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Support Brokerage- A Discussion Paper

Significant brokering issues are shared in [Support Brokerage- A Discussion Paper](#) paper released recently in London by the [Commission for Social Care Inspection](#). The paper raises a number of pertinent questions to consider here in the United States as the tool of independent support brokering triggers power shifts through fundamental respect for individuals as contributors and partners rather than dependent recipients. The discussion reviews in an understandable manner the practicalities and problems involving brokerage in a systems transformation to self-determination.

Another great source recognizing the benefits of independent brokers is [In-Control](#) "A national program to change the organization of social care in England so that people who need support can take more control of their own lives and fulfill their roles as citizens."

Both Great Britain resources interestingly parallels the subject of support brokering as discussed in the Center for Self-Determination's publication [The New Broker](#).

Consensus and Reflections on Mental Health Recovery

"By definition," says the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) consensus statement, *"the recovery process must be self-directed by the individual, who defines his or her own life goals and designs a unique path towards those goals."* The [consensus statement](#) was developed by more than 110 mental health consumers, families, providers, advocates, researchers, managed care organizations, public officials and others maintains that mental health recovery is a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential. It clearly states: *"Consumers must lead, control, exercise choice over, and determine their own path of recovery by optimizing autonomy, independence, and control of resources to achieve a self-determined life."*

Nancy Fudge, a pioneer in moving self-determination into the nation's first successful self-directed system of publicly funded behavioral healthcare for people with psychiatric disabilities, shares her personal perspective on essential components for a recovery oriented system in her paper ["The Role of the Provider in Person-Centered Care Practice"](#) presented in April at the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare 36th Annual Training Conference in Orlando, Florida. *"It all began with someone believing in my potential to achieve great things through my own self determination, self direction and choice"* Fudge says. To read

Membership

Principles of Self-Determination

Freedom to live a meaningful life in the community

Authority over dollars needed for support

Support to organize resources in ways that are life enhancing and meaningful

Responsibility for the wise use of public dollars

Confirmation of the important leadership that self-advocates must hold in a newly designed system

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Self-Determination State News

CONNECTICUT Vision to Outcomes

In Hartford on May 17 at the [Recovery Conference: Vision to Outcomes](#) Tom Nerney will address "Recovery, Choice and Self-Determination" and moderate a titillating panel discussion "How Realistic is Self-Determination in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services." The recovery conference is co-sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and SAMSHA.

FLORIDA Continues Initiating

The Florida Freedom Initiative (FFI) is moving forward with their plan to bring the benefits of the dual Social Security and Medicaid waivers to more people around the state. The Center recently assisted the new project staff at the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to create a Blueprint for Implementation for the project that is based on the principles of self-determination. The project is creating local FFI action groups in five areas around the state with a local coordinator to assist people who are eligible to enroll in the FFI and use the opportunities of the FFI to move forward in their own lives. The Center is also assisting the APD and the FFI Advisory Group to create effective ways to support all stakeholders to have the information and support they need to be successful.

IOWA Guaranteeing the Promise and Keeping the Fidelity

Center for Self-Determination Tom Nerney, Pat Carver, Lisa Balduf, Sarah Renner and Jack Hillyard convened an eager group last month to incorporate concepts of planning assumptions about living in one's own home; generating income; getting better connected to one's community and facilitating relationships. Continuing with the enthusiasm surrounding self-determination in Iowa, Tom Nerney with Laurie Powers from Portland State University Regional Research Institute and Elias Cohen, J.D., consultant on self-determination for older adults and former Commissioner of Aging and Family Services in Pennsylvania will discuss *Accepting the Challenge: Keeping the Fidelity of Self-Determination Across the Lifespan* on September 14, 2006. For more info visit the [Employment Policy Group at the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University Iowa](#)

KENTUCKY On the Road to Self-Determined Lives

Late last month "the journey continued" at Kentucky ARC conference in Lexington with Center Executive Director Tom Nerney and Resource Guides Jim Dehem, Debbie Crowley and Ric Crowley. The conference "On the Road to Self-Determined Lives" included tracks on self-determination, education and aging. Kentucky will soon be launching an Innovative 1115 Medicaid Waiver designed to cover all disabilities and aging using a complete self-determination foundation. For more info contact [Tom Nerney](#).

NORTH CAROLINA Best Practices

Center Resource Guides Sally Abril and Richard Reho presented at the April 2006 **Best Practices Conference: Focus on Supports of People with Developmental Disabilities** in Greensboro. Their session, "Support Brokerage & Case Management -the Same or Different?" used information from Center publication **The New Broker**. Abril and Reho completed the New Broker 2005 training in Midland, Michigan and are both available and qualified to provide support broker training in a multitude of settings. For

information about training opportunities with Center for Self-Determination Resource Guides contact [Billie Nagi](#).

MICHIGAN "My Life My Way"

The Michigan Department of Community Health and the Association of Community Health Boards will sponsor the 9th annual conference on self-determination June 12 & 13 in Lansing. For more information visit [MACMH](#)

MINNESOTA Residential Service Innovations

The state of Minnesota acknowledges that the current structure for supporting people in their home is becoming outdated for people. Therefore, the Residential Service Innovations Steering Committee was established to develop a cooperative sponsorship for interested stakeholder agencies concerning services/supports to people with disabilities in community homes and invited a number of speakers to Minnesota so that Department of Human Services (DHS) can learn more about activities and service models in other states. In April at a Minnesota DHS Residential Service Innovations 2006 videoconference, Tom Nerney presented *Beyond Residential Services: Real Lives, Real Quality and High Expectations*

Nevada "Our Lives, Our Choices"

[People First of Nevada](#) held its first statewide conference March 2006 in Reno. The "Our Lives, Our Choices" conference covered many issues of self-determination and self-advocacy. [Mary Bryant](#), Center Resource Guide and Statewide People First advisor, emphasized that it is never too early to understand and start on the road to self-determination.

Texas "What Works"

"The Production of Income" is the title of Tom Nerney's presentation scheduled for the [Community Options, Inc](#) two-day conference next month. "What Works" will examine best practices in employment for people with disabilities their parents, professionals and employers and result in a monograph for dissemination to advocacy organizations and policy makers.

TEXAS Self-Determination Boot Camp

On April 22 in Houston, basic training about self-determination and the Texas waiver system was put into operation. The Saturday morning "boot camp" was designed for people with disabilities who want to lead self-determined lives, especially those currently faced with important decisions as new Medicaid waivers are phased in across the state. This important fact sharing event is a part of the [Self-](#)

[Determination for Texas project](#).

Announcements

8th National Self Advocacy Conference

Early bird registration fees of \$365 have been extended and no late fees will be charged for the May 25-28, 2006 National Self-Advocacy Conference "We Had a Dream, Now We Have the Power." To register visit [Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered](#).

Alliance for Freedom

Early bird registration fees of \$365 have been extended and no late fees will be charged for the May 25-28, 2006 National Self-Advocacy Conference "We Had a Dream, Now We Have the Power." To register visit [Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered](#).

Closing Quote

"The hope for self-determination lies in the disability-based civil rights movement, in that never-to-be-turned-back tide that propels some people to cast off oppressive policies and people. Self-determination can be the vanguard of popular uprising."

- Rud Turnball, parent of son with disabilities and disability-rights advocate, on the community of practice discussion board about self-determination at the [Beach Center on Disability](#) at the University of Kansas.

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