

AN UNGLAMOROUS, BUT IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT

How do we know what we know about SDMNY? How do we know how many Decision-Makers we have worked with, or how long it has taken to get to their SDMAs, or what kinds of issues arose in their facilitations? How do we know who is a good and experienced facilitator, or how much it will cost to provide facilitation services in a statewide service provision model?

Often, early on during our DDPC grant, when the somewhat primitive record keeping system we had purchased failed, it was our memory, or handwritten notes somewhere on a yellow pad that carried the day. But although we managed, what we had was clearly not good enough if we intended to move beyond a pilot to a viable, sustainable entity that could serve everyone in New York who wants SDM facilitation. We needed a web-based platform that would guarantee the integrity of our process to those who might want to examine it after the fact, and, as well, make it possible to reasonably estimate the cost of a scaled up, sustainable future for SDM facilitation.



So when we wrote our proposal for the OPWDD implementation grant that we're currently operating under, we were sure to prioritize developing a high quality documentation and information collection system, one that would both collect and store an enormous amount of granular information about every aspect of our process, while ensuring privacy and confidentiality in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. We anticipated a statewide system with numerous entry points, so we needed a platform that would already be familiar to many providers, and that had the capacity to work within relevant funding systems.

Several of our partners suggested that we talk with eVero, an innovative health record management company that was already deeply engaged in Self Direction and is committed to access and equity. Our first meeting was more than a year ago; since then an incredible amount of work has gone into building a system that would meet immediate needs, including collecting all the facilitator and mentor notes that make it possible to track each Decision-Maker's progress, and how much time it takes to do everything we do so our evaluator will have the data necessary to do their job. At the same time, the system we are building should be expandable and scalable so that, at the end of this pilot, we will have a "turn-key model" for statewide facilitation service delivery that OPWDD can adopt, complete with a well-designed, integrated and flexible platform that will be capable of all the information collection and record keeping required by such an important enterprise.

The good news is that we're just about there! SDMNY Director Naomi Brickel has been involved at every painstaking stage of the process, and has this to say:

"It's been (and still is) a lot of 'labor of love,' and 'flying as we build,' but as we continue to tweak, learn, use, and move it forward, I see this as a pivotal game-changing moment in NY's SDM effort, laying the foundation for a statewide SDM service delivery system and further establishing our leadership in the international movement. And, I'm just so grateful to have such smart, passion-driven, well-organized, flexible, and, of course, fun people at eVero to partner with!"



CONGRATULATIONS, AND MANY THANKS TO THE EVERO AND SDMNY TEAMS FOR THIS BIG STEP FORWARD!