

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES STRATEGIC
PLANNING MODEL: DISSEMINATION AND PEER MATCH
TRANSFER TO NON-USER AGENCIES**

EVALUATION

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This project had three declared objectives:

- (1) to prepare easily understood brochures, user manuals, visual aids and other training materials to facilitate the dissemination and transfer of the Developmental Disabilities Strategic Planning Models (DDSPM);
- (2) to disseminate sufficient information on the DDSPM to prospective users allowing them to decide how they might utilize the Models and what preparations must be made to do so;
- (3) to develop, implement and continually improve a "peer match" form of technology transfer whereby established user agencies will provide on site technical assistance to new user agencies.

This evaluation is intended to report on project accomplishments and shortfalls with respect to each of these objectives and to attempt to explain to what extent and why the third objective was not achieved. The family of Developmental Disabilities Strategic Planning Models (DDSPM) is described in Appendix A.

This evaluation is based largely on the perceptions of HSRI staff and staff of those agencies participating in the development and piloting of the DDSPM. This included the below-listed six agencies. These agencies not only participated in Model development and testing but helped underwrite the process. Two "consulting agencies" who contributed staff time to the design and development of the Model are also listed:

- o California State Council on Developmental Disabilities;
- o New Hampshire Developmental Disabilities Council;
- o Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University;
- o Iowa Division of MH/MR/DD;
- o Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Planning Council;
- o New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council;

- o Walter P. Carter Center, University of Maryland (consultants);
- o Center for Residential and Community Services, University of Minnesota (consultants).

Objective 1: To Prepare Easily Understood Brochures, User Manuals and Other Training Materials to Facilitate the Dissemination and Transfer of the DDSPM

HSRI prepared a brochure describing the Model for use in the dissemination activities described under objective 2. HSRI also prepared six sets of 50 slides each for use by HSRI staff and by Model users to introduce individuals to planning Models generally and to the DDSPM specifically. Only three of the six initial user agencies ever made use of the slides.

Over the past six months, HSRI has come to use a Kodak device called the "DataShow". This device is designed to display a computer screen through an overhead projector so that it might be viewed by a larger audience. This device is used to demonstrate the Model and for this reason HSRI has now transformed the slides into transparencies for use on an overhead projector as well.

HSRI also developed a User's Manual to guide Model users. The Manual is presently organized into three volumes. Volume I introduces the user to the concepts of system management and modeling. Volume II describes the planning and preparation needed to put the Models into use. Volume III provides an overview of Model operations, specifies the hardware and software required to operate the Models, outlines the Model capabilities, and describes how to utilize the software, step-by-step.

The Manual has been converted from NBI word processing language to Microsoft Word, and the Page Maker software has been purchased in order to prepare a publication-quality version of the Manual. Because the Model software is currently undergoing significant change, the final version of the Manual will not be printed in Page Maker until September. It would make no sense to print the old Manual in Page Maker when the Manual would have to be replaced in a matter of less than three months.

Objective 2: To Disseminate Sufficient Information on the DDSPM to Prospective Users Allowing them to Decide How they Might Utilize the Model and What Preparations Must be Made in Order to Do So

HSRI presented the Model at annual meetings of the two key user associations: the National Association of State Mental Retardation

Program Directors and the National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils. HSRI also made arrangements to have the Models release announced in the newsletters of the following organizations:

- o National Association of State Mental Retardation Program Directors
- o National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils
- o The Association for the Severely Handicapped
- o National Conference of State Legislators
- o The Association of University Affiliated Facilities
- o Research and Training Centers
- o The American Association on Mental Deficiency

The latter two groups could accept only paid advertisements. HSRI felt that the Model should not be "offered for sale", so to speak, and so these advertisements were not placed.

Initial plans to announce the Model's release through the Newsletter of the National Association of Counties, was subsequently abandoned. This is because the Model was viewed as a tool best suited for statewide and regional planning and not for county planning. The accuracy of this assessment was confirmed in a meeting with staff of the Human Services Policy Center at Syracuse University.

Brochures describing the DDSMP were sent directly to the members of the above associations. In response to the distribution of the model brochure and announcement of the DDSMP's release in association newsletters, HSRI received dozens of inquiries about the Model from points far and wide, for American Samoa to Alaska.

Over the past several months, HSRI has demonstrated the Model to the following agencies:

- o Orange County Developmental Disabilities Center, Los Angeles, California

- o Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
- o Texas Protection and Advocacy Agency
- o Pennsylvania Office of Mental Retardation
- o Alaska Office for Developmental Disabilities
- o Arkansas Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Orange County and three other regional centers in California, Pennsylvania and Arkansas have now joined the Model-user group. We are in negotiations with the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and are waiting to hear from Alaska.

Demonstrations are being scheduled for the following agencies:

- o The Washington Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
- o Wisconsin Division of Community Services, Developmental Disabilities
- o Arizona Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- o The District of Columbia Bureau of Community Services
- o The District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council
- o South Dakota Office of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health, Department of Social Services
- o The Maryland Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Administration.

Objective 3: To Develop, Implement and Continually Improve a "Peer Match" form of Technology Transfer Whereby Established User Agencies will Provide On-site Technical Assistance to New User Agencies

The transfer of the Model technology through peers, as originally conceived, was not achieved. Delays in software development, delays in mounting pilot model applications, and an under-estimation initially of the amount of training and technical assistance required resulted in a base of current agencies ill equipped to provide the training and technical assistance needed by new user agencies.

-- DELAYS --

When the pilot agencies first began field testing the Model, more bugs appeared in the software than anticipated. In two states, California and New Hampshire, this reportedly led to delays in applications of the Model and in a third state, reportedly contributed to a decision to quit using the Model altogether (Virginia). In four states, New Hampshire, New Mexico, California and Virginia, changes in leadership also contributed to significant delays in Model applications. Finally, most of the pilot agencies were developmental disabilities planning councils, agencies more accomplished in grants management than in strategic planning. Unlike the MR/DD departments in each state, these agencies have trouble obtaining the data necessary to input to the Model without the full cooperation of the MR/DD departments and other line agencies in the state. Obtaining this cooperation was often difficult. For this reason, prospective Model users now are not offered the DDSPPM unless such cooperation is assured. It is no accident that the most progress in DDSPPM applications has been experienced by the MR/DD authorities and not the Councils! Below is a summary of the Model's status in the pilot states. All but Virginia continue to be active Model subscribers. However, it is clear that after two years the Model is far from an integral part of the planning processes in these agencies. In a number of these agencies there are still no strategic level planning processes in place.

California

Model-based planning was a low priority with the new Council leadership and thus the Council turned over the reins to the Association of Regional Centers. The Association is interested in incorporating the Model as part of the regional center management system. Meanwhile, at the Department of Developmental Services, Jim White in the Division of Planning, continues to work with the Model (though largely on his own time). The Model is not recognized by director of the Department. Jim is currently planning an application to assess the costs/benefits of family support alternatives in the state.

Iowa

Iowa has had occasion to apply the Model over the past year and a half in projecting the programmatic and fiscal impacts of the Iowa client Bill of Rights for the State Legislature. Iowa is the only state where the funding module of the DDSPM has been used to date. Iowa also largely underwrote the development of the Institutional Operations Simulation Model (IOSM), a recent addition to the DDSPM family.

Louisiana

The Developmental Disabilities Planning Council was planning to pilot the Model in three regions of the state. However, this pilot project is on hold until data from the client information system comes available in early Fall. Plans are now to pilot the DDSPM in only one region.

New Hampshire

The loss of the Council's liaison person in the State Office of Mental Retardation and lags in HSRI software development frustrated Council attempts to apply the Model in New Hampshire. Susan Parker, the former director of the New Hampshire Developmental Disabilities Council, and strong Model advocate, took a job as the Director of the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in the State of Maine. Barring any change in direction from the recently appointed Council director, Steve Knapp had planned to demonstrate the Model's application in at least one region in the state. However, this regional director recently accepted a job in Massachusetts. Steve continues to use the Model, but primarily behind the scenes!

New Mexico

The Developmental Disabilities Bureau and the Governor's Planning Council have both undergone recent changes in leadership. John Arango, the Model meister in the state, is waiting for the dust to settle before he attempts to demonstrate the Model to the new leadership. The Model is expected to be used in the near future to weigh the impacts of a recent court order to close Fort Stanton, one of two institutions in the state, and the Bureau is awaiting completion of the Comprehensive Services Module of the DDSPM for use in its early childhood planning efforts.

Virginia

Jack Noble, responsible for bringing the DDSPM to the state, took another job out-of-state. The state has no plans to apply the Model in foreseeable future. The work required to bring the Model into operation is more than the Research and Training Center and Council were willing and able to invest in the face of other priorities, and considering the absence of any planning mandate from central office.

CONCLUSION

In short, in applying the Model, we had to contend with the same realities that have long conspired to relegate planning functions to the back seat: namely, the domination of budgeting and rebudgeting activities, the crush of day-to-day management demands, key staff turnover and understaffing.

-- UNDERESTIMATES OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS --

The training and technical assistance provided to the pilot agencies by HSRI and provided to new agencies by HSRI in conjunction with the pilot agency staff initially consisted of:

- o one-half day of on-site training to inform policy makers, budget makers and planners who would be involved in Model supported planning efforts regarding how the Model works and the ways it could be used to improve decision making.
- o One day of on-site training to help the user decide how best to implement the Model, what uses should be made of the Model in the short and long term, and to plan for the structuring, collection and compilation of data for input to the Model. This training also covered working out the individual and organizational responsibilities for Model operation and for the dissemination of Model results.
- o One day of on-site training to demonstrate and review Model functions with those individual(s) who would be operating the Model day-to-day and to inform them of the avenues of support open to them.

This was not enough. Through experience we found that Model use is largely ad hoc and does not occur as part of an ongoing strategic planning process. It may be used to assess the fiscal impacts of

legislative decisions, to forecast the applications of program and fiscal policies under consideration, or to project the fiscal implications of changes contemplated in the current configuration of services. If the Model is to be used, it must be fully setup and "ready-to-go" for such applications. That is, data sufficient to simulate the existing system of services, must be collected and input to the Model. This is the baseline data upon which all Model projections build.

Model setup can require from three to six person months depending upon the complexity of the service system and funding arrangements, and upon the amount of "planning" participation that must be built into the setup. This level of assistance is far beyond what could be managed through the peer match transfer process where an agency staff could be expected to give a few days of their time at most.

For this reason HSRI and the current base of Model users have agreed that HSRI staff themselves must handle the training and technical assistance involved in Model setup and that HSRI staff must be available to provide on-call technical support at least eight hours per day. Current Model users are called on to help as needed.

In addition several ongoing mechanisms have been established to facilitate user interchange. Updated user lists are published and distributed quarterly. User Bulletins are published quarterly. The Bulletins include:

- o references to and abstracts of recent information of import to planners of services for persons with developmental disabilities
- o brief descriptions of Model applications underway and advances made by user agencies
- o notification of impending Model software updates and upgrades
- o announcements of strategic planning conferences and other relevant conferences or workshops.

Finally, Annual Users Conferences are held to share data and to report on Model planning applications, lessons learned and advances made. These conferences are designed to bolster and enrich the planning efforts of all involved by improving participant understanding or what can be accomplished with the Model and how best to make use of it.

It was agreed among the Model user's attending the last User

Conference that the third Annual User's Conference to be held in the Fall of 1989 should include nonusers as well as users and should address a variety of strategic planning issues, some related and some unrelated to the Model. It was the consensus of the Users attending the second Annual Conference that these conferences can do much to elevate the moribund state of developmental disabilities planning today. Efforts are currently underway to locate funding through foundations or federal sources to help underwrite the expanded conference format.