

# Independence Plus Initiative

Georgia's service delivery system for people with disabilities is moving toward a self-directed system. The Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR), in partnership with the Department of Community Health, received a three-year Independence Plus Initiative grant from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to design and develop a self-directed Medicaid waiver program for older adults and persons with disabilities. CMS defines Independence Plus as "a state Medicaid program that presents individuals with the option to control and direct Medicaid funds identified in an individual budget, and in which the participants live in their own homes."

In April 2004, APS Healthcare was selected to provide technical assistance to DHR during the three year initiative. The goal of Georgia's Independence Plus Initiative is to design a comprehensive system of self-directed Home and Community Based Waiver services and supports for individuals with disabilities (including developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, and traumatic brain injury) and elderly people. Stakeholder Committees have been formed for each project related to the Independence Plus Initiative. Stakeholder groups consist of self-advocates; family members of waiver service recipients; and representatives from the DHR Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Addictive Diseases and the DHR Division of Aging Services, as well as the Department of Community Health.

## Opportunities for Input

The systems-design part of the Georgia Independence Plus Initiative is nearing completion, but there are still opportunities for providing input. APS Healthcare has designed a survey to gather stakeholder input. The survey may be found by clicking on the link below. The stakeholders have been the driving force behind this initiative and everyone's input is invaluable. By telling the stories of real people, we will bring self-determination to life in Georgia. We welcome your feedback on the survey, and THANK YOU ahead of time for your input! Click here to begin the survey: [Independence Plus Initiative Survey](#)

Community Focus Group meetings are scheduled in early 2007 for input into the final documents of the Independence Plus Initiative.

**Thursday, February 1 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon** at Disability Connections Ballroom, 170 College St, Macon, GA 31201

**Friday, February 2 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon** at DeKalb County Library Auditorium (Decatur Branch), 215 Sycamore St, Decatur, GA 30030

**Space is limited. If you would like to attend, please e-mail your name, number of people, and which site you will attend to [amonfalcone@apshealthcare.com](mailto:amonfalcone@apshealthcare.com) or call 1-877-523-4978, x113 to make your reservation.**