

# REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE PROCESS TO EXPLORE WAYS TO USE MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING TO ADDRESS THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PERSONS

(FY2013 Appropriation Bill - Public Act 200 of 2012)

March 1, 2013

**Section 499:** The department shall explore ways to use mental health funding to address the mental health needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons. The department shall report to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on community health on the results of this process by March 1 of the current fiscal year.

*Michigan Department  
of Community Health*



**Rick Snyder, Governor  
James K. Haveman, Director**

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION  
FY 2013 APPROPRIATION BILL SECTION 499  
BOILERPLATE REPORT**

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is committed to working with stakeholders from various state of Michigan agencies, deaf individuals, advocates, interpreters, representatives from medical organizations, community mental health agencies and providers, substance abuse providers and others to develop a statewide plan to better address the behavioral health needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

An initial meeting was held on February 22, 2013, which included a variety of representatives and stakeholders. The list of attendees is available upon request through the legislative liaison office of MDCH. At the meeting, it was determined that a strategy is needed to evolve the current locally managed and delivered services for deaf and hard-of-hearing to one that is further strengthened by regional and statewide structures and responsibility. A regional and statewide strategy is needed to address issues such as cultural and linguistic competencies of behavioral health clinicians, cultural competencies of interpreters, and outdated technology (example TTY otherwise known as Text Telephone or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, TDD), versus more progressive technology such as video phones used in local settings. Several individuals from the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority Deaf Advisory workgroup have provided input to explain how their efforts have led to system changes within their locality, as well as how these efforts may contribute to a broader regional and statewide strategy resulting in strengthened local service delivery for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The statewide plan will be informed by best practices from around the country, including, but not limited to, Alabama, Minnesota, South Carolina and Missouri. The statewide plan will focus on identified local gaps across the state within the current system, and working with the stakeholders from the local and regional structures to implement best practices to bridge identified gaps. The plan, while informed by best practices from around the country, will be specifically adapted to Michigan. The resulting plan will support access to services at all localities, but will be monitored and supported on a regional and statewide basis, utilizing the regional specialty behavioral health and developmental disabilities services structures in place in the Medicaid system.

The stakeholder group intends to meet quarterly to discuss the progress. An initial plan will be drafted for review and consideration by December 1, 2013, and will be revised as new initiatives and practices are identified and established.