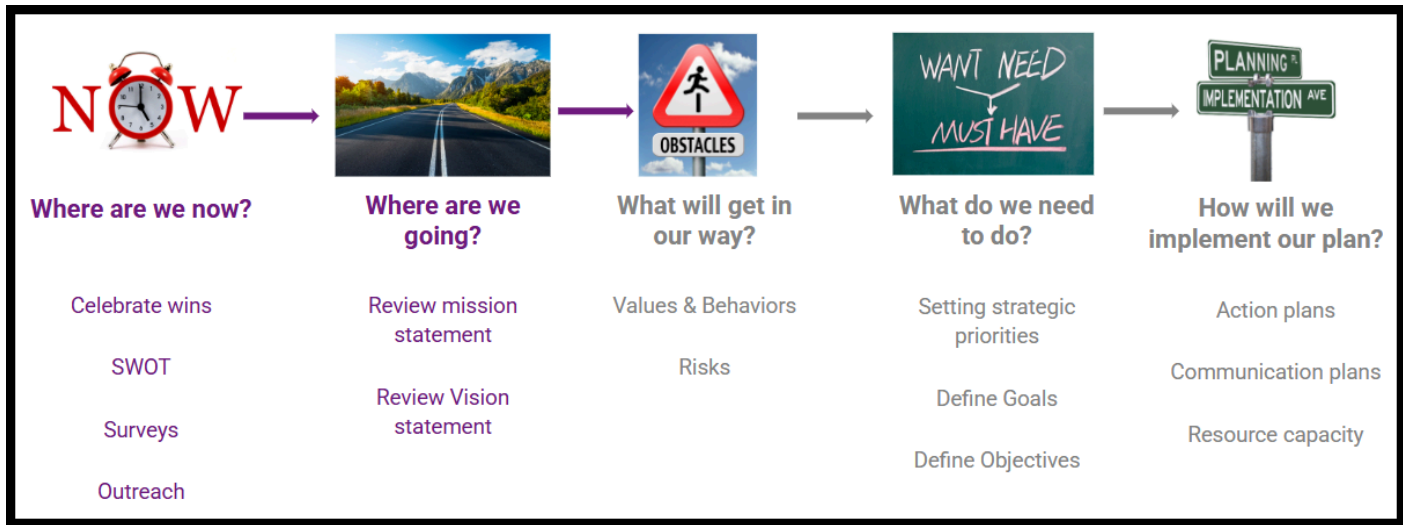
**What is Strategic Planning?** Strategic planning is a process that helps DDD map out its vision for the future and how it will get there. The process determines DDD's decisions and goals. DDD is creating a five-year Strategic Plan to be published in July 2025.

**Why will Strategic Planning help the Division?** Strategic planning is an ongoing process that will help the Division:

- Prioritize efforts
- Allocate resources
- Align employees and other stakeholders
- Ensure goals are backed by data
- Prepare for change
- Find new opportunities
- Stay true to the vision and mission
- Improve communication
- Improve decision-making
- Achieve evidence-based outcomes

**Strategic Planning Timeline**

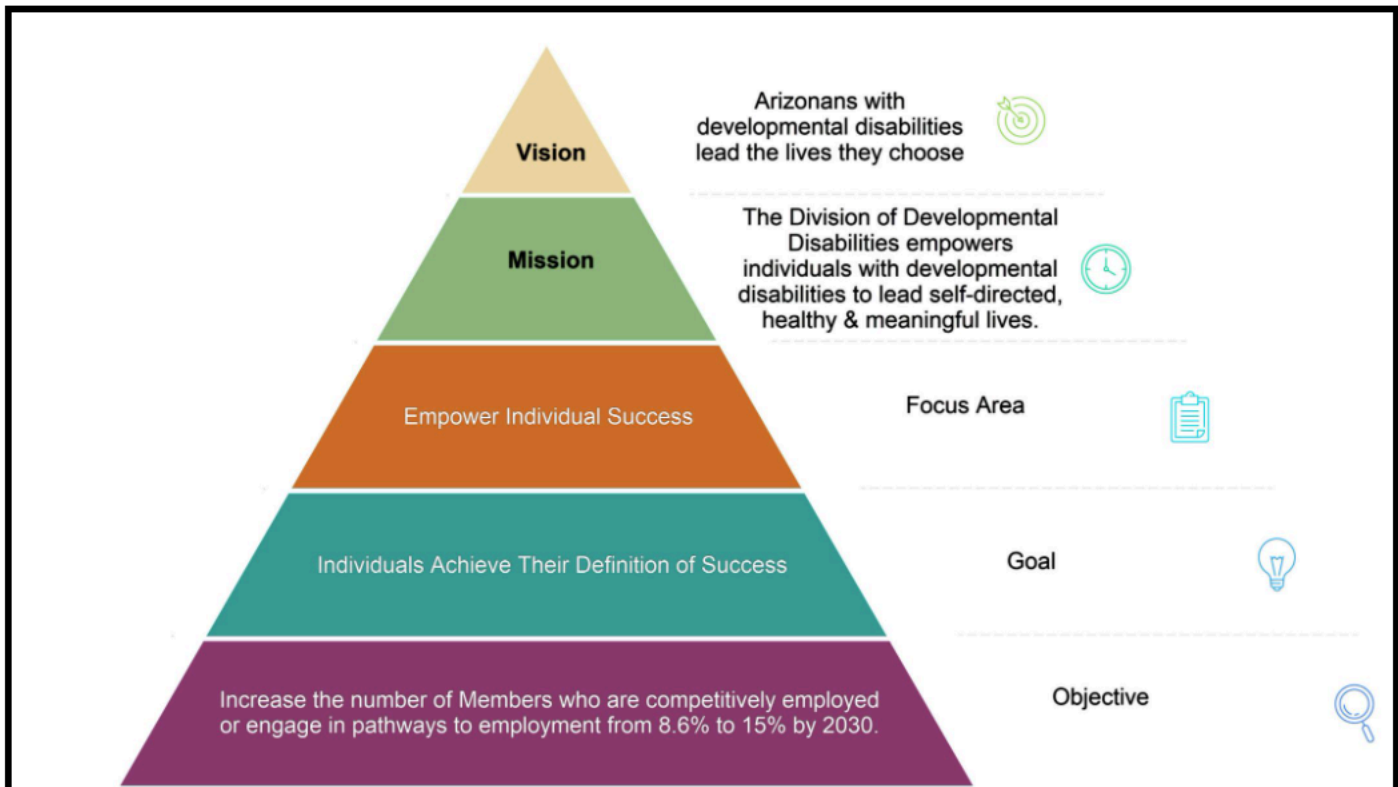




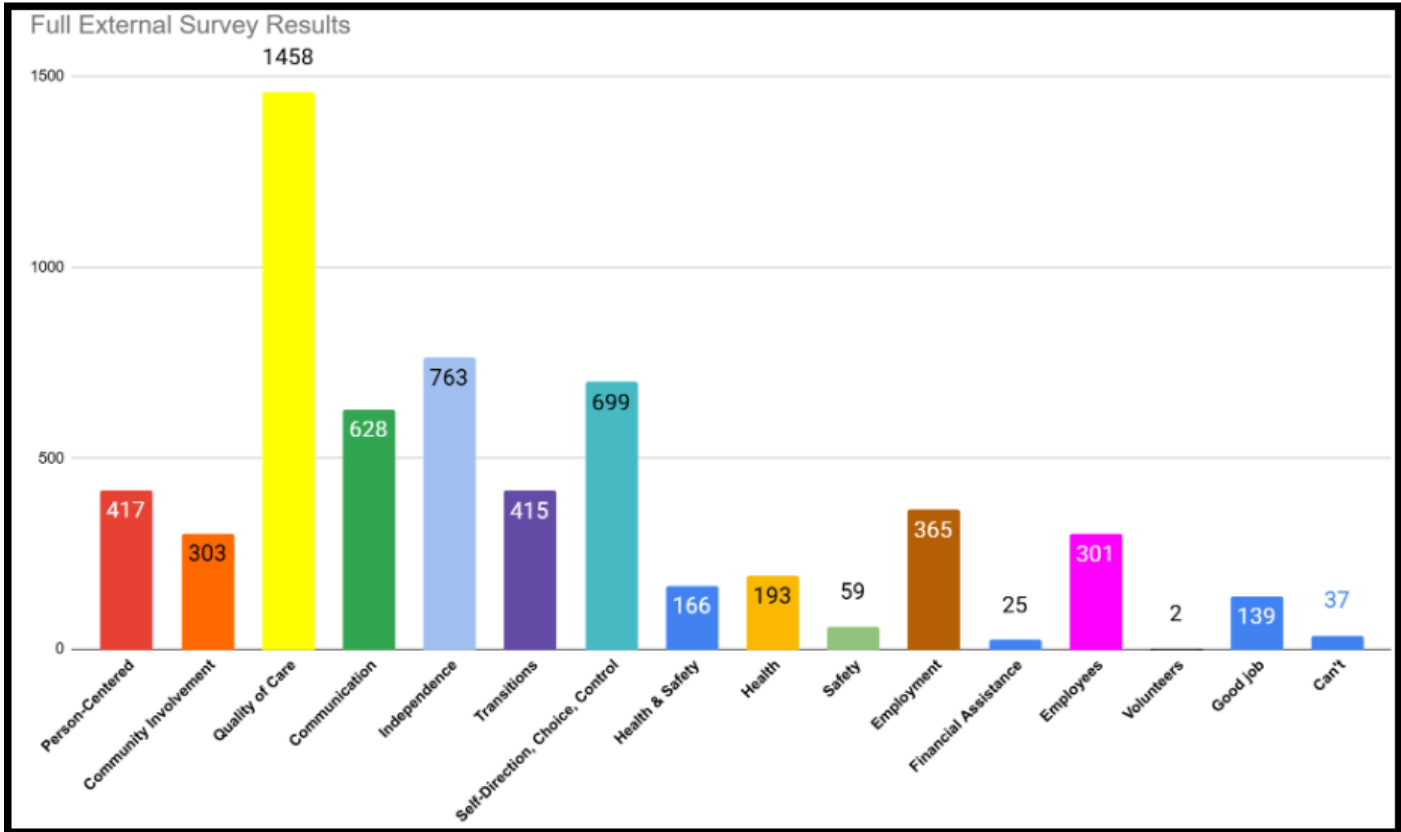
**Vision:** Arizonans with developmental disabilities lead the lives they choose

**Mission:** The Division of Developmental Disabilities empowers individuals with developmental disabilities to lead self-directed, healthy and meaningful lives.

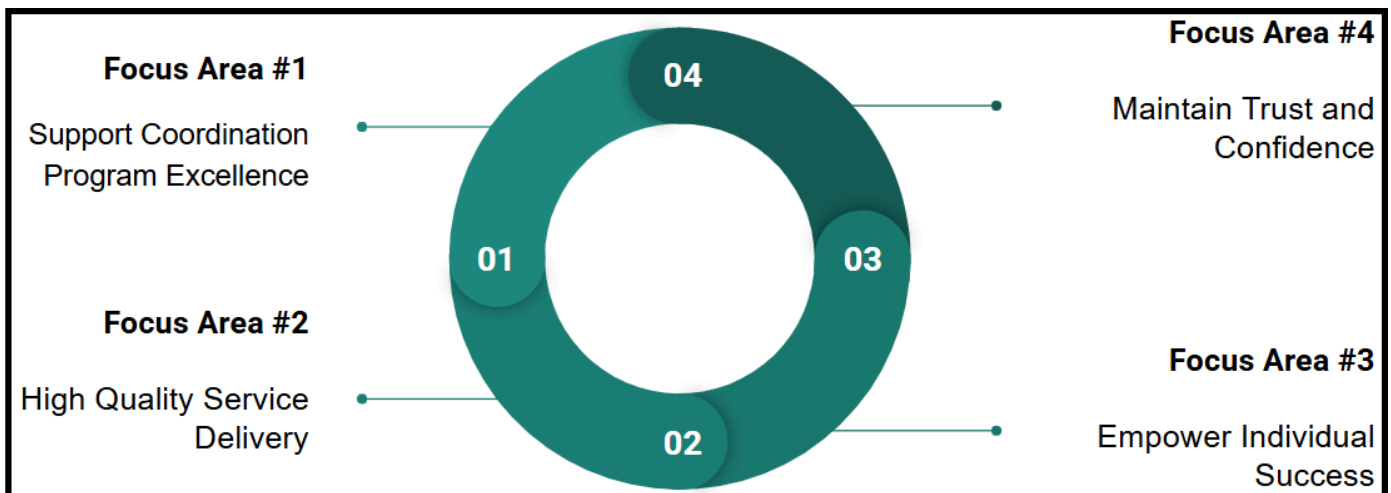
**Strategic Planning in Action**



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Strategic Focus Areas



Wrap up and Next Steps

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April/May: Sharing draft focus areas and goals with stakeholders

June: DDD will present draft objectives to stakeholders for feedback

July: The Strategic Plan is finalized and published

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**I thought we've been doing this. This is good, and we need to continue doing this. I love individual success because I don't think we focus on that enough. Trust and confidence might take a minute. High quality service delivery, will we know through auditing, self reporting, or surveys? How are we getting the data for these?** This is part of the objectives that are being written right now. **Casey this is well done and put together. It would be great that if we had a multi-tear issue/stance, not just audits, but also survey the families, providers, and families. Because you are looking at NCQA, they have national standards as well. As we are going for NCQA certification, we can pull some of that information as it will help give you tools for monitoring the high quality service.** Some of those things will be in the action items. We appreciate the ideas.

DDD acknowledges that we haven't done a great job of hearing directly from the members we serve regarding member outcomes and satisfaction. There is a clear opportunity for us to do that through increased participation in the National Core Indicators (NCI) surveys that occur annually for all states across the country. Ensuring the adoption of participation in the survey will be a big piece of this five-year strategic plan. This will give us insight into whether DDD provides high-quality service and empowers individuals' success.

DDD wants to ensure that we are making data-driven decisions. This is why we spent time reviewing a lot of information we already have access to, but also making sure we have plans to solicit that input and feedback, and make the best decisions. We want to be as inclusive as possible and open so that we can hear as many of the members' voices as possible and know how we are moving and what positions we need to meet based on that input.

**Needs to be anonymous feedback so people will actually do it and not fear retribution.** DDD will make note of this.

**A suggestion, could the self-advocates assist in making the plain language eval so members understand what is being asked?** This is a great suggestion. DDD would appreciate partnering with the self-advocacy groups to send further information for them to review.

**Looking forward to seeing the objectives for each item - the focus areas and goals are certainly on point.**

## COMMENTS/OPEN DISCUSSION

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**How is the new implementation for the new assessment for Authorized Support and Services, the new tool?** The training is halfway through, and we are also having a community of practice session to reiterate what was taught in those sessions. Cindy has joined a few of those sessions and is working with the teams so they fully understand. It will take a minute for people to put into practice what they have learned, but we should be done by the end of June. **Is it currently being used in the field?** The training for DDD employees is about the Person Centered Needs assessment, which is not a service assessment but a comprehensive evaluation of the member's needs. You may be referring to the changes that DDD and AHCCCS are collaborating to assess certain sets of services and use the HCBS Needs tool. Is this what you are asking about? **I wonder what is out there and if Support Coordinators are using it or bringing other individuals to make those assessments.** DDD hasn't changed the tools used to assess services, which will roll out as Parents as Paid Caregivers

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(PPCG) implementation in the policies that AHCCCS will release at the beginning of May and DDD at the beginning of June. Cindy can speak more about the training that is being done in-house. **So, does the SC still evaluate and authorize the support services on the PCSP?** Yes, there are no changes in that; there is a requirement in the CAS management program.

**Regarding the SC role and member responsibility, how often does DDD send out a reminder of what the SC can do/roles and the responsibility of members/family, so it is clear what each can do/can't do? Annual reminder?** No annual reminder exists, but we provide the member rights and responsibilities brochure. Also, the ALTCs handbook has a lot of information about the Support Coordinators' role, which is given out every year. We send out monthly emails to 55-60,000 email addresses. Joe can talk more about this if we should include content around that. **I think members who have been with DDD for a long time, because of the change in Support Coordination, will have ones who are very involved that will help them with every aspect, and go above and beyond. If the SC happens to leave and they get a new person, they expect that person to do the same. They start to complain and have issues, and when it's explained that it isn't their role and it's your responsibility to call, and if you need help, they can help, but you need to try first. There is a mixture of whose responsibilities it is. I just didn't know if something was periodically sent out explaining the SC's and the members' roles. DDD has a one-pager, which was shared. We can look at it and see if anything else needs to be added. Joe can meet with Lynn to discuss if there is anything else that should be added to the one-pager. Some aren't able to go online or don't know how. Can the SCs have a hard copy when they meet with members? It is hard for all of us to locate them online, but then add on if you have a cognitive disability, which makes it more challenging.** We can talk to the team about that and reinforce that those are available.

Thank you all for your input regarding the Strategic Plan. We will move the July 23, 2025, 10-12 PM meeting to June 25th, from 10-12 PM. We appreciate all that you have been doing in the past few months. Have a great rest of your day!