



MDS Strategic Plan – 2021-2025

Approved by the Board of Directors of Monadnock Developmental Services on May 24, 2021

Inclusion ♦ Participation ♦ Mutual Relationships

Who We Are

Monadnock Developmental Services (MDS) was formed in 1983 as one of ten non-profit organizations designated by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services as an Area Agency. In this role, MDS is responsible for supporting individuals with developmental disabilities from birth to elder years and their families, and individuals with acquired brain disorders. We also support children with chronic health issues and their families through Partners in Health. Over nearly four decades, MDS has evolved to serve more than 1,000 individuals and families in thirty-four towns in southwestern New Hampshire.

Overriding Vision: All people of all levels of ability are valued and will have opportunities to reach their full potential as productive members of society.

Mission Statement: The mission of MDS is to work toward inclusion, participation and mutual relationships for all people who are at risk of isolation from community.

What We Do: MDS makes it possible for individuals with developmental and related disabilities to live, work, and participate in their community.

Stakeholders: Individuals, Families and Guardians, Staff, Board, Provider Agencies, Health Professionals, State and Federal Agencies, Legislators, the Broader Community

Executive Summary



In the coming years, Monadnock Developmental Services will build on its greatest strengths: a dedicated group of staff and provider agencies, relationship-centered service delivery, and financial stability. We will continue to provide high quality community-based, family-driven services in an environment with continually shifting elements.

This past year's pandemic has brought to the forefront a number of opportunities as well as challenges for the organization. Our mission's watchwords of inclusion, participation and mutual relationships were sorely tested during the pandemic as we tried to find new ways to keep people safe and still connected. We recognize the need to make smarter use of technology to become both internally and externally more effective. Workforce shortages and staff turnover, chronic issues, will require focused, deliberate attention, especially as many of our long-term staff approach retirement. Clear stakeholder communication – in service delivery, family support and staff development – will be a crucial part of our success.

External forces over which we have only limited control continue to affect what we do and how we operate. Federal and state regulations create personnel, paperwork and funding challenges, as do changing political climates. Workforce, housing and transportation shortages are broad concerns for everyone in our region; MDS can and should be at the table as these systemic issues are addressed.

Our efforts over the next five years will focus on supporting individuals to be as independent as possible, supporting families, building community relationships, fostering a healthy work environment, and shoring up our internal processes, all so that we can provide innovative, high-quality services for individuals with developmental disabilities. That is why we exist, and these efforts are how we will succeed.

Planning Process



The Strategic Planning committee convened in early 2021 at the behest of the Board of Directors and under the direction of Mary-Anne Wisell, MDS Director of Operations. The committee was comprised of 10 members, representing family members, consumers, Board members, provider agency staff, and area agency staff.

The committee gathered information via online survey from stakeholders about our current and future situation, and areas of strength and areas of opportunity for improvement. Those who didn't have internet access were able to complete a survey by phone so that everyone had a chance to contribute. Overall, close to 350 people responded to the general survey. Although not everyone fully completed it, the majority did, which provided ample data to develop a plan.

Based on analysis and discussion of the data from our stakeholders, the committee pinpointed five areas of overarching focus to guide MDS through the next five years. The goals within each category reflect what could and should be accomplished by the end of this five-year period. Strategic areas of focus are of parallel and equal importance, and will have goals that flow through to impact all of the focus areas.

Going forward, the committee will put together several working groups by area to create timelines, determine how success will be measured, identify implementation steps to reach each area's goals, and regularly report progress to management and the Board.

2021 Strategic Plan Working Group



- Mary Anne Wisell, Chair, Director of Operations
- Alissa Delaney, Children's Service Coordination
- Tiffany Doyon, Provider Agency (RRI)
- Suzanne DuGray, Adult Service Coordination
- Tim Jordan, Board
- Steve Nelson, Board & Family Council
- Karen Peterson, Development
- Adele Remillard, Board
- Lisa Steadman, Family Council
- Laura Zimmerli, Consumer



Areas of Strategic Focus

Advocacy and Awareness

Illuminate MDS's mission through promotion, development of strategic partnerships, community relations, and family-led legislative involvement.

Recipient/Participant Support

Help people and families that MDS supports find ways to meet their specific needs by providing access to a variety of resources and services.

Service Options

Provide meaningful, high-quality and timely services to individuals and families participating in MDS services.

Organizational Development

Assure MDS's ongoing success by removing barriers in workflows, increasing efficiencies through technology, and creating paths to sustain effectiveness in the future.

Workforce Support and Development

Improve career opportunities through a healthy working environment and a continuous focus on adequate compensation, training, and career-path options.

Focus: Advocacy & Awareness

Illuminate MDS's mission through promotion, development of strategic partnerships, community relations, and family-led legislative involvement.

- Improve Monadnock Developmental Services (MDS) name recognition across the region.
- Develop and enhance strategic community partnerships.
- Develop a mechanism for communicating current legislative and regulatory issues and positions impacting stakeholders and the organization.

Focus: Recipient/Participant Support

Help people and families that MDS supports find ways to meet their specific needs by providing access to a variety of resources and services.

- Improve general and topic-specific communications and methods for participants.
- Connect families with similar needs by making sure they are aware of support groups and mentoring programs.
- Promote training and learning opportunities.
- Make information on community resources accessible to participants.

Focus: Service Options

Provide meaningful, high-quality, and timely services to individuals and families participating in MDS services.

- Identify additional supported employment opportunities for individuals of all abilities who want to work.
- Increase respite availability for families.
- Ensure that case management services comply with state and federal conflict-free case management requirements.
- Increase the number of families able to participate in self-directed services by providing additional training and growing agency capacity.
- Increase opportunities for individuals to have meaningful community involvement, using both paid and natural supports.
- Identify and communicate housing and transportation resources available for individuals and families to deal with the systemic regional shortage.

Focus: Organizational Development

Assure MDS's ongoing effectiveness and success by removing workflow barriers, increasing efficiencies through technology, and creating paths to sustain effectiveness in the future.

- Explore and adopt new technologies to improve workloads and process flows, including purchasing or developing a database and updating the website and other similar tools.
- Prepare for critical situations (e.g. floods, pandemics, power outages) by regularly updating our emergency preparedness plan.
- Plan for business continuity by developing succession plans for key positions.

Focus: Workforce Support & Development



Improve career opportunities through a healthy working environment and a continuous focus on adequate compensation, training, and career-path options.

- Educate the community about the value of careers in developmental services so that we can recruit top talent.
- Retain valuable employees by regularly assessing compensation structures, career path opportunities, and benefits.
- Foster and encourage positive workplace culture for MDS and all provider agencies.
- Increase region-wide participation in training.

2021 Strategic Planning Timeline



- Form planning committee - January 2021
- Conduct SWOT* and General Stakeholders Surveys - February 2021
- Determine strategic areas of focus - March-April 2021
- Determine goals for these areas - April 2021
- Present draft to MDS Board - May 2021
- MDS Board review and approval - May 24, 2021
- Submit to NH Department of Health & Human Services – by June 30, 2021
- Create implementation teams for action planning - July 2021
- Present action plans for each goal - Fall 2021
- Follow up regularly to assess and measure progress
Board: Sep-Jan-May Agency: Monthly

*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

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