

THE Writing on the Wall



Making life better together.

FALL & WINTER 2017

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in Action**

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Corner**

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Support**

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Individuals *in Action*

If you want to see Jonathan Miles and provider Sherri Wingfield, go to Elite Fitness in Appomattox. An avid body builder now, when Jonathan first moved into Sherri's home a year and a half ago, they would go to the gym and mainly hang out together. "Then we saw some people over at the gym who worked out a lot – big guys," says Jonathan. He was intrigued and Sherri encouraged him to join in and work out, and finally he did.

At one point, a sign appeared on the bulletin board for a body building show and an offer was made to Jonathan. "I'll make a deal with you," said Sherri. "I will take you to that show if you can lose this amount of weight. But, you have to make an effort." At that point, Jonathan started working out with her every day for an hour.

Jonathan wanted to do it, but it's really hard for your brain to learn muscle memory when you haven't had much experience. Until you actually do it, it's difficult and frustrating. He would even growl and say, "I told you I can't do it" and Sherri would say, "but I know that you can. Try again." So they would push, slowly, and the next thing they knew, Jonathan was dropping pounds left and right.

Then they started the big effort – food and changing Jonathan's diet. He had already started cutting down on sugar, but at this point, he agreed

to just eat what Sherri ate. They went to the gym five days a week and finally he decided to have most meals at home and eat out once a week. "I alternated his carbs and proteins, and he lost 10 – 15 pounds just like that," says Sherri. "By the time his brother came to

see him, he couldn't tell it. The last time he came, he looked at Jonathan and said, 'Johnny, you are half the man you used to be!' Jonathan was so happy to hear that."

"I don't eat too much candy anymore. I used to eat a pound of candy and soda too," says Jonathan. "I used to drink a lot of tea too but now I drink water. I sometimes drink a diet soda but not too much. And I can't remember the last time I had French fries. I even have baked potatoes with no butter or sour cream."

The addition of exercise and change in his diet have been noticed by his doctor. With his weight loss, Jonathan was able to be taken off his diabetes medication. Three months later, his sugar was still perfect and a few months ago, his doctor sent a letter stating that Jonathan no



Sherri and Johnathan showing off their muscles.

longer had a diagnosis of diabetes. "I'm 30 pounds lighter and took about 20 inches off my waist," says Jonathan.

What does Sherri attribute this success to? "It's the rapport that Jonathan and I have – he wanted this for himself as much as I



Jonathan's shrinking pants.

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Director's Corner

By John Weatherspoon, Executive Director

The summer of 2017 was a busy time for DD Waiver Providers and it looks as if the Fall and Winter will be no different. This summer Wall Residences represented Sponsored Residential providers through participation in the Commissioner's Advisory Group, DD Waiver Advisory Committee (DD-WAC), the SIS Stakeholders Workgroup and the Sponsored Residential Rate Review workgroup.

The Commissioner's Advisory Group is made up of representatives from private and public agencies which serve individuals in all areas of service provision from Mental Health and Substance Abuse to Developmental Disability Services. The DD-WAC is a group composed of leadership from DMAS and organizations which represent individuals receiving DD services and the agencies which provide those services. This group will continue to meet throughout the Waiver Redesign process.

The SIS Stakeholder Group met on one occasion this summer to review data prepared and presented by DMAS and DBHDS and to make statements and recommendations for moving forward. A report has been developed by the state with a number of recommendations for improving the SIS process. This group will continue to meet at least annually. The final report from this committee is expected to be released soon.

The Sponsored Residential Rate Review workgroup met on one occasion in June. Wall Residences, Inc. providers, along with all other sponsored providers in the Virginia, were asked to complete a survey developed by DBHDS earlier this year to determine the impact the rate changes made to sponsored providers and the individuals in their services. Unfortunately, no sponsored agency was asked to take part in the development of the survey, and due to that a number of the questions were written in a way that providers found confusing or potentially misleading. This may have contributed to the poor response with only 288 sponsored homes completing the survey. Formal results of the survey have not been released at this time, but due to the lack of response to the survey and the way the survey was developed without input from sponsored agencies, it is likely the outcomes of this report will be in question and this group will need to meet again to review the impact rate changes are having on the service.

Finally, agencies around the state are now in the process of completing the second round of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Settings Surveys for every site where individuals receive group home, sponsored residential, supported living, group day or group supported employment services under the DD Waivers. All



sites must be in compliance with the HCBS Settings Rule. Because the quality of Wall Residences sponsored residential and group home services have always been screened and evaluated based on similar criteria, we did not have many changes to make to reach full compliance.

These federal regulations (42 CFR 441.301) state, individuals enrolled in long-term services and supports waivers are permitted specific rights. For individuals receiving group home, sponsored residential, supported living, group day or group supported employment services in the DD Waivers, the following must apply in these settings:

- Be integrated in, and supports full access to, the greater community including opportunities to engage in community life, control personal resources, and receive services in the community, to the same degree of access as individuals not receiving Medicaid HCBS.
- Ensure an individual's rights of privacy, dignity and respect, and freedom from coercion and restraint.

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Nursing Support for Sponsored Residential Services

This past year, there have been a lot of changes both at the state level and within Wall Residences. No matter how you feel about change, it always brings new opportunities. One such opportunity Wall Residences is thrilled to announce is that we are actively working to increase the amount of nursing support provided to the individuals we serve and to our sponsored providers.



ensure that identified individuals will be seen on a regular basis by a Registered Nurse. This level of support will help to ensure ongoing monitoring of a person's medical status, development of a nursing care plan, nursing consultation, provision of certain medical interventions and ensuring that providers, and their support staff, have the resources and training they need to continue to provide safe medical care.

Many individuals in our services would benefit from additional nursing support as they age and their medical status changes. This means ensuring people have access to community-based nursing services whenever needed. There are a variety of models available to deliver these services and one of the most common in the community is home health. However, a person's health status may not warrant the need for home health services. This may not eliminate the need for additional nursing support but accessing nursing services outside of home health can be challenging. With this in mind, Wall Residences is working to develop a nursing program that will bridge the healthcare gap that exists between home health services and the residential services. Meaning Wall Residences is working to

We have hired several Registered Nurses across the state and continue to actively advertise based on regional needs. We'd like to welcome Ashley Taylor, RN and Kevyn Burns, RN to the Wall Residences team. Ashely will be working in the southern part of the state and Kevyn will be working in the northern part of the state. Additionally, Wall Residences would like to welcome Sharon Matts, RN. Sharon will be working part-time in the central part of the state.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will be rolling out this new program. If you have questions or if you think the individual you serve would benefit, please notify your Program Manager.

Time to Cheer

This year, Manchester High 11th grader Sully Brown became a member his school's cheerleading squad. When asked by the Sparkle cheerleading squad if he'd like to join, Sully was up for the challenge. Sparkle is a Chesterfield county program that is available to all special education students who would like to take part in athletic teams.

"The kids become a part of their school's team and take part in all of the events with their teammates," says provider Dustin Wade. "They become a part of the school community and the school spirit." Sully has cheered at pep rallies and football games, and will be cheering for his basketball team this winter. **Go Sully!**



Sully Brown with the cheerleading squad.

Directors Corner continues

- Optimize, but does not regiment, individual initiative, autonomy, and independence in making life choices, including but not limited to, daily activities, physical environment, and with whom to interact.
- Facilitate individual choice regarding services and supports, and who provides them.

The Wall Residences mission statement was originally written over 20 years ago and states:

The goal of WALL RESIDENCES is to encourage the total health and well-being of each person, both the

individual who receives support (originally “client”) and worker, through a holistic approach to services. All service providers and community support personnel will be evaluated to assure that they are emotionally healthy people who have the capacity and desire to respect and learn from the person with the disability label. The goal of the program will be met when all people in the community are able to see past the disability and know that each person is fully functioning when the appropriate supports are made available. The individuals we serve have unique strengths and needs just like all other people.

Acceptance of diversity will be encouraged through the inclusion of the individuals who receive support in typical home and community activity.

As you can see from this excerpt of the mission statement, from the beginning, Wall Residences has always embraced and championed an integrated, person centered life full of meaning and connections for those in our services. We see the HCBS Settings Rule as reinforcement of the values we have always upheld.

CPR Training

Recently, individuals were given the opportunity to attend a modified CPR class in Orange. Taught by instructor and provider, Dustin Wade, students had a good time learning a new skill and were thrilled with their certificates and the gift of a barrier mask.



Individuals happily showing their new CPR certificates.



Maime Allen learning mouth to mouth.



Virginia Kimberlin & Josh Rosner.

Individuals in Action continues...

wanted it for him,” she says. “We are not always friends at the gym!” Jonathan laughs and agrees they are sometimes “frien-emies”. “We chose a trainer from Appomattox for Jonathan to work with a few



Seeing the results of hard work.

days a week,” says Sherri. “We had a conversation about the cost and weighing it against other favorite

expenditures, like comic books. But Jonathan chose to make the sacrifice which shows how much he is valuing his health.”

They now work out together two or three days a week, and Jonathan works with his trainer on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Recently, Sherri and Jonathan went through all of his clothes because they didn’t fit anymore. Sherri notes that his posture and form have improved, but the biggest joy has been to watch Jonathan’s transformation. “It’s been a constant effort to keep up with exercise – driving to Appomattox every day. We were late one day last week so we went down to the Riverwalk. We walked 1 ½ miles, and jogged 1 ½ miles. He can sprint!” says Sherri. “The biggest thing has been making friends at the gym – regular, every day

people who come up and talk to him and care.”

“There are real people there, and real friends, such as this little lady I like a lot. One time, some friends we made there saw us in a restaurant and bought all our table dinner,” says Jonathan.

Going to the gym is an outlet for both of them. As Sherri notes, it’s an effort on her part but also on Jonathan’s as he could have quit at any time. “It’s good for him to be out in the community - the whole experience,” says Sherri. Jonathan adds “it’s good for my brain cells”. “He’s grown so much as a person the past year and a half – nobody would have expected that. He doesn’t look down at the floor when he’s at the gym. He’s looking at other people in the eye and talking to them.”

Jobs in the Community



(above) Brendan serving a customer at Subway.

(right) John cleaning up at Food Lion.

(far right) Brendan working at the register.

Using natural supports, and with the help of the Colonial Beach community, provider Dennis Cornwell assisted John Hatton and Brendan Fry with securing employment in their community. John is working as a bagger at Food Lion and Brendan is learning all aspects of his job at Subway – from making sandwiches to running the cash register.



Program Managers Retreat

This past September, Wall Residences hosted the 2017 Program Manager Retreat at the Floyd Event Center, in Floyd, Virginia. During the three-day retreat, program managers were provided information on a variety of topics to insure they are delivering the most up to date information to the contracted Family Providers they support.



Jessa Layne, MSN, RN, Medical QA Director, provided an overview of the increase in nursing services Wall Residences will soon be able to provide across the state and an overview of Risk Management for the agency.

Deborah Tankersley and Andi Carter were special guests from the Office of Licensing and provided information on trends & changes in Licensing.

Wall Residences Office Staff were invited to join the Program Managers on the final day, and operations & communication between departments was reviewed for

all departments to determine how we can increase and improve our responsiveness (fewer lost documents – coming up!).

We ended our time together by celebrating the great staff who work with Wall Residences, both in the field and in the office, especially those who celebrated five & 10-year anniversaries. During the event our program management staff were pampered with neck massages and yoga classes in an effort to make sure they know how important they are to all of us! All in all, a successful event!

Pumpkin Patch

Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck individuals and providers celebrated the fall season with a trip to a local pumpkin patch.



Taking a break at the pumkin patch (L-R) provider Jessica Hazelett, Blair Racioppi, provider Alice Parker, Angela Swann, & Leigh Reines.



Jarrold Corrick and Leigh Reines.



(L-R) Provider Jimmy Golas, Charles Campbell, and Shirley Sprouse.

Cover photo:
Daveshawn Carter and provider Ellen Smith.



SWVA individuals, families, providers and staff
enjoying a picnic on a
beautiful day at Felts Park in Galax.

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