

Commission for Persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Speech Impaired



2018-2019 Updates

Strategic Plan Updates

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# Introduction

The Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Speech Impaired was created through SB 481 in the 79th Legislative Session.The Commission authority includes making recommendations to any state agency, including, without limitation, the Aging and Disability Services Division (the “Division”) of the Department of Health and Human Services (the “Department”), concerning the establishment and operation of programs for persons who are Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to ensure equal access to state programs and activities. SB 481 also grants the Commission responsibility to recommend to the Governor any proposed legislation concerning persons who are Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

The goal of the Strategic Plan is to be a management tool to guide the activities of the Commission in order to achieve their vision of timely access to information, effective communication, education, and services that promote choice and independence.

# Critical Issues

After a review of the recommendations that came from outreach and research, members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee approved the following critical issues:

**Critical Issue #1: Enhanced Service Spectrum** to include:

* + Adequate detection and accurate identification of consumers throughout the lifespan.
	+ Provision of evidence-based levels of care.
	+ Home-based services in rural and frontier areas of the state.
	+ Assistive technology.
	+ Sufficient ASL classes.

**Critical Issue #2: Additional School-Based Supports** to strengthen:

* + Connection to care and services prior to the age of 3.
	+ Coordination of services with other service providers.
	+ Transition activities between school systems and trajectory beyond high school.

**Critical Issue #3:** **High Quality and Adequately Numbered Workforce** to serve those who Deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing and those with a speech disability,incorporating the following components:

* + High quality interpreters, teachers, professionally trained deaf individuals to support the deaf and hard of hearing population, and others that provide direct services.
	+ College level programs for interpreters and teachers that serve consumers.
	+ Interpreter certification standards.

**Critical Issue #4:** **Increased Awareness** about the target population designed to:

* + Encourage wide-spread understanding about rights and required accommodation.
	+ Inform key stakeholders (individuals in the target population, providers, etc.) about available services and how to navigate various service systems and insurance products.
	+ Educate the general public about the target population, their needs, and experiences.

**Critical Issue #5:** **Develop a Robust Family Support System** to ensure:

* + Families have the appropriate knowledge and skills to assist family members who are consumers.
	+ Families have access to a peer mentor who can provide the emotional and educational support in navigating the service system.
	+ Families are able to advocate on behalf of their rights and access to care.

# 2017-2018 Accomplishments

Implementation of the Strategic Plan began with the first meeting of the Commission in July 2017. The following accomplishments have been realized in the first year of the plan.

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| **Access to Services**  |
| Based on the research, having timely access to basic services including education, employment, communication access, and transportation. Based on availability of resources, the Commission prioritized their top two objectives: * Employment – *Objective 1.4* calls for the Commission to enhance employment readiness, supports, and opportunities for the target population. The Commission is exploring opportunities to work with the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) to enhance work readiness programs, Community Based Assessment (CBA) sites, and projects offered to youth who are transitioning from school to work or college.
* Education/Part C - *Objective 1.3* is to implement effective educational approaches, supports, and transitions throughout Nevada school-aged individuals in the target population. Workgroup members have begun discussions with Nevada Early Intervention (NEIS) and Part C personnel to discuss what job descriptions for service providers might encompass for those who work with families who have children with hearing loss. Commission members are also working with Lead K specialists to explore options for Nevada.
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| **Awareness** |
| The Commission began efforts to increase awareness about and support for individuals. These efforts included: * Website – *Objective 3.1* calls for the Commission to develop a website with information about services, communication tips, and consumer rights. The Resource Workgroup met with the No Wrong Door Coordinator at ADSD to begin outlining the website to be included in their existing platform Nevada Care Connection.
* Training and Outreach – Objective 3.3 calls for the Commission to collaborate and offer outreach to promote rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Commission members started these efforts, collaborating with the Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities to offer training to community groups.
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| **Family Supports**  |
| The Commission began efforts to support community-based partner efforts to implement family to family and peer mentorship services.  |

# Goals and Objectives

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| **Access to Services**  |
| **Goal 1. All Nevadans who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing and those with a Speech Disability, have access to timely basic services.**  |
| **Objective** | **Completion Date** | **Responsible Entity** |
| **Objective 1.1** *(Strategies 1.1.1 – 1.1.4)*Equip primary care physicians and emergency room staff so they can serve the physical healthcare needs of the target population.  | July 2019 | Healthcare Workgroup |
| **Objective 1.2** *(Strategy 1.2.2)****Collaborative training efforts*** to incorporate (CEU certified) education and information to mental health providers aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the culture and rights of the target population.  | July 2019 | Healthcare Workgroup |
| **Objective 1.3** *(Strategies 1.3.1 – 1.3.4)****Advocate for policy change*** to implement effective educational approaches, supports, and transitions throughout Nevada for school aged target population.  | July 2019 | Education Workgroup |
| **Objective 1.4** *(Strategies 1.4.1-1.4.3)****Partner with existing efforts*** to enhance employment readiness, supports, and opportunities for the target population.  | July 2019 | Employment Workgroup |
| **Objective 1.5** *(Strategies 1.5.1 – 1.5.3)****Research, advocate, and educate*** to increase the availability of ASL classes and assistive technology to improve communication access.  | July 2019 | Interpreter Workgroup |
| **Objective 1.6** *(Strategies 1.6.1-1.6.2)****Coordinate and partner*** to expand and enhance access to transportation services for the target population.  | July 2019 | Resource Workgroup |
| **Interpreter Workforce** |
| **Goal 2. There is a sufficient number of high quality interpreters available to provide services to individuals who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, and those with a Speech Disability.**  |
| **Objective** | **Completion Date** | **Responsible Entity** |
| **Objective 2.1** *(Strategy 2.1.1-2.1.1)****Partner***to encourage growth in the field and enhance certification options in Nevada.  | December 2019 | Interpreter Workgroup |
| **Objective 2.2** *(Strategies 2.2.1-2.2.2)****Research and develop*** a policy statement regarding quality standards for interpreters, including incorporation of such standards into law/regulations. | March 2019 | Interpreter Workgroup |
| **Awareness** |
| **Goal 3. There is awareness about and support for individuals who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing and those with a Speech Disability.**  |
| **Objective** | **Completion Date** | **Responsible Entity** |
| **Objective 3.1** *(Strategy 3.1.1)****Develop*** a resource website to increase awareness of services and rights.  | March 2019 | Resource Workgroup  |
| **Objective 3.2** *(Strategies 3.1.1 – 3.2.2)****Host and******coordinate*** opportunities for inclusion of the general population and the target population.  | July 2019 | Resource Workgroup |
| **Objective 3.3** *(Strategies 3.3.1-3.3.3)****Collaborate, educate and monitor*** to promote rights and required accommodations for the target population. | July 2019 | Outreach Workgroup |
| **Family Supports**  |
| **Goal 4. Families have the services and supports necessary to adequately care for family members who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, and those with a Speech Disability.**  |
| **Objective** | **Completion Date** | **Responsible Entity** |
| **Objective 4.1** *(Strategies 4.1.1-4.1.2)****Advocate and support*** training efforts with state and community service partners to increase availability of family related services.  | July 2019 | Outreach Workgroup |

# Monitoring Plan Performance

This plan will be used as a management tool with progress reviewed quarterly and updates established annually. The Commission workgroups will report progress at each meeting throughout the plan year with an annual update to be completed by September following the completion of each year.