

**Issue 9:** Currently, there does not appear to be a formalized process identified for determining fiscal priorities for program funding levels.

**Finding 9a:** Contract allocations for programs are not formally aligned with the department's strategy or highest community needs. Currently, DCDHS attempts to fund all of its programs every year, although there may not be adequate funding to cover the program costs. POS agencies feel that there is not transparency in the process for how program budgets are established. For example, there may be years when services need to be cut for budgetary reasons. An advisory board can assist the County Board and DCDHS with setting priorities and determining which services can be eliminated.

Recommendation 9a	
Recommendation	Cost Impact/Barriers
Create an advisory board of consumers and POS agencies to provide input on determining fiscal priorities and create a management plan that outlines a plan of reduction when there is not sufficient funding for programs. Additionally, during this process a plan for reduction can be set to address funding gaps.	Cost Impact: None.  Barriers: A project coordinator is needed from the Office of the County Board of Supervisors to manage the selection of advisory board members and coordinate the quarterly meetings.
Recommendation Details	
<p>DCDHS should create an advisory board consisting of consumers, family members of consumers, POS agencies and local citizens to provide advice and guidance to the Dane County Board of Supervisors for determining funding levels and fiscal priorities for programs offered. The role of the advisory board will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Serve in an advisory capacity;</li> <li>➤ Help set priorities for programs and services;</li> <li>➤ Advise DCDHS on its strategic plan and budget; and,</li> <li>➤ Provide advice on services needed within the community.</li> </ul> <p>The Dane County Board of Supervisors can use the recommendations of the advisory committee to set funding priorities for DCDHS which can then be published for the public's review. By incorporating the consumers and POS agencies in the process to set funding priorities, these interest groups are given a platform to add input in the process. Further, it serves an opportunity for collaboration between the County and the community. This committee should meet on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Lastly, the impact of funding reductions should not rest solely within DCDHS to deal with. One best practice we have seen implemented is where a plan for reduction is planned for and approved as part of the budget process. This plan is set in order to deal with any fiscal challenges which arise during the course of the year.</p> <p>The advisory board should assist DCDHS for drafting a management plan that will be used to define how services are provided and the manner in which service levels are reduced when there is not sufficient funding. This management will create a standardized process for service level reductions of core services and can also guide the prioritization process.</p>	
Comparable Jurisdiction Data (if applicable)	
<p>1. The following counties have advisory boards that consist of consumers, parents of consumers and County Board Supervisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ County of Kenosha, WI</li> <li>➤ County of Milwaukee, WI</li> <li>➤ County of Rock, WI</li> <li>➤ County of Sheboygan, WI</li> <li>➤ County of Waukesha, WI</li> </ul>	

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### Recommendation 9a

2. The Fairfax County, VA Department of Health and Human Services prioritizes services that are part of the Consolidated Community Funding Pool. The department publishes the "Priorities for the Consolidated Community Funding Pool for Fiscal Years 2015-2016"<sup>27</sup> on its website. The document describes how funding priorities were set based on feedback from community input sessions. Additionally, it lists the four targeted priority areas and the approximate target funding percentage that is allocated to each program. This process is transparent and is an example of how community input can be used to help set funding priorities.<sup>28</sup>

### Industry Best Practice Research

That National Council of Nonprofits advocates that government-nonprofit taskforces work together to develop and implement recommendations to reform contracting practices and procedures.

A group of Iowa counties implemented a budget reduction proposal as part of their annual budget process. This plan identifies how any fiscal challenges will be addressed throughout the year without placing this responsibility solely upon the department deploying the programs.

### Risk Assessment Summary

High — Failure to create an advisory board that offers strategies on how to prioritize funding for human services will continue the practice of decision makers making decisions in a vacuum and POS agencies and consumers feeling as though they are not part of the process.

### Implementation Time Frame

Six months is needed to develop a nomination process to select advisory board members and hold the first advisory board meeting.

### Resources Needed to Implement

Forty hours of staff resources is needed annually from the Office of the County Board of Supervisors to accept nominations for the advisory board as well coordinate meetings and agendas for the advisory board. The DCDHS Director and Planning and Evaluation Unit Manager staff will need to devote 10 hours each on a quarterly basis to prepare and run the meetings. This is a total investment of 80 hours annually from DCDHS staff.

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ccfp/pdf/board\\_item\\_ccfp\\_priorities\\_fy2015\\_2016\\_attachment.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ccfp/pdf/board_item_ccfp_priorities_fy2015_2016_attachment.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ccfp/#ConsolidatedCommunityFundingPool>

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