



August 15, 2013

- Good morning. My name is Melody Cooper, and I am the President of Self-Advocates of Indiana.
- Self-Advocates of Indiana is an organization designed to help people with disabilities have and live their own lives.
- We have 42 chapters across Indiana.
- Self-Advocates of Indiana holds four statewide meetings every year, where self-advocates from around the state get together to talk about issues that affect us.
- I am here today to talk to you about person-centered care.
- Person-centered means knowing a person and understanding their needs.
- I am a person with a disability, and I should have the opportunity to decide things about my own life.
- My friend, Betty, can't buy health insurance because of a preexisting condition, even though she is working.
- She has to buy Medicaid.
- Just because she has a disability, doesn't mean she shouldn't be able to participate fully or be limited in decisions about her healthcare.
- Self-advocates are here to help with this process.

Aged, Blind and Disabled Task Force Stakeholder Presentations
Testimony from The Arc of Indiana & Self-Advocates of Indiana
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- Any long-term care plan should begin with a focus on the family providing natural support, community, and inclusion.
- Several studies have shown that as one increases their employment and job satisfaction, one's health improve as well. Therefore, employment must be at the heart of long-term supports for those under the age of 65 and an option for those over the age of 65. We recognize that this will vary in practice depending on the person.
- Workforce development needs to be considered within the full scope of managed care. Job coaches and VR counselors should be a member of the managed care team linking quality outcomes to both traditional health outcomes and also to employment outcomes.
- Increasing the presence of the I/DD community in the workforce not only will increase their overall health but also allow individuals to potentially become eligible for employer-provided benefits, decreasing their dependence on the state's Medicaid program. This would require a very active Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure strong job placements. A recent survey completed by 80 self-advocates/consumers in Fort Wayne identified that the cost of our current Medicaid system for acute and long-term care is to high. We want to find a way, together, to make our system more sustainable for the future.
- We are here to help. The Arc of Indiana has several different committees including the Blueprint for Change Steering Committee, the Health & Wellness Committee, and the Government Relations Committee who are considering managed care for the I/DD community and also seeking thoughts from consumers and their families. We, as a community, are not afraid of managed care but excited for this next step in service delivery throughout the State of Indiana and the overall health and life improvements it could bring.