



July 15, 2020

A Note to Delawareans

Almost one year before the COVID-19 pandemic reached Delaware, the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) began our strategic planning initiative, building off the work of Governor Carney's focus on efficiency and accountability through the Governor's Governmental Efficiency and Accountability Review (GEAR) Board.

Today, we see just how critical our strategic planning work has become. The health care, humanitarian, emotional and fiscal crisis created by COVID-19 is requiring that we enhance and integrate data across our Department; promote inclusive and routine communication with stakeholders, providers and clients; and, most importantly, serve the whole person and the entire family, all of which are key components of the draft strategic plan that we are offering for public comment.

Because COVID-19 has changed every aspect of our lives, we know that the needs of our neighbors – whether it involves safe trips into the community for those living in group homes for individuals with developmental disabilities; enhanced emergency food benefits for people whose family incomes have been significantly reduced; or telehealth treatment appointments for individuals suffering from substance use disorder – have been magnified and intensified in some cases. And the Delawareans we serve are depending on us to employ new and more efficient ways to provide integrated and person-centered services.

Across the Department of Health and Social Services, our vision is to have high-quality operations, and we believe the recommendations in this draft strategic plan offer us a detailed path forward in achieving this vision. We look forward to your feedback as we begin to take the first steps in implementing this plan as a critical piece of our COVID-19 response.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kara Odom Walker in black ink.

Kara Odom Walker, MD, MPH, MSHS
Cabinet Secretary

Handwritten signature of Molly Magarik in black ink.

Molly Magarik
Deputy Cabinet Secretary