

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services

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Hess named Director of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities

BISMARCK, N.D. – The N.D. Department of Human Services announced that Cheryl Hess has been named Executive Director of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. The council advocates for policy changes that promote choice, independence, productivity, and inclusion for North Dakotans with developmental disabilities.

Hess joined the department in 2001 as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. In 2008, she was promoted to vocational rehabilitation program administrator where she coordinated various programs including transitions, supported employment, assessments, and assistive technology for people with disabilities.

Hess will coordinate meetings and initiatives of the 19-member council and will administer the grant program, which distributes funding as directed by council members to support projects that enhance opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Hess is also involved in various organizations including the N.D. State Community of Practice on Transition, Association for Persons in Supportive Employment, Rehabilitation Organization of N.D., and the regional Human Rights Committee.

Through the years, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities has provided grant funding for projects and activities that maximize opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The grants fund select areas including quality assurance, formal and informal community supports, employment, education, early intervention, transportation, recreation, housing, health related activities, and child care for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Council members include individuals with developmental disabilities, parents and other immediate relatives, guardians, representatives from the N.D. Department of Human Services and its Developmental Center, Job Service North Dakota, the Department of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, the Protection and Advocacy Project, and the N.D. Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. Community-based service providers are also represented.

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