

# DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTS DIVISION NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 COVID-19 Status Report – New Mexico
- 3 CDC Updates Vaccine Resources for Disability Populations
- 3 NACDD Provides Resources on COVID-19 Vaccinations
- 4 Grateful for the COVID-19 Vaccination
- 5 Vaccine Willingness Among Adults with Disabilities
- 6 COVID-19 Vaccine Joint Information Center
- 7 School to Work Transition Fairs
- 8 Employing Individuals with Disabilities
- 9 Community Resources
- 9 Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ)
- 10 The Journey to Online Learning
- 11 iVia Waiver Approved and Improved!
- 12 E-Blasts For This Quarter
- 12 New Hires & Retirements
- 13 About Us

## COVID-19 Status Report

*Submitted by Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director*

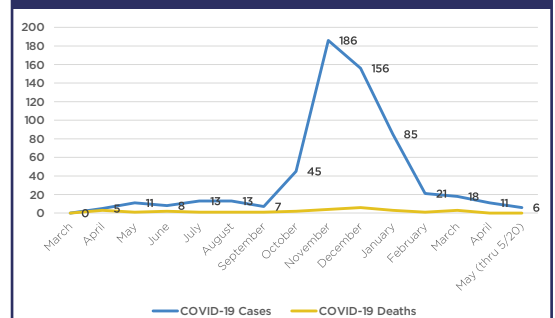
We have experienced a great deal of change in the last year. Since the first COVID cases almost 15 months ago, at its highest, New Mexico has seen close to 1,200 cases in a day. New Mexico is now hovering around 150 to 200 cases of COVID per day. Since the beginning of the pandemic, there has been a total of 201,868 positive cases of COVID and 4,131 COVID-related deaths as of May 24th (see <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>). New Mexico has moved to a Red to Turquoise Framework for each county based on public health criteria and the State is on-track for full vaccination-related immunity of 60% of New Mexicans by June 30th. On May 14th, New Mexico announced the state's adoption of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's updated guidance on facemasks for those who are fully vaccinated, reminding us that all individuals who are unvaccinated or not yet fully vaccinated are still required, per the public health order and CDC guidance, to wear a mask in public settings. (see <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/051421-PHO.pdf>).

Since the beginning of the pandemic, in New Mexico's Home and Community Based (HCBS) Waiver population for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, there have been a total of 585 positive cases of COVID and 28 COVID-related deaths. See the graph and tables attached to this article for more detailed information including cases by region, type of waiver, and type of service.

### COVID-19 VACCINATION STATUS THROUGH 5/21/21 NEW MEXICO HCBS I/DD POPULATION

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Declined</b>                          | <b>93</b>    |
| <b>Johnson &amp; Johnson Single Dose</b> | <b>57</b>    |
| <b>Moderna dose 1</b>                    | <b>1,725</b> |
| <b>Moderna dose 2</b>                    | <b>1,417</b> |
| <b>Pfizer dose 1</b>                     | <b>442</b>   |
| <b>Pfizer dose 2</b>                     | <b>347</b>   |

### COVID-19 CASES AND DEATHS PER MONTH (THROUGH 5/20/2021) NEW MEXICO I/DD POPULATION



### COVID-19 CASES AND DEATHS THROUGH 2/18/2021 NEW MEXICO HCBS I/DD POPULATION

|                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Confirmed COVID-19 Positive</b> | <b>585</b> |
| <b>Confirmed COVID-19 Deaths</b>   | <b>28</b>  |

COVID vaccinations for those on New Mexico’s HCBS waivers are reported by residential agencies through General Events Reporting (GER). Through May 21st, 1,821 individuals on HCBS waivers are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means receipt of both doses of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech or a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccines. The the table on the previous page provides a more detailed summary.

New Mexico’s vaccine registration system can be found at <https://cvvaccine.nmhealth.org/>. Seniors and those with disabilities can call 1-800-432-2080 for support with registration and scheduling. Anyone over the age of 12 is encouraged to register for the COVID vaccination.

Finally, DDSD issued a statement on May 14th that, “(p)rograms administered by DDSD are considered to fall under the category of health care settings. Therefore, DDSD’s mask mandate for Direct Support Professionals (DSP), Therapists, Behavior Support Consultants, Nurses, etc. remains effective until further notice. DSP must continue to wear masks during the entirety of their shift to include delivery of services in the home, community, and while providing transportation.”

Please contact your Regional Office if you have questions or see additional resources elsewhere in this newsletter.



| COVID-19 COVID-19 CASES BY REGION |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Metro</b>                      | <b>264</b> |
| <b>NERO</b>                       | <b>44</b>  |
| <b>NWRO</b>                       | <b>80</b>  |
| <b>SERO</b>                       | <b>93</b>  |
| <b>SWRO</b>                       | <b>104</b> |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                | <b>585</b> |

| COVID-19 CASES BY TYPE OF WAIVER     |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>DD Waiver</b>                     | <b>443</b> |
| <b>Medically Fragile Waiver</b>      | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>Mi Via Waiver</b>                 | <b>124</b> |
| <b>Supports Waiver</b>               | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>State General Funded Services</b> | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                   | <b>585</b> |

| COVID-19 CASES BY TYPE OF SERVICE (DD WAIVER ONLY)            |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Community Integrated Employment and Community Supports</b> | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>Customized In Home Supports</b>                            | <b>32</b>  |
| <b>Day Services Only</b>                                      | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Family Living</b>  | <b>111</b> |
| <b>Intensive Medical Living</b>                               | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Respite</b>  | <b>5</b>   |
| <b>Supported Living</b>                                       | <b>258</b> |
| <b>Case Management Only</b>                                   | <b>23</b>  |
| <b>Other including Mi Via and SW</b>                          | <b>140</b> |
| <b>Grand Total</b>  | <b>585</b> |



**PROTECT YOURSELF.  
PROTECT NEW MEXICO.**  
REGISTER AT [VACCINENM.ORG](https://vaccinenm.org)

# CDC Updates COVID-19 and COVID-19 Vaccine Resources for Disability Populations

Submitted by Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated the page on its web site titled **"COVID-19 Vaccines for People with Disabilities"**. This webpage provides information for people with disabilities or conditions that may increase their risk of getting and spreading COVID-19, and for their care providers. This site includes information on getting a COVID-19 vaccine, when to get a COVID-19 vaccine, and what to expect after your vaccination.

The CDC also updated another resource page titled, **"People with Disabilities"**. According to the website, "(m)ost people with disabilities are not more likely to become infected with or have severe illness from COVID-19. However, some people with disabilities might be more likely to get infected or have severe illness because of underlying medical conditions, congregate living settings, or systemic health and social inequities."

A third updated resource is CDC's **"Toolkit for People with Disabilities"** which includes guidance and tools to help people with disabilities and those who serve or care for them make decisions, protect their health, and communicate with their communities.

## COVID-19 vaccines for People with Disabilities

For more information see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/disabilities.html>

## People with Disabilities

For more information see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-disabilities.html>

## Toolkit for People with Disabilities

For more information see:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/toolkits/people-with-disabilities.html>

# NACDD Provides Resources on COVID-19 Vaccinations

Submitted by Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) debuted the **"Get Out The Vaccine"** website and called on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), their loved ones, and caregivers to learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines. On [GetOutTheVaccine.org](https://www.getoutthevaccine.org) people with I/DD can find trusted resources and information on finding the COVID-19 vaccine in their area. According to the website, "(v)accination against COVID-19 is important so everyone can safely get back to living their lives and being a part of their community again. NACDD created this site to provide trusted sources to help you make the right decision for you, your family, and your community."

For More Information, see

<https://www.getoutthevaccine.org/>.



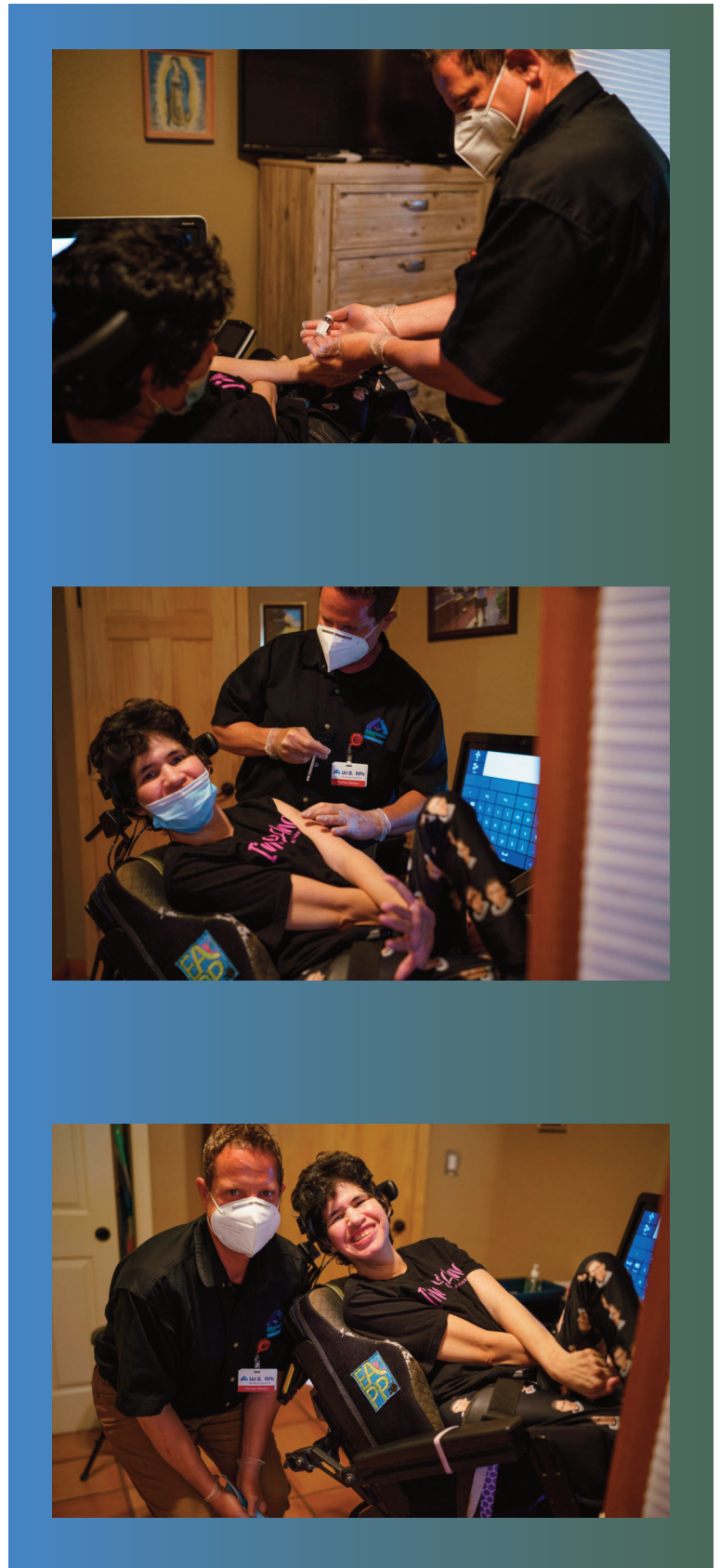
# Grateful for the COVID-19 Vaccination

Submitted by Iris Clevenger RN, Clinical Services Bureau

My name is Toña. I am 41 years old. I have Cerebral Palsy. I survived a head tumor. I was an artist at Very Special Arts of New Mexico. I've been the founder of Every Ability Plays Project since 2014. As a person who has a physical disability, it is very important for me to go out into the community to show people that people with disabilities can also enjoy life like any other person. If there wasn't a chance for me to get vaccinated at home, I would probably have to wait until the end of this year.

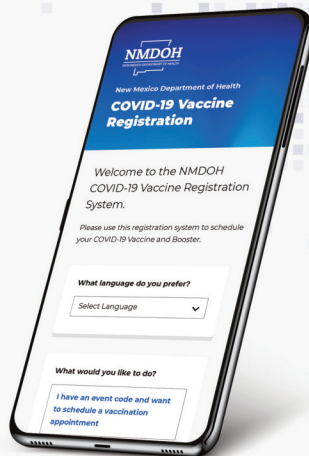
I think it is important for people with disabilities to get vaccinated. I don't have a strong immune system, so I might not recover if I get this awful virus. Even though I get the flu shot, I still get very sick. Today, I took the vaccine with a lot of faith knowing that I will keep someone else from going to the hospital.

I think it is extremely important for anyone who works in the disability community to get vaccinated as well. A person with any kind of disability, they might not be able to recover. I really encourage everyone to get vaccinated, especially those who work in the disability community. I am so grateful to everyone who helped make this happen for me.



**REGISTER  
TODAY  
FOR YOUR  
COVID-19  
VACCINE**

**VACCINEM.ORG**



# Vaccine Willingness Among Adults with Disabilities

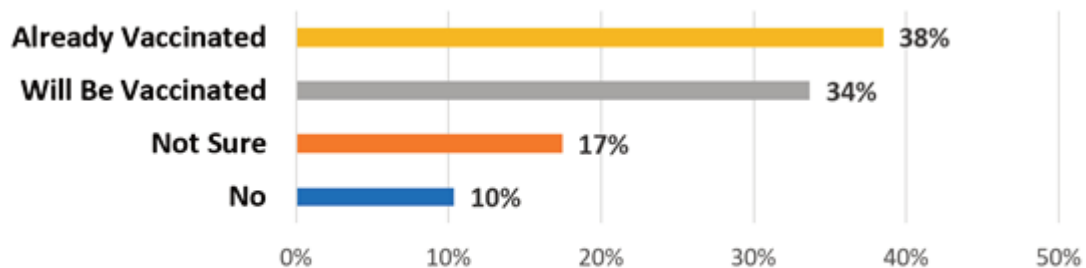
Submitted by Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Reprinted from the American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD). See <https://aahd.us/dissemination/covid-19-and-vaccine-survey-project/>.

Little information has been collected on the reasons why adults with disabilities have taken, will take, are not sure about taking, or will not take the COVID-19 vaccine. To fill this void, AAHD conducted a rapid, real-time online study of the perspectives of adults with disabilities on the COVID-19 Vaccine. The self-report survey included demographic questions (disability identifiers, gender, ethnicity, race, and geographic area). Respondents that said that they were not going to be vaccinated (No Vaccine) or were not sure (Not Sure) received a set of

Disability-Related and General Vaccine Hesitancy, Accessibility, and Availability questions. Respondents that said that they were planning on being vaccinated or already had been or were in process received two open-ended questions on whether they experienced any underlying concerns about the vaccine and their motivation for being vaccinated. The survey was open from March 12th, 2021, to April 5th, 2021. The final sample includes results from 4,131 adults with disabilities. Reports and summaries will be released as they are completed.

## Vaccine Willingness Among Adults with Disabilities (n=4,131)



# COVID-19 Vaccine Joint Information Center

## Key Messages & Updates: May 11, 2021

May 11, 2021

### Top-Line Messages

New Mexico reached a new benchmark this week when we surpassed 1 million people who have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine! In other good vaccine-related news:

### Pfizer for Tweens

The federal Food and Drug Administration on Monday approved the Pfizer vaccine for 12- to 15-year-olds. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will now review the decision. If approved by the CDC, New Mexico's Medical Advisory Team (MAT) will conduct its own review. When the MAT affirms the federal review process, New Mexico will begin vaccinating 12-15-year-olds immediately.

[Read the complete news release here.](#) Some caveats:

- Vaccinations for New Mexicans under age 18 require parental consent;
- Pfizer is the only vaccine available for anyone under 18 years old;
- No identification is required and there is no personal cost to getting a vaccine.

### On-Site Events

The New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) today launched a new webform at [getvaxnm.com](http://getvaxnm.com), which the public can use to request on-site vaccination events. Businesses, nonprofits, religious congregations, community centers and other organizations can use the form to request a vaccination event serving at least 25 people. [Read the complete news release here.](#)

### Calendar of Vaccination Events

More than 900,000 New Mexicans have registered for a vaccine through [vaccinenm.org](http://vaccinenm.org). About one-third are self-registering, and a push-notification team is filling in the other two-thirds. To boost registrations, a **public-facing community** calendar has been added to the registration portal, which allows individuals to search for vaccination events based on location, vaccine manufacturer, and type of vaccine (primary or booster dose).

### Free Vaccine Fliers

Free COVID vaccination fliers are now [available here in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.](#)

### ICYMI: Meow Wolf

The Santa Fe-based artist collective Meow Wolf partnered with DOH and ReelTime Solutions to release [this get-the-vaccine video](#) last week. The message is simple: We are all longing to reconnect with family and friends in real life; a screen is no longer an acceptable substitute.

### About 'Herd Immunity'

[Recent news articles](#) citing authoritative experts have questioned whether herd immunity is even possible given the emergence of more contagious variants and the slow pace of vaccinations worldwide. Based on that, Dr. Anthony Fauci and others now advocate shifting the focus away from a goal of reaching herd immunity and onto getting as many people vaccinated as possible.

### Communications Toolkit

The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force maintains a Communication and Education Product Inventory which vaccination partners can access on the Awardee SharePoint portal in the "COVID-19 > Communication Content" folder. Check out the 'New Content' tab with the latest webpages. The inventory is an index of key content organized by product category and by stakeholder. It is updated at least once a week.

### Today's Trusted Voices

As always, we are sharing videos from the #NMTrustedVoices campaign, which feature New Mexicans who are encouraging their communities to sign up and get vaccinated. We invite everyone to share these videos:

- Dr. Lance Chilton is a pediatrician in Albuquerque with more than 50 years of experience in the medical field. Lance's video is available on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).
- Octavia Djanquaye is a registered nurse in Northern New Mexico. Octavia's video is available on [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

# School to Work Transition Fairs - A Valuable Resource for Youth and Families!

*Submitted by Deborah Lassiter, SW Region Community Inclusion Coordinator  
Isabel Casaus, SW Region Community Inclusion Coordinator and  
Eugene Vigil, SE Community Inclusion Coordinator*

School to Work Transition teams are a unique and diverse group. They are a collaboration of UNM/Center for Development and Disability Partners for Employment, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), DOH/DDSD, along with school districts and community partners who meet to provide youth with disabilities and their families information and resources to assist in their transition to adulthood. School to Work Transition Teams host an annual School to Work Transition Fair. As a result of COVID-19 many of those School to Work Transition Fairs have gone virtual. Virtual School to Work Transition fairs typically feature live presentations and virtual tables of sharable resources and information that can be viewed and/or downloaded.

The first Southern New Mexico Transition Fair had English and Spanish Virtual Fair options, where presentations and virtual tables were featured in English and Spanish. The English Fair was on April 14, 2021 and was hosted by Gadsden Independent School District. Les Flores from NM DVR welcomed and introduced the start of the fair. There were seven presentations and 17 virtual exhibitors including DDSD and one DDW provider. The website for this fair is: [Southern New Mexico Virtual Transition Fair \(google.com\)](https://southernnewmexico.org/virtual-transition-fair).

Isabel Casaus commented, “(i)t was refreshing to see that information was being provided to students, parents, guardians and community in their native language. I was impressed at how the presenters addressed the community and how clearly they provided the information. Attending this event was truly a privilege. My hope is that in the future, events like this one will continue so that our communities are culturally supported in their native languages.”

The Luna-Grant County Virtual Transition Fair was on April 21, 2021 with introductions and opening comments from Connie Pierett (NM School for the Deaf), Curtis Clough-Silver (Consolidated Schools) and Amber Granado (Deming High School). The fair was hosted by Western New Mexico University and featured eight live presentations and 20 virtual tables, including DDSD and two DD Waiver Providers. The website for this fair is: <https://css.wnmu.edu/virtual-transition-fair>.

The second annual Otero County Transition Fair kicked off on May 6, 2021 with opening remarks by NM School for the Blind and Visually Impaired representative Holly Bird and a

video from Lt. Governor Howie Morales. The fair was hosted by Gary Bond (NMSU). Accessibility Services and featured eight live presentations and 20 virtual tables including DDSD and one DDW Provider. Attendance was lower this year than last year, but still had students in classrooms and family members taking part in the fair. The website for this event is: <https://nmsua.edu/transition-fair>.

The Southeast Region held its Annual Transition Fair for the Lincoln County School Districts on March 11, 2021. This year's Transition Fair was the region's first all virtual transition fair. The event kicked off with an opening welcome from Shari John (Ruidoso High School) which was followed by live presentations from Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Alamogordo, ENMU - Ruidoso, ENMU - Ruidoso Workforce Connection Center, ENMU-Roswell Special Services Program, and the NM Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Virtual Exhibition Booths consisted of all agencies mentioned above along with Roswell Job Corps, Epics, Disability Rights NM, Independent Living Resource Center, and the NM Department of Health DDSD.

Special Thanks to Katherine Kiefer - ENMU Ruidoso/Webpage Designer, Ruidoso SWTT Members, UNM-CDD Partners for Employment, all presenters, and all those who took time to share their agency resources and information for those in attendance. One of the benefits of hosting the transition fair virtually, is that it has been recorded and has become a resource for all to utilize so please share widely. The Ruidoso Virtual Transition Fair link can be found at:

<https://ruidoso.enmu.edu/community/transition-fair-2021/>.







Also, please be on the lookout as the Roswell Independent School Districts Special Services Department is looking to host a transition fair of their own during the 2nd week of June 2021. More details to follow as information becomes available.

For more information visit the Partners for Employment School to Work Transition page at <https://unmhealth.org/services/development-disabilities/programs/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/school-to-work-transition.html>.

# Employing Individuals with Disabilities

Submitted by Casilda Gallegos, DDSD Statewide Supported Employment Lead

## Myths vs Statistics

| Forbes 2/25/2021 “An Untapped Talent Resource: People with Disabilities” Nicholas Wyman  | US Department of Labor 10/21/2020 Job Accommodation Annual Report <a href="https://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm">https://askjan.org/topics/costs.cfm</a>   |
|--|---|
| <p> <b>Myth:</b><br/>They have higher absentee rate</p> <p> <b>Truth:</b><br/>With accommodations in place, workers with disabilities are more productive and less likely to be absent</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 57% increase employee’s attendance with accommodations</li> <li>• 35% increase overall company attendance</li> </ul>                                   |
| <p> <b>Myth:</b><br/>They’re not as productive as their co-workers</p> <p> <b>Truth:</b><br/>With accommodations workers with disabilities are more productive</p>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68% increase employee’s productivity</li> <li>• 49% increase overall company productivity</li> </ul>   |
| <p> <b>Myth:</b><br/>They cost more to recruit, train and employ</p> <p> <b>Truth:</b><br/>Most employers report zero or low cost accommodations</p>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% retained as valued employee</li> <li>• 58% reduction in training costs for new employees</li> <li>• Avg cost for accommodation 1x \$500</li> </ul> |

Additional benefits mentioned in the Department of Labor Job Accommodation report for employers included a 55% increase in company morale, 36% increase in diversity of the company and 30% savings in Workers’ Compensation. Diversity and inclusion in the workplace should be an expectation and not exception to the workforce. For more information on the ADA, how to provide accommodations, recruit individuals with disabilities and secure tax incentives please visit the websites provided below.

### Job Accommodation Network (JAN) ADA overview

<https://askjan.org/articles/The-Americans-with-Disabilities-Act-A-Brief-Overview.cfm>

### JAN Workplace tool kit

<https://askjan.org/toolkit/index.cfm>

### New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

<https://www.dvr.state.nm.us/>

### Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

<https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/WOTC>

### NM Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

<https://www.nmddpc.com/>

### New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division Supported Employment

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/cmin/spe/#:~:text=DDSD%20Community%20Inclusion%20Coordinators%20at%20the%20DDSD%20Regional,of%20topic%20areas%20related%20to%20community%20life%20engagement.>



# Community Resources

*Submitted by Lisa Storti, Manager Office of Constituent Support*



**Benefits Connection Center at Adelante**  
**3900 Osuna Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109**  
**(505) 341-2000**

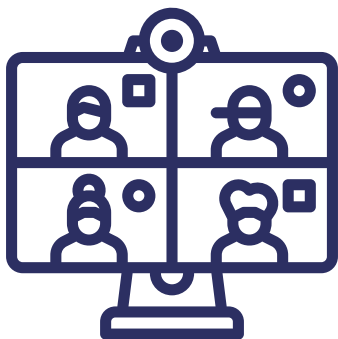
Benefits Connection Center provides FREE benefits enrollment services to low income seniors (65+) and any person with a disability (21+) in New Mexico. Se habla Espanol. Assistance provided in accessing government benefits including, but not limited to the following:

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program)
- LIHEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance)
- Medicaid
- Medicare Savings Programs
- Medicare Part D
- SSI (Supplemental Security Income)

Wonder what benefits you might be eligible for? The Benefits Connection Center can help you find out with a Benefits Checkup and Screening. Call us at (505) 273-5222 or toll free at 1-844-266-2236 outside the Albuquerque metro area between 8:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Friday. When calling us, one of our benefits assistants will gather the necessary information from you such as Social Security number, proof of income, address and any other information needed to complete the screening process.

## Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ)

*Submitted by Wendy Corry, Corry Consulting, ACQ Contract Administrator*



The Advisory Council on Quality (ACQ) Executive Committee would like to remind everyone that the ACQ meetings and all sub-committee meetings are open to the public. The next ACQ meeting is June 10 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Highlights of the meeting include 1) the DDSD Director's Report which includes the latest information on COVID - 19, the vaccine and the gradual re-opening of DD services. DDSD and the Human Services Department/Medicaid (HSD) will provide an update on the Mi Via Waiver.

The ACQ Executive Committee continues to work with DDSD, HSD and Managed Care Organizations on how to partner together for the ACQ meetings and this will be discussed in future meetings. If you would like to join the June 10th ACQ meeting the ZOOM link is

<https://zoom.us/j/98845216614?pwd=VVo3OW5hMlhaeTB6cEpbndnSnNhdz09>

Meeting ID: 988 4521 6614 and Passcode: 769818.

The ACQ also has several committees: Policy & Quality, Employment & Community Inclusion, Wait List, Medically Fragile Family Advisory Board, Mi Via Advisory Council, Interagency Coordinating Council, and the DD Waiver subcommittee. Please email the ACQ Administrator, Wendy Corry at [wendy@corryconsulting.com](mailto:wendy@corryconsulting.com) for a copy of the committee calendar.

# The Journey to Online Learning

Submitted by DDS Training Unit

The DDS Training Unit was not exempt from the massive “OMG” explosion heard ‘round the employment world. I mean, c’mon, we’re trainers. What do you mean, we’re going “virtual”? The whole point is that, see, we all get together in one place, and learning happens when we sit together and bounce our experiences and thoughts and ideas and information off each other. But our wonderment and panic were met with the same universal premise everyone else was hearing: no one would be able to congregate, and we’d have to find a way to figure out how to maintain our DDW required training. So began the Training Unit’s journey of taking instructor-led training to eLearning in the time of COVID.

We only had about a million or so questions regarding how to start cranking out some super-awesome online courses. Most of us had never programmed anything more than a TV in our lives, and certainly none of us had advanced degrees in eLearning Instructional Design. Don’t get me wrong, we were in-person instructional design pros; no question we’d created tons of courses and trainer guides and gone down just about every road of designing curricula that challenged linear/conditioned thought processes. We were pretty much rock stars when it came to assessment, motivation, design, delivery, and evaluation. But taking our collective century of training experience and wrapping it into a pretty package of algorithms and coding? (Um... Alexa?) It seemed this was going to be quite the challenge, and to be sure a fast-tracked mission: the public health order had already gone into effect. It wasn’t negotiable, though; trainings had to be made available now. For the entire field, all regions, for all services, all New Mexicans, for every type of learner... and did we mention that this needed to occur now? Making it halfway through 2021, we knew it was always bound to happen. Everything is online. We’re in the age of saving time and money, and almost everything is a click away. It had only been a matter of time until the Training Unit’s number was called to create online learning – learning that’s effective and efficient. We couldn’t keep people chained to their computers for 8 hours at a time, given the 15-20-minute attention span of adult learners – so the courses clearly had to be redesigned and streamlined. We needed to maintain the content of the core trainings, yet in abbreviated form; we had to ensure that people were getting all the info they needed, yet we couldn’t bore them to death. And how does one engage that mystery person on the other side of that screen, making sure they’re “getting” all the information, learning what they would have had it been facilitated in a classroom setting? Though training was always headed in this direction, it’s safe to say that COVID was the catalyst for making it happen. And quickly.

Collaborating with the Center For Development and Disability was and continues to be a huge part of this effort. This could not have been accomplished without the ideas, input and insight from all the amazing content experts and invaluable stakeholders: the self-advocates, advocates, providers, and other bureaus (thank you Mi Via, Supports Waiver, and Community Programs Bureau)! The amount of time – the one thing we never have enough of – that was spent reviewing and providing feedback was plentiful, to say the least. Everyone who offered their support, ideas, suggestions and creativity to this process truly brought the trainings to life, and the end result that learners experience when they log on to the trainings today. There are far too many to name (but a special shout out to Adelante, ARCA and ENMRSH for their assistance – you rock!); you are all appreciated beyond words. Through trial, error, and sometimes intermittent meltdowns, the Training Unit had so much support to come together and navigate this new reality, much like everyone else during the age of COVID. That light at the end of the tunnel is starting not to look so much like a train these days. All the hard work and dedicated efforts are making headway, if we can only hang on just a little while longer.

All of this said, each of us in Training Unit (along with all the incredible people who helped along the way) is excited to share with you the new courses that have been accomplished; check them out and let us know what you think! We’ve learned that this “going virtual” business is an ever-changing reality, much like the world during the pandemic, and we’re constantly learning... so your suggestions and feedback will only help us grow and move forward as we continue creating eLearning courses. Go on now... get your trainings done, and don’t be a stranger. We’ll be waiting to hear from you!

To check out all the new eLearning courses:

<https://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/disability-health-policy/ddsd-courses/index.html>.

If you’re not quite ready to rock the eLearning, register for a livestream training here:

<https://ddsctrain.cdd.unm.edu/Calendar.aspx>.

# Mi Via Waiver Approved and Improved!

*Submitted by Jennifer Rodriguez, DDSD Community Programs Bureau Chief*

The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) Mi Via Unit, in collaboration with our partners at the Human Services Department (HSD), have been working on the Mi Via Waiver renewal process with stakeholders and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for the last 2 years. We are excited to share the Mi Via Waiver renewal has been approved by CMS for an additional 5 years. Thanks to everyone who took the time and provided input, experiences, suggestions, areas for improvement and success stories - we couldn't have done it without you!

In addition to working with our stakeholders and partners, DDSD and HSD had an incredible opportunity to work with a CMS consulting agency, New Editions, during our renewal work. Through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Technical Assistance (TA) project, New Editions worked with DDSD to review our Mi Via Self-Directed Waiver Program. The New Editions team consisted of Jeanine Zlockie, Mary Lou Bourne, Teja Stokes, Katherine Murray, James Toews, and Merle Edwards-Orr, all national leaders in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. The following were areas of focus during NM's technical assistance with New Editions:

- Balancing person-centered practices with strong oversight strategies as NM sought to gain a greater understanding regarding how other states build strong quality systems within a self-directed services environment, including state strategies and expectations for Consultants.
- Information on how states support individuals/families in the performance of employer-of-record functions, including required training and program integrity issues and monitoring performance.
- Information regarding how NM might utilize education and awareness to ensure self-direction is utilized and implemented in the best interests of the person.

The TA team worked with leadership staff from DDSD and HSD to gather background information on the Mi Via Waiver and the policies and procedures that guide its implementation. This year-long project resulted in the following technical assistance and information that was used in the Mi Via renewal activities and ultimately our approved waiver.

1. Identification of effective strategies and models for consideration related to Mi Via Waiver implementation, including information on best practices.
2. Discussing critical components of Mi Via Waiver implementation and guidelines to ensure monitoring for successful participant outcomes by:
  - a. Strengthening the oversight completed by Mi Via Consultants to be more person centered so that participant choice and control is upheld and maintained through service documentation; and
  - b. Identifying ways the DDSD can improve the Service and Support Plan (SSP), including strategies that may improve adherence with all CMS person centered plan (PCP) guidelines through Consultant training and policy development.
3. Providing the State with information to enable a deeper understanding on how to balance person centered planning and structured oversight and monitoring to ensure individual health and welfare and address risk, including the potential addition of an Agency with Choice/corporate Employer of Record option to the waiver for families who prefer or need additional support with Employer of Record functions.
4. Suggestions for potential additions to the draft Employer of Record (EOR) Handbook so the state could improve description of expectations and to establish procedures so that EOR duties are set forth in accordance with state-established policies.
5. Identifying ways in which the state can use Consultants to improve protections, supports and services as directed by the PCP under the Mi Via Waiver.

As new and/or revised authoritative documents and guidance is issued, you will notice where we have incorporated the input and recommendations from our collaboration with New Editions. Specifically, you will see improvements to our New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC), the Mi Via Waiver Service Standards, Consultant Contact Forms, a new Mi Via training curriculum, a new EOR Guidebook, Vendor and EOR packets and a revised SSP.



## IS THE COVID-19 VACCINE SAFE?

**GET THE FACTS AT [VACCINENM.ORG/FACTS](https://vaccinenm.org/facts)**



# E-Blasts For This Quarter

*Submitted by Tammy Barth, Provider Enrollment Manager*

- NM DOH and DDSD Documents – Sent 3.1.2021
- Provider and Agency EVV Weekly Communication 3.3.2021 – Sent 3.4.2021
- EVV Interactive Voice Response Outage – Sent 3.9.2021
- DDSD Indoor Visitation Requirements for Court-Appointed Guardians and Conservators – Sent 3.9.2021
- Important Update: EVV Interactive Voice Response Outage – Sent 3.10.2021
- Request::: Survey to Collect EVV Agency Contact Information – Sent 3.11.2021
- Palco Weekly EVV Communication – Sent 3.11.2021
- BBS Buzz Newsletter March 2021 – Sent 3.15.2021
- Save the Dates for the next 2 trainings!! – Sent 3.15.2021
- DDSD Documents – Sent 3.15.2021
- Checks Needing Correction – Sent 3.16.2021
- Palco Weekly EVV Communication 3.17.21 – Sent 3.17.2021
- Palco Weekly EVV Communication 3.24.21 – Sent 3.24.2021
- DDSD Documents – Sent 4.1.2021
- Provider and Agency EVV Weekly Communication 04.07.21 – Sent 4.7.2021
- DDSD Documents – Sent 4.15.2021
- Vaccine Event for Adults with Disabilities April 26 and 27 – Sent 4.21.2021
- CORRECTED CONTACT NUMBER - FW: [EXT] Vaccine Event for Adults with Disabilities April 26 and 27 – Sent 4.21.2021
- EVV Weekly Communication 4.22.2021 – Sent 4.22.2021
- COVID VACCINE EVENT - APRIL 26-27 – Sent 4.22.2021
- "Drive Through Only" COVID 19 Vaccine Event – Sent 4.26.2021
- REMINDER: DD Waiver Therapy Provider Meeting TODAY from 2:00-3:00 – Sent 4.28.2021
- DHI Re-Entry Webinar with Providers – Sent 4.30.2021
- DDSD Documents – Sent 4.30.2021
- EVV Weekly Communication 5.5.2021 – Sent 5.5.2021
- SW Memo and Draft Fee Schedule Distribution – Sent 5.11.2021
- DDSD Documents – Sent 5.14.2021
- DDSD Key Performance Indicator Memo and TA Guide 2021 – Sent 5.18.2021
- EVV Weekly Communication 5.19.21 – Sent 5.19.2021
- Draft DD Waiver Service Standards for Preview and Feedback – Sent 5.20.2021

# New Hires & Retirements

*Submitted by: Joseph Anaya, Human Resources*

## **New Hires:**

Jennifer Sedillo, Dental Hygienist-A, Albuquerque Special Needs Dental Clinic, April 3, 2021  
Alicia Otolo, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 1, 2021  
Jaekisha Lewis, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 10, 2021  
Aaron Maestas, Staff Manager, May 15, 2021  
Maira Chairez, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 29, 2021  
Linda Murry, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 29, 2021  
Susanna Whitten, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 29, 2021  
Christy Pina, Training & Development Specialist-A, May 29, 2021  
Kristy Roybal, Social & Community Services Coordinator-O, May 29, 2021

## **Retirements:**

Dave Brunson, Social & Community Service Coordinator-O, retiring June 1, 2021  
Dennis O'Keefe, Social & Community Service Coordinator-O, retired March 31, 2021  
David Doyle, Healthcare Surveyor-O, retiring August 6, 2021

## About Us

The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division is located at  
810 San Mateo  
PO Box 26110  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
Our website: [www.nmhealth.org](http://www.nmhealth.org)

### **FOR INFORMATION CALL:**

(505) 476-8973 or Toll Free:1-877-696-1472 or email us at [SANTAFEmailbox.ddsd@state.nm.us](mailto:SANTAFEmailbox.ddsd@state.nm.us)

### **DDSD NEWSLETTER STAFF**

Editor-in-Chief: Marc Kolman  
Layout: André Walker

If you would like to write an article for the next issue of the DDSD Newsletter, have suggestions or comments, please contact Marc Kolman, DDSD Newsletter Editor-in-Chief at 505-476-8839 or [Marc.Kolman@state.nm.us](mailto:Marc.Kolman@state.nm.us).