

# Review of 2019 Progress on 2019-2021 Strategic Plan

**Strategic Objective: Increase the number of LCBDD-eligible individuals of working age engaged in community employment**

Goals	Expected Outcomes
<p>A minimum of 22 LCBDD-eligible individuals will be placed in a job that meets the definition of community employment every year, between 2019 and 2021</p> <p>90% of LCBDD-eligible individuals who are placed in a job that meets the definition of community employment will retain the job for at least 90 days</p> <p>75% of LCBDD-eligible individuals who are placed in a job that meets the definition of community employment will maintain the job for one year or more</p>	<p>Steady increase, between 01/2019 and 12/2021 in the number of LCBDD-eligible individuals of working age engaged in community employment</p> <p>Increased earnings and job satisfaction of LCBDD-eligible individuals</p> <p><b>33 individuals were placed in jobs that met the definition of community employment in 2019</b></p> <p><b>31 of the 33 individuals placed in community employment retained employment for at least 90 days (94%)</b></p> <p><b>The third goal will be evaluated in 2020, after a year has passed</b></p>

◆ **Continue to coordinate and take a leadership role on the Lorain County Employment First Transition Team, which has established the following goals:**

**Establish a baseline measurement of employment outcomes of youth in Lorain County, including information about the services, education, support, etc. received while in school and immediately after.**

**Building upon the identified strengths and resources of Lorain County and the Ohio Employment First Process, create a plan that outlines a process of awareness, training and communication to support higher expectations for community employment for youth with DD in Lorain County, with a focus on all stakeholders (families, students, schools, DD system employees, OOD representatives, service providers, etc.)**

**Identify a continuum of options for youth with DD to prepare and support these youth to engage in community employment.**

The Murray Ridge Supported Employment (SE) Director chairs the Lorain County Employment First Transition Team, which is comprised of the State Support Team, Educational Services Center transition counselors, local school district representatives, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) representatives, and other providers of transition services to youth with disabilities.

The Lorain County Employment First Transition Team held its third annual Future Planning Retreat at Lorain County Community College (LCCC) on March 9, 2019. At the retreat, eligible youth and

their families were able to learn about topics such as Service and Support Administration, Nutrition and Fitness, Transition Services, Medicaid Waivers, Career Discovery, and Backward Planning.

- ◆ **Through on-going participation on the Lorain County Employment First Transition Team, take steps to ensure that LCBDD and local school districts use similar methods to support students with DD to obtain community employment, and to resolve any duplication of effort.**

The Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department participated in Employment First Transition Team meetings throughout the year to discuss SSA involvement in transition and efforts being made by school districts to obtain community employment. The SSA Department also met with the transition coordinators to introduce the SSA Transition Team and explain the new LCBDD transition process involving SSA staff. The process was updated to include assignment of an SSA to eligible transition students at age 16. This allows for the entire team to support students with DD in obtaining community employment and work together to resolve duplication of efforts.

- ◆ **Update and execute a strategic, targeted plan to create community-based integrated employment opportunities for adult consumers utilizing a team of Supported Employment staff. Include strategies for evaluating the human resource needs of local employers, approaching specific employers, and making employers aware of the benefits of hiring people with developmental disabilities.**

In order to identify strategies for future success, the SE team continued to meet weekly to review placements, analyze terminations for what lessons could be learned, identify backfilling opportunities, review situational and community-based assessments, and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of consumer job interviews from the previous week.

In 2019, the Marketing/Job Placement Specialist attended three local job fairs as well as other regional job fairs to collaborate with other providers to see what placement techniques are working for them. She attended monthly provider collaboratives in neighboring counties to keep current on what is happening in the field as it relates to placement services, transitioning students, transportation, etc. She attended trainings sponsored by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), and attended a diversity forum on overcoming barriers to entering the workforce for people with disabilities. Additionally, the Marketing/Job Placement Specialist attended a Lorain County Community College (LCCC) networking event which provided helpful information on job search techniques, communication skill building techniques, and interview techniques; these were subsequently utilized during the job development process.

The Supported Employment Director participated in multiple webinars on Employment and Career Planning for people with developmental disabilities and shared the information with staff members.

- ◆ **Include in the LCBDD budget a line item for community employment marketing, and identify specific strategic expenditures designed to highlight the competencies of people with DD in the workforce, and the benefits of hiring people with DD (e.g. 'bus bench campaign,' radio spots, radio interviews with employers/consumers, etc.)**

The 2019 budget for Supported Employment Marketing was \$34,980. Through this budget, 27 Lorain County bus bench advertisements featured competitively employed individuals and their employers, and contact information for the Murray Ridge Supported Employment Department. Radio spots highlighting the competencies of people with DD in the workforce and the benefits of hiring people with DD were aired on WOBL/WDLW 10 months out of the year. Also, as part of the radio advertising package, radio interviews were conducted featuring both employers and program participants, highlighting the benefits of hiring people with DD. Consumers pursuing community employment participated in mock interviews live on the air to enable them to practice their

interviewing skills and make potential local employers aware of their skill sets. Print media and radio were also utilized to promote Developmental Disabilities Employment Awareness Month in October 2019. \$36,530.00 was budgeted for community employment marketing in 2020.

◆ **Facilitate the meetings/activities of a Community Employment Advisory Committee consisting of local business leaders from diverse industries (food service, manufacturing, retail, local government, not-for-profits) that will meet quarterly to develop best practices with regard to providing community employment services and placing consumers in competitive jobs.**

The Community Employment Advisory Committee met four times in 2019. One of the ideas generated by the committee was for the Marketing/Job Placement Specialist to volunteer to assist at regional hiring events in order to network with attending providers in order to keep current about trends in the field; she was able to assist at four such events in Cuyahoga County.

The group also recommended attending trainings that may be held by other organizations serving different populations. Staff attended two trainings in Akron sponsored by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. The trainings were well-attended, but unfortunately the training provided little new information.

The committee suggested a short exit survey for employers who hire an individual with developmental disabilities to find out what they liked best about the process and what could be improved. The Supported Employment Director and Marketing/Job Placement Specialist will develop a survey for this purpose.

◆ **Maintain ongoing contacts with a variety of businesses and industry representatives to promote community employment placements**

The Marketing/Job Placement Specialist maintained a database of industry representatives and contacts at a variety of businesses. This list of contacts was reviewed and updated through both the targeted plan to create integrated community employment opportunities and the Community Employment Advisory Committee. The Marketing/Job Placement Specialist contacted people on this list, as well as people listed on job boards and in 'help wanted' advertisements. She also did cold calling, specifically targeting businesses that might have multiple job opportunities for those we serve. She also volunteered to work the desk at several local hiring events at locations such as Progressive Field, Hyland Software, John Carroll University and the Parma Public Library in order to meet other local providers and to network. In Lorain County, she attended hiring events at the Lorain County Community College, the Reserves Network and Shurtape Technologies.

◆ **Solicit agency staff/supporters for job leads**

The Marketing/Job Placement Specialist attended staff meetings throughout the agency to solicit job leads, including leads for specific consumers at the Murray Ridge Opportunity & Vocational Centers. The Director of Vocational and Transportation Services attended staff meetings at Murray Ridge School and with Service and Support Administrators.

◆ **Develop relationships with a variety of civic organizations/chambers of commerce/service clubs that could lead to employment opportunities for adult consumers**

Staff attended regular meetings of the North Coast Chamber of Commerce, the Lorain County Chamber of Commerce, the Power of More (an association of many local chambers of commerce), the Lorain County Manufacturing Council, and the Lorain County Safety Committee for the purpose of developing leads for community employment opportunities. Twenty-eight different networking events were attended in 2019, and several consumers gained community employment as a direct result of connections made at these events.

- ◆ **Continue partnering with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) to assist identified individuals who want community employment by working with the OOD counselors to provide intensive placement services**

The Supported Employment Department worked with the OOD counselor by tracking those services listed within each individual's employment plan for which it was the identified facilitator, and meeting regularly with the counselor to discuss the effectiveness of the plan. The entire Supported Employment team also met weekly with the OOD counselor to discuss newly-referred individuals and their employment histories, if any, in order to assist with the development of effective employment plans. Progress of those who already had employment plans was also discussed.

- ◆ **Utilize lessons learned from community employment dismissals and voluntary terminations to increase the likelihood of successful future community employment placements/job retention**

Job losses were analyzed so that the reasons for each individual's job loss could be taken into consideration when facilitating future employment opportunities. For instance, one individual quit after a new manager started because she didn't get along with him. Now, during monthly visits SE staff specifically inquire about any changes in personnel, and make sure that related transitions are going smoothly.

- ◆ **Actively participate in the development and promotion of MOVE, Lorain County's Coordinated Transportation Plan which, if funded, would develop and implement a mobility management program, and create pilot projects to increase the availability of affordable public transportation services**

The Director of Vocational and Transportation Services serves on a committee which developed a coordinated transportation plan for Lorain County. The goals of the plan are to increase awareness of and access to transportation options for Lorain County residents by: (a) increasing understanding and awareness of transportation needs; (b) coordinating transportation options to meet needs; and (c) building sustainable and healthy communities. Our agency's involvement with the plan ensures that people with developmental disabilities and their transportation needs are addressed. The MOVE committee applied for and received a grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation to hire a Mobility Manager to develop strategies to support connections between transportation and human services, education, and employment. The committee meets quarterly and ended the year in the process of implementing and evaluating several pilot projects.

- ◆ **Systematically track and document occasions on which lack of transportation precluded a community employment opportunity for an LCBDD-eligible individual, or resulted in job loss for an LCBDD-eligible individual**

In 2019, the SE Department identified 14 occasions which met the identified criteria. The SSA Department developed and implemented a tracking mechanism to capture individual situations in which lack of transportation was a barrier to a community employment opportunity. Based on the data collected, there were four individuals who were unable to accept a community employment opportunity due to the lack of transportation. Each of these individuals was working through OOD, and the team was unable to identify viable transportation options to assist him/her in obtaining successful employment. The barriers identified were living in rural areas of the county (which impacted two of the individuals), and lack of funding.

- ◆ **Consider additional investment in the provision of work-related transportation when natural supports are unavailable**

This was considered, and it was decided we would re-evaluate this during the 2021 budget preparation process.

- ◆ **Refer individuals, as appropriate, to the OOD/DODD job placement partnership through which technical assistance is given and providers of employment support receive funding**

In 2019 the SSA Department continued to make referrals to the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)/Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) partnership, through which funding and technical assistance is made available to providers of community employment services.

- ◆ **Continue to implement and enhance an assessment and service planning protocol for assisting eligible individuals to move forward on their paths to community employment**

The SSA Department continued to utilize the Discovery & Individual Needs Assessment (DINA) to assess the individual's place on the path to employment and plan for services. The SSA Department updated the annual assessment tool based on guidance provided by DODD, and provided service plan outcome development training specific to assisting individuals to move along their paths to community employment.

- ◆ **Seek guidance from DODD consultants on: (1) best practices for assessment and service planning to assist eligible individuals to move forward on their paths to community employment, (2) how to access and interpret statewide data on community employment of people with DD, and (3) which providers have had the greatest success with assisting individuals with DD to achieve desired community employment outcomes**

Throughout the spring of 2019, the SSA Director spoke with DODD Community Life Engagement staff regarding best practices for assessment and service planning to assist eligible individuals to move forward on the paths to community employment. DODD staff reviewed the assessment tools utilized by the SSA Department and provided guidance. The SSA Department updated the annual assessment tool based on the guidance provided, and provided training to SSA staff on how best to have conversations with an individual and his/her team regarding moving forward on the path to community employment. The SSA Department received training on the tools on the Ohio Employment First website, including the Guidance for Conversations Toolkit.

DODD staff was unable to provide guidance on the statewide employment data. The DODD data collection process was updated in 2019.

The SSA Department reached out to DODD staff to identify providers who have been successful with assisting individuals with DD to achieve desired community employment outcomes within Region 6. The SSA Department sought out the identified providers that operated within Lorain County and found that the providers were not DODD certified and worked solely through OOD. These providers were not willing to become DODD certified; not wanting to work under two systems was cited as a reason for this. The SSA Department also reached out to the identified out-of-county providers; none had the staff/capacity to expand into Lorain County at the time. These providers were asked to share their success stories and plans with Lorain County providers; an event/forum for this purpose is expected to occur in 2020.

- ◆ **Develop and begin collecting data on a metric that measures whether or not post-secondary school employment matches the job preferences identified by eligible individuals during the secondary school transition process.**

In September of 2019, the SSA Department developed a transition student occupational tracking metric. The data collection system was implemented on October 1, 2019. Occupational preference data will be collected at age 16 (or when first assigned as a transition student), at the time of graduation and four years post-graduation. The data collected in 2019 was specific to individuals at age 16 (or when first assigned as a transition student); data on these students will be collected at all identified stages.

- ◆ **Post information about transition-related education opportunities in which LCBDD participates, or which it provides, on the LCBDD website.**

Information was posted on the Agency website regarding an educational event entitled "Future Planning for Families - Lorain County" which was held at LCCC in March 2019. The day-long event, sponsored by State Support Team Region 2 and hosted in partnership with LCBDD, the Lorain County Educational Service Center and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, was designed for families of transition-age students in grades 8-12 and featured sessions on goal-setting, career exploration and self-advocacy.



**Sandra Kilgore**—Sandra has participated in training at community-based work sites at Oberlin College (dishwashing/lobby attendant duties), First Church in Oberlin (custodial duties), and Splash Zone (janitorial duties). She was employed by Oberlin College Dining Services in March of 2019. Sandra received assistance with obtaining the job, and support from a job coach to master her duties on the job. She then received ongoing follow-along supports, and help with transportation to and from work. When asked about her job at Oberlin College, Sandra simply says "I love it!"



**Bryon Ragin**—Bryon has participated in work training at the following group employment work sites: Oberlin College (dishwashing/lobby attendant duties) and First Church in Oberlin (custodial duties). In August of 2019, Bryon was employed by Pizza Hut in Oberlin as a dish washer.

**Strategic Objective: Within resource constraints, ensure/assist eligible individuals to receive services in the most integrated settings appropriate to their needs**

Goals	Expected Outcomes
<p>Address CMS requirements related to community-based, integrated service delivery</p> <p>Increase the amount of time that all interested Adult Program participants spend receiving community-based day services</p> <p>Identify more community places where individuals with DD may enjoy spending extended periods of time without incurring significant cost</p> <p>Arrange for eligible individuals to receive community-based services that help them enjoy themselves, progress toward desired outcomes, engage actively with people (other than paid staff) who do not have DD, and play valued roles within the community</p>	<p>Increased provision of Murray Ridge Adult Services in integrated community settings</p> <p>Continued engagement of LCBDD-eligible individuals in volunteering and other valued activities in their community</p> <p>Increased participation by LCBDD-eligible individuals in desired, community-based activities with the assistance of Medicaid waiver providers and other assistance, including natural supports</p> <p>Improved ability of Service &amp; Support Administrators to assist with identification of specific community-based services desired by eligible individuals, and linkage of these individuals with providers that are well-equipped to provide these services</p>

The below data reflects the continued increase in the provision of community-based services to those who attend Murray Ridge Opportunity/Vocational Centers. A trend that continued in 2019 is the increased opportunity for Murray Ridge Adult Program participants with significant medical, behavioral and/or physical challenges to participate in integrated, community-based activities:

	Data collected from January 1-December 31, 2018	Data collected from January 1-December 31, 2019
Number of times individuals in Murray Ridge Adult Services participated in activities away from the OVCs other than work and volunteer activities coordinated by the SE Department	3,666	7,334  (This is a <u>100% increase</u> relative to 2018)
Number of groups of Adult Program participants that were involved in community-based activities (other than work or volunteering facilitated by the SE Department)	1,300	1,781  (This is a <u>37% increase</u> relative to 2018)
Number of times Murray Ridge Adult Program participants with severe medical, behavioral and/or physical challenges participated in community-based activities other than work.	1,685	3,807  (This is a <u>126% increase</u> relative to 2018)

◆ **Hire an additional Recreation Specialist to support the planning and delivery of community-based services within the Murray Ridge Adult Program.**

In January 2019, Adult Services added a Recreation Specialist to increase the number of community-based activities for consumers.

◆ **Continue to have a management or professional level employee work, on at least a monthly basis, with each Murray Ridge Adult Program participant who has a desired outcome involving day support away from the OVCs to identify and arrange for the delivery of indicated/ desired services in community places.**

Murray Ridge Adult Services identified a Program Manager from each OVC to be directly assigned to work with the staff and program participants to plan services away from the OVCs. Each month, the assigned Program Managers met one-on-one with each consumer who had a desired outcome that required service delivery away from the OVCs. When meeting with each consumer, they discussed what interests the consumer had and where he/she would like to go in the coming month. The information shared at the meetings was included on the Desired Outcome Documentation forms, and used as the basis for arranging individual services in community places.

◆ **Assign a professional level or management employee to work with the staff and program participants in each OVC area to plan services away from the OVC for Individuals assigned to the area.**

The assigned Program Managers developed and implemented a system to ensure that those with desired outcomes involving day support away from the OVCs were offered/provided desired community-based services each month. These managers also worked with area staff and program participants to plan services (that could, but did not necessarily need to be delivered in community settings) away from the OVCs.

◆ **Continue to use for planning of services to occur outside the OVCs Proposals for Community Based Services Forms to identify proposed destination(s); interests, individualized support strategies, and desired outcomes to be addressed for each person to receive services at/en route to the destination(s); how those to receive the community-based services were/will be involved in planning the proposed community-based activities; how these activities may enable Adult Program participants to interact meaningfully with people (other than paid staff) who do not have DD; and how the proposed activities may foster relationship building and engagement within the broader community. Subsequent to delivery of community-based day services, support staff will document occurrences/outcomes relative to what was addressed on the Proposal Forms.**

The Proposal for Community-Based Services Form continued to be used to assist staff in planning for services that occur outside of the OVCs. The form requires the identification of the community destination the consumers will go to, as well as the interests, desired outcomes and support strategies that will be addressed for each consumer when he/she receives services at (or on the way to) the destination. The following factors are systematically considered through the use of the form: (1) whether or not the destination lends itself to addressing each consumer's identified interests, support strategies, and desired outcomes; (2) whether or not existing staff coverage will be adequate for all consumers at the OVC (after associated staff are redeployed) if the identified group of consumers leaves the OVC and spends the planned amount of time at/traveling to the destination; (3) being equitable in providing all consumers with opportunities for community-based services; (4) how the consumers will be involved in planning/organizing the activity; (5) who, other than paid staff and consumers, will/might be involved with the activity; (6) how the activity may foster relationship-building between consumers and community members; and (7) how the activity is expected to help consumers to engage within the broader community. After each community-based activity, staff documented the occurrences/outcomes relative to what was addressed on the proposal form.



- ◆ **Systematically, using the searchable database of individual interest areas of Murray Ridge Adult Program participants, assist individuals served to plan community-based activities of interest with other Adult Program participants who have common interests; in so doing, plan for adjustments to staffing within/arrangement of the OVCs such that it will meet the needs of those receiving center-based services while others receive community-based services.**

Staff responsible for planning community-based services used the interest areas database to assist individuals to plan community-based activities with other Adult Program participants who have common interests. They also met with the Recreation staff to set up groups based upon interests. Adult Program Managers planned for staffing to meet the needs of those receiving center-based services while others received community-based services.

- ◆ **Establish a committee and through it work to address barriers to successful planning and delivery of community-based services within the Adult Program, including factors related to the cost of some community-based activities, communication/coordination with residential caregivers, and uncertainty about availability/approval for use of collective resources needed for community-based service delivery.**

The assigned Program Managers, the Quality Assurance Manager PT, Recreation Specialists, the Recreation Manager and the Director of Adult Programs were members of a committee that was established to address barriers to successful planning and delivery of community-based services. This committee had a kick-off meeting with the superintendent in early 2019. Some identified barriers included the cost of some community-based activities, the challenge of coordinating community-based services with employment services, the challenge of ensuring that residential caregivers sent items necessary for community-based activities on days when they were to occur, and consumers changing their minds about leaving the OVCs at the last minute. This led to needing to find others to go in place of those opting out of or unprepared to engage in community-based activities. Identification of more no-cost activities was identified as having the potential to increase the number of program participants able to participate in community-based activities without advance notice, and also to resolve issues related to consumers/caregivers forgetting to bring what's needed for planned activities away from the OVCs. Committee members worked to trouble-shoot/develop improved systems for addressing these issues throughout the year.

- ◆ **Continue to research and disseminate information about community places where LCBDD- eligible individuals may enjoy spending time without incurring (significant) expense.**

Staff and the Quality Assurance Manager PT continued to research and share information about community locations where program participants might enjoy spending time without incurring significant expense. In 2019, Murray Ridge Adult Services staff were asked to focus on researching community locations where community-based group activities could be provided at no cost. In 2019, 16 locations with no-cost activities and 11 locations with low-cost activities were added to the locations database. The number of no-cost community-based group activities increased significantly in 2019. The number of low-cost community-based group activities provided remained almost the same as in 2018. See below:

	Data collected from January 1-December 31, 2018	Data collected from January 1-December 31, 2019
Number of no-cost community-based group activities provided	828	1,432  (This is a <u>73% increase</u> relative to 2018)

Number of low-cost community-based group activities provided	432	427 (This is a <u>1% decrease</u> relative to 2018)
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- ◆ **Establish and implement a formal protocol for the use of resources at the disposal of Murray Ridge Adult Services (vehicles, Area staff, 'supplemental staff,' including those assigned to the Seniors Program, nurses, etc.) for community-based service delivery; the protocol will be designed to maximize community-based day services using existing resources, and provide equitable opportunities for those who are interested in community-based day support, while diligently assisting those with desired outcomes that must be addressed away from the OVCs to experience/work towards those outcomes.**

The committee formed to address barriers to providing community-based services met to establish and implement protocols for the use of resources such as vehicles, staff, and nurses, in order to maximize community-based services and to provide equitable opportunities for those interested in community-based services. Each OVC's Seniors Program began to include individuals that were not seniors in community-based services, if there was interest. The Program Managers maintained a tracking system to ensure that all consumers were offered community-based services. Offerings of community-based services increased significantly in 2019. See below:

Number of offerings of community-based services in 2018	Number of offerings of community-based services in 2019
5,616	11,025 (This is a <u>96% increase</u> relative to 2018)

- ◆ **Expand capacity for community-based support through Murray Ridge Adult Services by strategically identifying ways to use more 'Area staff,' and be less reliant on the use of supplemental staff' for community-based service delivery.**

Involvement of 'Area staff' in delivery of community-based service was expanded in 2019. Each Recreation Department staff was paired up with an 'Area' staff member to provide community-based services.

- ◆ **Continue to implement and refine a system for identifying and communicating to Program Specialists when Murray Ridge Adult Services has reached its capacity for assisting those served to experience/work toward desired outcomes that require receipt of day services away from the OVCs.**

Murray Ridge Adult Services established a system to identify and communicate to Team Leaders when Adult Services has reached its capacity for assisting those served to experience/work toward desired outcomes that require receiving day services away from the OVCs. The system takes into account that community-based service should be available to all program participants, and that services that can be provided in the OVCs should be delivered in community settings as well.

- ◆ **When Murray Ridge Adult Services has reached its capacity for assisting eligible individuals to experience/work toward desired outcomes that require receipt of day services away from the OVCs, during the person-centered planning process, notify the teams of individuals who have such desired outcomes that Murray Ridge Adult Services is unable to facilitate the desired outcomes. In such cases, assist with the identification of alternative providers/facilitators of the impacted desired outcomes.**

The Quality Assurance Manager PT received notice of program participants that had desired outcomes that required implementation outside of the OVCs. He managed and maintained a list for each OVC and kept Team Leaders informed of capacity levels so that during the person-centered

planning process, Team Leaders could notify the team if Murray Ridge Adult Services was unable to facilitate the desired outcomes. In these cases, SSA assisted in identifying alternative providers/facilitators of the desired outcome that was impacted. The SSA, the eligible individual, and the team worked to identify natural supports, community supports, residential supports or a new day provider willing to provide the necessary support strategies to assist in achieving/working toward the outcome.

◆ **Continue strategically to locate and approach organizations and/or businesses in the local community that desire/are willing to take on multiple volunteers with DD.**

On a quarterly basis, the Quality Assurance Manager PT attended OVC staff meetings to solicit ideas for community-based opportunities. In 2019, Murray Ridge Adult Services added two new on-going volunteering commitments. Program participants from the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center volunteered on a weekly basis at Meals on Wheels in Amherst and at the Good Neighbor Thrift Store in Avon Lake.

◆ **Continue to facilitate service clubs at each OVC, and sustain/expand the Acts of Giving Back Program through Murray Ridge Adult Services.**

The Quality Assurance Manager PT met monthly with each Opportunity/Vocational Center’s Service Club. Consumers participated in many community service projects. Some examples included food drives, school supply drives and card making events. In 2019, there was an increase in the number of “Acts of Giving Back” and an increase in the number of program participant participating in “Acts of Giving Back. See below:

	January 1-December 31, 2018	January 1-December 31, 2019
Number of “Acts of Giving Back”	202	245 (This is a <u>21% increase</u> relative to 2018)
Number of program participants that participated in “Acts of Giving Back”	164	193 (This is an <u>18% increase</u> relative to 2018)

-Consumers from all three Opportunity/Vocational Centers and Supported Employment continued to volunteer every Wednesday at the Friendship Animal Protective League (APL). Consumers assisted with cleaning the facility and also enjoyed spending time petting and playing with the animals.

-Another consistent volunteer site was the Habitat for Humanity Restore, where consumers volunteered on a weekly basis to sort and shelve clothing items.

-Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC) consumers volunteered to unload, sort and shelve food at several food pantries, including Lorain St. Mary's Church.

-Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (OOVC) consumers volunteered at Oberlin Community Services, and also assembled hardware packages for the local 'Sleep in Heavenly Peace' organization, which builds beds for local children in need.

-Elyria Opportunity Vocational Center (EOVC) consumers helped to clean the Elyria First Methodist Church.

- Consumers continued to assist at the Oberlin Senior Center by preparing and serving hot lunches. Consumers from all three OVCs made holiday and other seasonal cards to deliver to nursing facilities throughout the county.

-The OOVC continued its "Plant a Row" project. Ed Perry, a consumer at the OOVC, supervised the planting and growing of produce that was donated to the Oberlin Community Services Food Pantry.

-New volunteer opportunities at the LOVC included delivering Meals on Wheels on a weekly basis to elderly residents.

-The EOVC developed a "Buddy System" with residents at the Life Care Center of Elyria, where consumers paired up with residents to socialize.

-EOVC program participants also worked at the Food Pantry at the Trinity Lutheran Church.

- ◆ **Prior to taking consumers to community places, continue to meet with them to discuss Hazards/challenges that they might encounter at their destinations, and how the challenges can/will be addressed.**

Murray Ridge Adult Services concentrated on assisting program participants to discuss what hazards/challenges might be encountered at their community destination and how the challenges might be addressed. These meetings were documented on the Proposal for Community-Based Services Forms.

- ◆ **Identify and offer through Murray Ridge Adult Services a variety of activities that promote community access and social skills development. These activities will be designed for and made available to Adult Program participants with all types and levels of abilities and disabilities.**

During 2019, Murray Ridge Adult Services staff (with the help of the Speech-Language Pathologist) implemented a social skills training program that promoted community social skills development. The Quality Assurance Manager PT and interns from Cleveland State University and Lorain County Community College assisted in the development of videos that were used in group role-playing sessions. The OVCs utilized these videos to teach program participants social skills to use in the community.

- ◆ **Identify and promote community-based activities that enable people with DD to interact meaningfully with people who don't have DD.**

Adult Services staff, Program Managers and the Quality Assurance Manager PT promoted community-based activities that enabled people with developmental disabilities to interact meaningfully with people who do not have DD. Such community-based activities that took place on a weekly basis included volunteering at the Friendship APL, crocheting with seniors at the Columbia Station Library, and meeting with the Elyria Seniors for lunch. The number of meaningful interactions increased during 2019 as shown below:

Number of community-based services in which a consumer had a meaningful interaction with a person who did not have DD.	
January 1 - December 31, 2018	January 1- December 31, 2019
1,989	2,734 (This is an <u>increase of 38%</u> relative to 2018)

- ◆ **Attend staff meetings at each OVC to address and report on progress with the above objective, and to solicit related suggestions from Adult Program staff.**

The Quality Assurance Manager PT attended staff meetings at each OVC on a quarterly basis. He provided staff with updated information on community-based services and the "Acts of Giving Back" program. He also solicited ideas from staff regarding socialization/volunteering opportunities for program participants.

- ◆ **As person-centered plans are developed, facilitate the identification of community activities and places that will help individuals achieve/work toward desired outcomes, and participate actively in community life.**

SSA staff continued to complete the implementation of person-centered Individual Service Plans (ISPs). The ISP development process included planning for community-based services and the identification of community activities that would assist individuals to achieve/work toward desired outcomes. The SSA staff and eligible individuals' teams identified support strategies to achieve the desired outcomes, and community places where the support strategies might be delivered.

◆ **Encourage and assist waiver enrollees to identify the providers that are best equipped to support them to access desired experiences within the community**

Throughout the annual person-centered planning process and the year, SSAs provided information about certified providers that were able to address individual needs/requests. SSAs educated eligible individuals and their advocates about providers and the types of community-based activities they facilitated, as well as the frequency of the community-based services delivered by various providers, so that eligible individuals were able to determine which providers were best able to support them to access desired experiences within the community.

◆ **Provide Information and referral that assists LCBDD-eligible individuals to participate in desired, community-based activities; explore and encourage the use of natural supports and community resources for this purpose.**

Throughout the annual person-centered planning process and the year, SSAs worked to provide eligible individuals and their advocates with information about community-based activities related to their interests and desires. SSAs researched community-based activities and relayed to eligible individuals/their advocates information about the resources needed to participate in the activities.

◆ **Identify and participate in training on the facilitation of support in integrated settings and community membership, and the promotion of relationships and natural supports that reduce the reliance of people with DD on formal/paid services**

Several SSA Department staff members attended two trainings related to the promotion of community membership and natural supports. These staff members then presented the training information to the entire SSA Department. Further professional development on community membership facilitation and reducing reliance on formal/paid services will be explored throughout the strategic plan period.

◆ **Communicate in a variety of ways to the local public about the value of people with DD as co-workers, volunteers, citizens, neighbors and friends**

Dedicated effort was made in 2019 to decrease the amount of newsletter space devoted to consumers engaged in center-based social activities. Instead, an increased amount of space in the newsletter – an average of at least 1-2 stories per issue -- was devoted to stories featuring consumers engaged in hobbies, volunteering to address various community needs, and contributing through community-based jobs. One such story described how a consumer made such a positive impact with the staff at Lorain County Jobs & Family Services, where he worked, that staff members there attended his Special Olympics basketball games, met his parents, gave him Christmas presents, and featured him in a full-page story in that agency's newsletter. Additionally, whenever appropriate, stories about consumers being fully engaged in their community were shared through media outlets such as Facebook posts, agency spots on local radio, and stories placed in the local news media.

**Strategic Objective: Promote self-advocacy by individuals served by LCBDD through the person-centered planning process, activities and community connections**

Goal	Expected Outcomes
<p>Enhance the assessment/identification of beneficial self-advocacy supports for LCBDD-eligible individuals</p> <p>Increase provider awareness/competencies relevant to the provision of self-advocacy support</p> <p>Sustain and expand opportunities for eligible individuals in Lorain County to receive training in and exercise self-advocacy</p>	<p>Increase in self-advocacy skills of individuals with developmental disabilities in Lorain County</p> <p>Identification of those individuals who are interested in (increased) participation in advocacy activities</p> <p>Increased participation of individuals with developmental disabilities in Lorain County in advocacy activities</p>

- ◆ **Revise the annual assessment tool/process used by LCBDD Service & Support Administrators to include more probing questions about self-advocacy skills and supports desired; in so doing, include questions related to speaking up about choices when with friends and providers.**

The Discovery & Individual Needs Assessment (DINA) tool was updated in June of 2019 to include more probing questions about self-advocacy skills and supports desired. Training on the new assessment questions was completed in July of 2020.

- ◆ **Ensure that service plans developed within the SSA Department include individualized supports to assist with improvement of self-advocacy skills.**

Based on the probing questions added to the DINA, SSAs identified more individualized supports to assist eligible individuals to improve self-advocacy skills. The distinct questions within the DINA provided teams with a clear picture of what an individual is capable of and what supports need to be written into the Individual Service Plan (ISP).

- ◆ **Assist interested individuals to develop and include in their service plans desired outcomes related to self-advocacy**

Based on the eligible individual's interests and desires, SSAs continued to work with teams to develop detailed desired outcomes related to self-advocacy. These, along with associated strategies, were included in ISPs.

- ◆ **Identify consumers interested in participating in advocacy activities; ensure that supports necessary to achieve this are included in the person-centered plan of each of these individuals**

Through the person-centered planning process, the SSAs identified individuals interested in participating in self-advocacy activities, and included supports necessary to achieve this in their ISPs.

- ◆ **Identify and participate in training opportunities on self-advocacy of people with DD, and identifying/arranging for related supports.**

Several SSAs attended the annual three-day Synergy Conference and participated in numerous trainings on self-advocacy. In addition, several SSA staff attended a technology conference at which all presenters were people with DD speaking about self-advocacy and how technology helped provide them with a voice.

- ◆ **Provide self-advocacy support information to providers of Residential and Adult Day/ Employment Services in Lorain County. Develop and begin collecting data on a measure or measures of provider competency relative to supporting self-advocacy, including an assessment of competencies related to LCBDD's provision of related information.**

The SSA Department provided general self-advocacy information to all providers of Residential and Day Array services in Lorain County. This information was provided in July 2019 to agency contacts to be shared with the direct care professionals. The metric and data collection will be completed in 2020.

- ◆ **Offer periodic group training/information sessions on self-advocacy (with external consultants, as available) for LCBDD-eligible adults and their advocates/family members.**

A large self-advocacy event was held in August 2019 at Lorain County Community College featuring speakers and self-advocates who shared information on advocacy and the importance of 'speaking up.' More than 150 LCBDD-eligible adults and their advocates attended the event.

- ◆ **Disseminate information on the Ohio Self-Determination Association regional meetings and local self-advocacy groups to LCBDD-eligible adults and DODD-certified providers that serve individuals in Lorain County.**

Murray Ridge Adult Services provided information about Ohio Self-Determination Association regional meetings and events as well as other local self-advocacy resources available to eligible individuals in Lorain County. Additionally, information about Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility) trainings, the Synergy Conference and the LCBDD-sponsored advocacy event was disseminated.

- ◆ **Continue to support Murray Ridge Speaks Up; to facilitate monthly Self-Advocacy training and meetings; to conduct quarterly Consumer/Employee Committee meetings at each OVC; to invite, encourage and assist OVC attendees to make suggestions about the Adult Program; and to carefully review all Adult Program participant suggestions, and act upon them to the extent practicable.**

Murray Ridge Adult Services continued to offer monthly Self-Advocacy training at each OVC. Meetings were conducted by the consumers and staff that received Project STIR training. The name of the Murray Ridge Adult Services self-advocacy group is "Murray Ridge Speaks Up!" In January, members of the three OVC Self-Advocacy groups met to identify topics that they felt would be beneficial to other program participants. In February, the topic was "Speaking up for yourself & learning how to problem solve." In March, transportation was provided for 43 consumers (from all three OVCs) to Mercy Health and Recreation Center to receive educational training in "Cyber-bullying," "Being safe in your home," and "Being safe in the community." Patrolman Jacob Padrosky from the Amherst Police Department was the guest speaker. In April, self-advocacy group members shared the information obtained from the March meeting with other program participants. In May, the topic was "Steps to take if you feel like you are being bullied: speaking up for yourself and making requests from people in authority." In June, the topic was "What is a healthy relationship and having courage." In July, the topic was "Identifying verbal and physical abuse and what to do about it." In August, the topic was "Using social media responsibly." In September, consumers from the three OVCs were transported to Mercy Health and Recreation Center to share stories of success in celebrating self-advocacy. In October, staff and consumers attended the Synergy Conference at Kalahari. At the conference, participants learned about "Being safe at home," "Finding your own action hero," and "Living, loving autism." In November, the topic was "Winter safety."

On a quarterly basis each OVC held a Consumer/Employee meeting to encourage program participants to assist in the planning of facility activities and solicit suggestions about the program in general. Each suggestion was carefully reviewed and implemented to the greatest extent possible.

◆ **Consider arranging/sponsoring Project STIR training for additional individuals served (and their identified 'allies').**

The SSA Department arranged for and sponsored four eligible individuals and their allies to attend Project Stir training in November of 2019.



On August 22, 2019, Murray Ridge held its 'Find Your Voice' countywide self-advocacy event. Funding for this event was provided through the Myrtle Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation of Lorain County. This event featured guest speakers, **Josh Anderson** from No Regretz, and **Britta Hough** from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, as well as Lorain County consumers, **Megan Beals**, (**top left**), **Diana Clement** (**top right**), **Dan Fenik** (**bottom left**), and **Matthew Schoerverth** (**bottom right**). These individuals shared their experiences with self-advocacy as well as their successes, dreams, and hopes for the future.

One of the highlights of the evening was the prize drawings. Winners received the opportunity to attend STIR training and the upcoming Synergy conference. STIR training teaches people how to become a self-advocate, while the Synergy conference allows individuals with disabilities to network and learn about a variety of topics, including advocacy, safety, planning, and using technology. Winners also received t-shirts, cards, and fun take home baskets. Everyone who attended enjoyed a taco bar, an ice cream cart from Trikeable Treats, and the fun and exciting atmosphere.





**Strategic Objective: Reduce the number of eligible individuals in the county waiting for services**

Goal	Expected Outcomes
Reduction of waiting list for HCBS Medicaid waivers	More individual /family needs will be met through community-based alternative services v. HCBS waivers
Reduction of waiting list for supports in semi-independent living arrangements	A minimum of 110 people will be enrolled on HCBS waivers
Expanded provision of desired support to eligible individuals	Family caregivers will be assisted to handle caregiving challenges
Expansion of the provision of support and information to assist families to meet caregiver challenges	Growth in services will be fiscally sustainable, and will not jeopardize the continuation of the Early Intervention Program or Murray Ridge School

- ◆ **Hire a Part-Time Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist who will have, as one of two primary roles, responsibility for identification of and user-friendly communication about community-based alternative services as well as targeted provider recruitment.**

The Part-Time Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist was hired in February 2019 and subsequently resigned in August 2019. The Board approved a Full-Time position to replace the Part-Time position.

- ◆ **Post information about self-advocacy events and resources on LCBDD website**

As event information became available, the information was posted on the Agency website under one of two links on the home page: events sponsored by Murray Ridge (listed on the calendar), or a separate link to "Upcoming Events Not Sponsored by Murray Ridge Center."

- ◆ **Based upon research and a comprehensive review of related resources, update the LCBDD Alternative Services List that includes resources needed/desired by county residents with developmental disabilities (DD) and by families caring for members, including children, with DD.**

Committee meetings were held in January and June of 2019 to update the LCBDD Alternative Services List. After each meeting, the updated list was distributed within the SSA Department for staff to share with county residents with DD and those who care for them.

- ◆ **Establish a Board FSS Committee to assess the current parameters of the Family Support Program relative to identified needs, and consider expansion of the program; make recommendations relevant to this assessment**

This Board Family Support Committee was established in January of 2019. The committee met on multiple occasions throughout the year to discuss expressed needs of Lorain County families and review the parameters of Family Support Services (FSS) Programs. The committee recommended an increase to the quarterly FSS allotments available to families, and created a standard allowance for families to borrow from prior and future quarters during a calendar year. One desired impact of this allowance is the ability of families, if they choose, to utilize (more of) their annual FSS allocations for summer camp. The committee also reviewed the FSS co-pay structure, and determined that a new co-pay structure would be developed for families of eligible members who were not enrolled on Medicaid waivers (with the existent co-pay structure remaining in effect for families of eligible members who are enrolled on Medicaid waivers); the new co-pay structure, pertinent to those not enrolled on Medicaid waivers, was significantly liberalized. The committee recommendations were approved by the Board, with an effective date of 01/01/2020.

- ◆ **Complete, in accordance with OAC 5123-9-04, standardized assessment of each individual who was on the county's HCBS waiver waiting list on the day prior to the effective date of the rule, and who has not been removed from this list by request or in accordance with related rule provisions.**

In November of 2019, the SSA Department completed required waiting list assessments for individuals on the transitional waiting list, enabling the Board to commence ahead of schedule waiver enrollments planned for 2020 (55 Level I Waiver enrollments). The 55 Level I Waiver enrollments were initiated in 2019, with one enrollment completed in 2019. Additionally, ten Individual Options (I.O.) Waiver enrollments were initiated in 2019.

- ◆ **Initiate Supported Living services for individuals on the waiting list for supported living services in semi-independent living arrangements, as budgeted dollars for Supported Living become available.**

Using Supported Living funds, the SSA Department increased 'Apartment Supports' (supports for individuals living by themselves) within the context of the established budget. During 2019, one new person was served in the Apartment Supports Program.

- ◆ **Consider increased funding for the reduction of the waiting list for supported living services in semi-independent living arrangements.**

During the budget process the annual budget limitation was analyzed and determined appropriate for the 2020 calendar year.

- ◆ **Within the resource capacity of two dedicated FTEs, implement in-home behavior analysis and support through SSA positions dedicated (in whole or in part) to in-depth analysis of maladaptive behavior causation and correlation. This is designed for application within the homes of families caring for eligible individuals, and related consultation may also be made with day care centers/school personnel. Note: similar assistance may be provided within the context of the Early Intervention Program.**

The SSA behavior support staff worked directly with approximately 95 individuals and their teams to identify and implement in-home support strategies in the family home. This involved consultation, observation, and assessment. Behavior team members worked with families and support staff to implement positive proactive strategies and demonstrated the strategies when necessary. The behavior team assisted 19 individuals and families by working with the school team to identify the supports needed for transition from home to school and vice versa. Additionally, the behavior support staff assisted families with connecting to Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services, and ensured the team was working as a unit to address the behaviors.

- ◆ **Assess need/desire for and affordability of expanded capacity for in-home behavior analysis and support.**

During the budget process the need for expanded in-home support staff was reviewed. It was determined that the needs of eligible individuals could be met with staff levels remaining the same for calendar year 2020.

- ◆ **LCBDD staff, to include Behavior Analysts, SSAs, Developmental Specialists (who serve the 0-3 population) and other professionals, as applicable, will continue to offer and expand periodic trainings/information sessions for families and other caregivers on topics of expressed interest (e.g. toilet training, puberty, self-advocacy)**

The SSA Department offered training and information sessions about self-advocacy. Additionally, SSA staff connected families with no-cost training provided by external entities on topics including puberty, sexual relationships, and communication challenges.

**Strategic Objective: Recruit sufficient providers of services to meet the needs of eligible individuals receiving services in Lorain County**

Goal	Expected Outcomes
<p>Ensure that there are willing and able service providers for each HCBS waiver recipient served by LCBDD, including individuals with intensive needs.</p> <p>Ongoing awareness of unmet needs/desires for providers/information on providers to support LCBDD-eligible individuals.</p> <p>Provision of user-friendly, readily accessible information about providers/resources desired by LCBDD-eligible individuals and known to LCBDD</p> <p>Recruitment/identification of more providers to meet unmet needs/desires of LCBDD-eligible individuals and their families.</p> <p>Secure providers willing to commit to implementation of person centered plans.</p> <p>Targeted recruitment of Adult Day Support and Supported Employment providers capable of effectively addressing the desired outcomes of LCBDD-eligible adults</p> <p>Ensure that an acceptable and appropriate foster home (shared living option) is readily available for each eligible individual requiring emergency placement, if adult foster care is appropriate for and desired by the individual.</p>	<p>Increased availability of service providers, including providers of Participant-Directed Services to meet the needs of waiver recipients served by LCBDD</p> <p>Improved access to desired resource information by LCBDD-eligible individuals and their families; improved ability to compare resource/provider options</p> <p>Increased access to desired providers/resources by LCBDD-eligible individuals and their families</p> <p>Increased ability for waiver recipients to find providers of preferred person-centered plan provisions</p> <p>Enhanced satisfaction by some LCBDD-eligible individuals with Adult Day Support and Supported Employment services.</p> <p>Increase in the number of residential and day service providers in Lorain County that are willing/ able to service individuals with intensive medical/ health-related and behavior support needs</p> <p>Increase in the total number of readily available foster homes.</p>

- ◆ **Hire a Part-Time Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist who will have, as one of two primary roles, responsibility for identification of and user-friendly communication about community-based alternative services as well as targeted provider recruitment.**

The Part-Time Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist was hired in February 2019 and subsequently resigned in August 2019. The Board approved a Full-Time position to replace the Part-Time position.

- ◆ **Create and include on the LCBDD website a searchable database of providers that can meet support needs of Lorain County residents with DD (including any providers of summer camps/recreation).**

A link to the DODD searchable database was added to the main page on the LCBDD website. The link allows individuals and families to search for providers of a variety of services such as day services, homemaker personal care, and respite.

- ◆ **Add a link to the LCBDD website about the need for providers. Connect potential providers with SSA management contact to explain services and the DODD certification process.**

Due to the Provider Compliance/ Resource Specialist resigning in August 2019 and focusing on other tasks throughout her 6 1/2 months of employment, this link was not added in 2019.

- ◆ **Engage in strategic targeted recruitment of: (1) Providers of SELF Waiver Participant-Directed Homemaker/Personal Care (HPC) Services, (2) Residential and Adult Day Support Providers Willing to Serve Individuals with Intensive Medical/Health-Related Needs, (3) Residential and Adult Day Support Providers Willing to Serve Individuals with Intensive Behavior Support Needs, (4) Providers of Supported Employment, (5) Providers of Remote Technology and Support, and (6) Providers of Foster Care**

Education was provided to HPC-certified providers working in Lorain County regarding the SELF Waiver and the need for SELF Waiver providers for in-home supports. When the SSA manager responsible for provider assistance was contacted about certification, the need for SELF Waiver providers was discussed. Additional recruitment activities will occur in 2020 and 2021.

The Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist contacted providers of Adult Day Supports located in Medina County and western Cuyahoga County to discuss the need for specialized providers in Lorain County. Providers were identified and a list of Adult Day Providers was developed and shared with SSA staff. Eligible individuals were connected with providers able to meet their needs.

SSA staff continuously sought out residential providers willing to work with individuals with intensive medical needs. Numerous providers were identified and individuals were linked with the providers who were best able to meet their needs. Additionally, prospective providers identified by the individual or family were assisted through the DODD certification process.

SSA staff also continuously sought out residential providers willing to work with individuals with intensive behavioral needs. During 2019 there were several providers identified that began working with individuals with intensive behavioral needs in the family home and in small group settings. Additionally, prospective providers identified by families/individuals were assisted through the DODD certification process.

Throughout 2019, the SSA Department sought out OOD providers that provided services in Lorain, Erie and Cuyahoga counties, and discussed the need for additional providers of Supported Employment in Lorain County. Three of the providers expressed a willingness to become waiver certified, however they did not complete the process in 2019. Recruitment efforts will continue in 2020. The SSA transition team that works on a regular basis with transition-age youth and OOD will continue to speak with providers about the need for providers of Supported Employment and the DODD certification process. Additional recruitment activities will occur in 2020 and 2021.

The SSA Department formed a technology (TECH) team in 2018 that spent the majority of 2019 gaining knowledge about remote technology and educating SSA staff, Homemaker Personal Care providers, and families. During 2019 the TECH team attended conferences throughout the state to meet vendors, watch presentations about equipment and listen to testimonials of individuals using remote technology. The TECH team also visited SMART homes in Medina and Lucas counties to see that technology (in which appliances and devices can be controlled remotely) in action and discuss services with SSAs in those counties. Additionally, the TECH team held informational forums featuring providers of remote technology to educate SSAs, HPC providers and families. A technology referral process was implemented at SSA in order to connect interested individuals with providers that may be able to meet their needs. Additional recruitment activities will occur in 2020 and 2021.

Throughout 2019, SSA Manager Angela Toich spoke with independent providers about the need for Foster Care providers. These conversations were held while assisting new providers to complete initial provider training and when completing the initial application, as well as while assisting providers with the recertification process. In each discussion, the need for homes without pets or children was addressed, as was the need for the provider to be able to complete the delegation class to administer medications. Recruitment efforts will continue throughout 2020 and 2021.

- ◆ **For each Medicaid waiver recipient for whom there is no willing and able provider with a previously expressed interest in operating in Lorain that is acceptable to the waiver recipient, given required consent, promptly conduct a statewide search for a willing, able and acceptable provider.**

Statewide provider searches were conducted on behalf of 22 Medicaid waiver recipients for whom providers could not be located from among those that had expressed interest in operating or were already operating in Lorain County. Approximately half of these searches were the result of the eligible individual declining to work with providers who expressed interest in serving them. Once the search was completed, willing, able and acceptable providers were identified for all but one of the Medicaid waiver recipients. Both Agency and Independent providers were identified to meet the needs of the Medicaid waiver recipients. At year-end, the SSA Department was continuing to search for a provider for one Medicaid waiver recipient.

- ◆ **Incorporate into the provider database a web-based system through which LCBDD is able to post a profile for certified providers to view and indicate if they are interested in serving the individual. This mechanism will also allow SSA staff to notify providers when a new profile has been posted, and providers will be able to indicate on the website whether or not they are interested in serving the individual based on his/her profile.**

In October 2019, iData was the web-based provider identified to implement the provider portal database. The process was initiated with the provider, and Board approval was obtained to purchase the system.

- ◆ **Keep a running record of provisions that providers with a current expressed interest in operating in Lorain County are unwilling to implement. Evaluate this running record, and identify: (1) the types of services that providers currently operating in the county have been unwilling to provide, and (2) the circumstances under which and number of instances in which no provider that is on record as being interested in operating in Lorain County is willing/able to provide HCBS waiver services. Use this information in the design and execution of provider recruitment strategies.**

Two service plan provisions that no provider expressed interest in delivering in Lorain County were Waiver Nursing for an intensive pediatric nursing case with trach and vent care, and SELF Waiver Participant Directed Homemaker Personal Care (PDHPC).

The SSA staff for these cases conducted statewide searches through emails, phone calls and face-to-face interviews, and recruited family and friends to become certified for PDHPC. The SSA staff contacted all providers serving individuals in Lorain County that were willing to provide new services in Lorain County, and all declined to provide services to these individuals. Following conversations, interviews and assistance with certification, the SSA staff was able to locate willing and able providers for PDHPC. Unfortunately, the SSA staff was not able to locate a willing provider for the one Waiver Nursing case. SSA staff continued to work with nursing colleges, nursing agencies and hospitals to seek out nurses willing to become certified to provide services through DODD.

- ◆ **In discussion with/recruitment of providers of Day Array Services, provide information about expressed unmet needs/desires of eligible individuals in Lorain County relative to Adult Day Supports and Supported Employment, respectively.**

When meeting with Day Array Service providers, SSA staff shared information about expressed needs based on their respective caseloads. SSA management discussed needs and desires of eligible individuals in Lorain County relative to employment services and community-based activities.

- ◆ **Actively discuss with providers the unmet desire for and cost-effectiveness of providing group social/recreational opportunities for children and adults with DD, and of providing community-based group activities for people with DD. Support providers interested in providing these group services by helping to communicate the (potential) availability of the services to eligible individuals/their families, and providing other assistance, as needed.**

The SSA Department educated independent providers about providing group social/recreational opportunities. There are numerous independent providers that successfully provide services in this manner and these providers coordinate the services based on outcomes, likes, and interests of the individuals served.

◆ **Establish a committee to address strategies for identifying/facilitating the development of providers of transportation, including accessible transportation, that are available/affordable to Lorain County residents with DD/their families.**

A committee was established in 2019 consisting of the Director of SSA, the Director of Vocational and Transportation Services, the Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist PT, the Supported Employment Director, and staff from the SSA and Supported Employment Departments. There was discussion of transportation issues, such as the lack of providers for evening and weekend hours. The committee identified barriers to transportation, strategies to address transportation issues, and transportation options for different parts of the county and the cost of these options. The Director of Vocational and Transportation Services forwarded to committee members for review MOVE Lorain County’s coordinated transportation plan, which is the Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan for our area. The plan, funded by an \$80,000 Grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) was created to establish a Mobility Management Program and to hire a Mobility Manager. The responsibilities of the Mobility Manager will include supporting connections between transportation and human services, education, and employment. The committee will continue to meet to develop an informational handout on transportation services available throughout Lorain County.

◆ **LCBDD will continue to provide Early Intervention Services (for eligible infants and toddlers ages 0-3), Supportive Home Services, Supported Employment Services, and an Adult Day Program**

LCBDD continued to provide all of the above-listed programs and services in 2019.

**Strategic Objective: Meet with each newly certified independent provider within sixty days of the provider being selected to provide services to an individual, for the purposes of confirming that the provider understands the individual service plan and the provider’s responsibilities, and ensuring that the provider has contact information for the county board**

Goal	Expected Outcomes
<p>Follow SSA procedure provisions requiring that SSAs meet with each newly certified provider within sixty days of the provider being selected to provide services to an individual, for the purposes of confirming the provider understands the individual service plan and the provider’s responsibilities, and ensuring the provider has contact information for the county board.</p>	<p>Each newly certified independent provider will be promptly aware of and understand his/her responsibilities as outlined in individual service plans.</p> <p>All certified independent providers will have needed contact information for the county board</p>

The SSA staff met with each newly certified independent provider within 60 days of the provider being selected to provide services to an individual, for the purposes of confirming that the provider understood the ISP and the provider’s responsibilities, and ensuring the provider had contact information for the county board.