**Recruitment and Retention Pilot Project and Network**

**(The R&R Project)**

Hello.

I hope you are well. Thank you for expressing interest in our Recruitment and Retention project. For many providers across Ohio the workforce crisis has threatened your ability to deliver quality services to the people you support. There is an urgency to act and address this crisis head on. As you know The OPRA Team in conjunction with the OPRA Board and Policy Committee developed the 4 Fronts of the Workforce Crisis. The 4 Fronts include:

* Recruitment
* Retention
* System Barriers
* Compensation

It is our mission to take on the workforce crisis in each of these 4 areas. There is not one solution to the workforce crisis but there are many things that need to be addressed and/or tried simultaneously if we want to address the issue.

As you can tell by the title this project is primarily focused on the Recruitment and Retention fronts. The advertising materials that you will have access to as a part of this project have been tried by other providers with some success. We want to see if they will work in other parts of the state. We also want to understand who you are hiring and look at what the methods you are using to retain new employees.

Finally, the providers who are a part of this project will be a part of a network of providers who are doing their best to take on the difficult challenges the workforce crisis is presenting. We will connect on a regular basis throughout the life of the project and share successes and challenges and offer the opportunity to share your story.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Moore

President/CEO OPRA

**Project Description**

Ohio’s developmental disability system is facing a rapidly worsening workforce crisis which has been amplified since the start of the Covid-19 Global Pandemic. The workforce crisis Ohio’s providers are facing is the biggest threat our system has ever seen. At the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) we have been organizing our resources to intentionally and seriously address this issue. In an effort to manage our efforts we broke the crisis down into 4 areas:

We are going to work with a group of OPRA members to address two of the areas outlined above, Recruitment and Retention. We are seeking 21 providers (3 OPRA members from each of OPRA’s 7

geographical districts) to participate in the pilot project. If we are unable to fill all three spots in the in each district we will look to the other applicants to fill the open positions regardless of where they are located. We are seeking 1 participant in a county.

Once selected the provider will participate in 3 parts of the project. Those parts include:

* Advertisement for DSP positions
* The DSP Experience: the first 60 days
* 6 monthly “check-in” meetings with all participants to share progress, discuss success and challenges, and share ideas

The following are the primary goals for this project:

* Give a group of providers the resources to implement a local campaign to advertise for their DSP positions
* Test the effectiveness of the campaign by measuring the number of applicants generated during a two month period in comparison to the average from previous months
* Understand whether or not the applicants are qualified for the DSP positions and if they are hired.
* Gather demographic information on the applicants.
* Follow the DSPs who are hired for 60 days beyond their start date and gather information about their experience during the first 60 days on the job.
* Use the information we collect and share the information and resources with Ohio’s providers.

# Process for implementation

The projected timeframe for the project is 6-8 months and the project will be started in May of 2021. The project will be conducted in phases, which will include, identification of the provider participants, implementation of the advertising campaign, and the following the experience of the DSPs who are hired. The project will take place in a variety of geographical regions across the state which align with OPRA’s

Pete Moore, OPRA’s President and CEO, will be the coordinator and the point of contact for the project and OPRA will be responsible for:

* Collecting provider applications
* Coordinating efforts/communicating with provider project leaders
* Coordinating and facilitating monthly check-in meetings

# How the Project will be Evaluated

The ultimate outcome we are seeking is an increased number of DSP applicants. We also want to get a good understanding of what their experience is after they are hired. We will evaluate the success of the project by:

* Getting monthly updates from the project participants
* Gathering recruiting and hiring data throughout the duration of the project
* Comparing the number of applicants during the project period vs. a designated period prior to the start of the project.
* We will use a variety of surveys to gather information from the providers and the DSPs.

**Funding**

* $105,000 will go toward purchasing the Pilot Advertising Package ($5000 per provider).
* The providers who participate will be asked to contribute a minimum of $1000 to the project. They may can contribute more if they choose to, the more they are able to contribute will increase the amount of advertising they can use.
* The providers will also provide “in-kind” match which will result in data as the effectiveness of this effort and giving OPRA information regarding the first 60 days of the DSP experience.

**Next Phase of the Project**

It is our hope that the network of providers who participate in this project will see some success by increasing the number of DSP applicants. Upon completion of this project, we plan to take what we have learned and pass on that information to more providers and expand this helping network. The future financial needs will depend on the number of new participants who will be involved. Our intention is to share the results of the project with the Department of Developmental Disabilities in an effort to seek additional resources to help expand the availability of hiring resources to a broader spectrum of providers.

**Project Partners**

OPRA will be leading the project and will partner with OADSP to assist with the retention portion of the project.

**Project Timelines**

**May 28th** Call for participants will be sent to OPRA members

**June 11th**Deadline for applications

**June 18th** Selections will be complete

**June 24th** Initial provider network introductory and organizational meeting will be held (10 AM) and will continue on the 4th Thursday of every month, concluding with a final meeting on November 18th (due to the Thanksgiving Holiday)

**December 15th** Submission of the final report for the grant will be completed along with a plan for next steps and for expanding the R & R network.