# Ligas Family Advocate Program The Arc of Illinois

Program Introduction & Trends March 2021





### What is the Ligas Family Advocate Program

- Funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services to provide education, advocacy, and support to self-advocates and families who are anticipating PUNS selection (Early Notification) or have been selected from the PUNS list to receive funding for support services through the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver.
- We provide one-to-one support, group education, resource materials, and connection to community resources.
- LFAP works in partnership with Independent Service Coordination agencies, but services are not duplicated. Remember, your ISC is the gateway to developmental disability services in Illinois.

# How does a Ligas Family Advocate assist you?

- Provide guidance and accurate information at a critical time in service planning and provision
  - Understanding all of the available services within the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver
- Support the work of the Independent Service Provider, to prepare families and self-advocates for fully informed decision-making once they are selected from the PUNS:
  - Familiarizing with local DD providers and services
  - Connection to ISC and for those without Medicaid, connection to local Family and Community Resource Center (FCRC), as well as Centers for Independent Living and others as needed
  - Connect individuals/families to other individuals/families as appropriate, to learn about service navigation and creative use of funding

Support the ISC-family relationship Facilitate efficient planning process Empower families & self-advocates

# How has 2020-2021 grown our program?

- We welcomed Ruth Aguilar, Northern IL LFA!
  - **Ruth Aguilar** has over fifteen years of combined experience advocating for people with disabilities. She holds a B.S Psychology from the Illinois Institute of Technology and Professional Graduate Studies in Non-Profit from Harvard University. Ruth's professional experience stems from working previously in an ISC Agency and then as a Self Directed Assistant serving the community with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
  - Ruth's extensive experience and expertise allows us to expand programming to our Spanish speaking families and self-advocates

### • We have gone virtual!

- Monthly Know Your Options Zoom Presentations
- Partnership Programs: KYO with Independent Service Coordination agencies and Developmental Disability Provider Organizations
  - Assist families and self-advocates with becoming familiar with options available within the IL Developmental Disability Service System
  - DD system navigation
  - Connection to key community resources
  - Education specific to preparing for an upcoming PUNS selection



# LFAP Online Educational Series - 2020



- 5/6/20: Where Do I Want to Live? What Can I Afford (affordable housing resources)
- 6/10/20: Self-Direction Assistance, an optional service of the waiver
- 7/9/20: Behavioral Intervention & Treatment, Behavior Counseling, Psychotherapy
- 8/13/20: Community Day Service Programs
- 9/10/20: DRS v. DDD Medicaid waivers -how to choose?
- 10/8/20: Host Family CILA

# **Core Resources for Families**

- Extensive Educational Resource Tools
  - PUNS informational flowchart
  - DRS DDD Comparison Chart
  - Medicaid Q & A
  - 2020 Planning for DD Services
  - Questions to Ask When Selecting a Provider
  - Residential Fact Sheet
  - SDA (Self-Direction Assistance) Fact Sheet
  - Mental Health Resources Fact Sheet
  - Home-Based Supports Introduction Fact Sheet

See our website for these resources & more!

### PROGRAMAS DE EXENCIÓN DE IDD PARA ADULTOS DRS & DDD: COMPARACIÓN DE ELEGIBILIDAD Y SERVICIOS

Programa de Servicios en el Hogar de la División de Servicios de Rehabilitación (DRS) de Illinois o Programa de Servicios en el Hogar de la División de Discapacitades del Desarrollo (DDD) de Illinois/Acuerdo de Vivienda Integrado en la Comunidad (CLA) La presente northe questione pante melho fendio para las territos e terros de anarolis de Malandi Alguna presente nor IDD elementario de la Classificación de la Comunidad de la Classificación de l

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# What are families teaching us?

### **Trends**

- Families have shared relief about recent DDD clarification around access to potential transition in services (Example: moving from Home-based to CILA group)
- Families and individuals continue to seek Home-based services at much higher rate than CILA services
- Many families seemed to need help with applying for Medicaid
- Many families confuse LFA role with ISC role
  - Explanation: Imagine that -
    - The ISC is DHS' right arm.
    - The LFA is the DD Individual's right arm

### **Barriers**

- Families are often overwhelmed at the complexity of system navigation
- Covid-related challenges have caused a deep disruption for families seeking supports outside of their home; many families report difficulty in assessing potential providers due to visiting restrictions
- Many families & Self-advocates do not feel comfortable with Zoom learning
- USPS mail delivery issues
- Access to technology
- Family/Individual follow-through by contacting LFA Program is lower than desired

## Visit the Ligas Family Advocate Website

 https://www.thearcofil.org/about-us/programs/ligas-family-advocateprogram/

### How We Help

With a wealth of experience and understanding, we support you in navigating the adult developmental disabilities system, uncovering outside-the-box solutions and help you to avoid confusion at every step of the process.

### Advise

No matter what stage you are in, our team will provide assistance plans for maximum success.

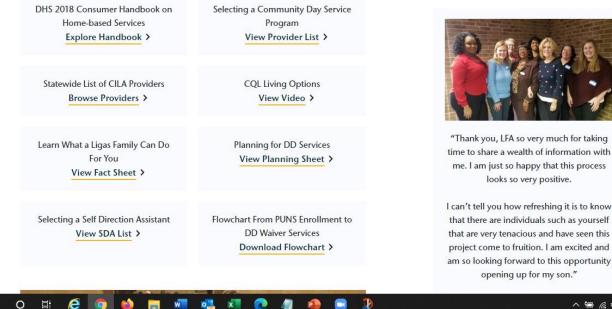
### Prepare

Prepare for the pre-admission screening process with your Independent Service Coordination (ISC) agency.

### Connect

Meet other families and build a broader support network through informative workshops and events.

LFAs will support you in connecting to your Independent Service Coordination Agency, which is a key step in accessing adult disability services.





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## Trainings:

- Monthly Virtual Know Your Options, check LFAP Site to register
- Know Your Options in partnership with ISC's & DD providers (will repeat following summer PUNS selections):
  - 2-10-21, LFAP, Prairieland, CWTC
  - 2-15-21, LFAP, Marc First
  - 2-17-21, LFAP, CISA, SPARC
  - 2-22-21, LFAP, SICCS, Coleman
  - 3-31-21 CSO (Spanish)
  - 4-14-21 Service Inc. of IL Region E
  - 4-23-21 Suburban Access

## Contact us!

*ICFDs are also an option that does not require being selected from PUNS!* 

- Shirley Perez, LFAP and FSN Program Director
  - shirley@thearcofil.org
- Megan Mutti, Senior Ligas Family Advocate, Central/Southern IL
  - megan@thearcofil.org
- Ruth Aguilar, Ligas Family Advocate, Northern Region
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