

**HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIVING ISSUES IN POPULATION WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
(ADULT MENTAL RETARDATION)**

Advocacy Organizations	
What are some Local organizations that do advocacy work?	M.A.S.S, ARCMass (Central Middlesex Arc, Arc Community Services Southern Worcester), Central Massachusetts Parent Network, MFOFC, MDSC (Mass. Down Syndrome Congress) etc.
What are some State level organizations that do advocacy work?	Same as above plus DMR, Special Olympics,
What are some National level organizations that do advocacy work?	Same as above; most of the local and state level organizations are part of national level organizations such as ARC of the United States or Special Olympics National/International; AAID (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities).
What are some International organizations that do advocacy work?	See above. UN and affiliated organizations such as International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicaps, Brussels (Belgium). All of the above mentioned organizations have a wide range of goals related to human rights and health advocacy.
Advocacy Issue	
Looking at the State, National, and/or International level, at the websites or information from the organizations above, what is a major area of advocacy at this time? <i>Try to choose an advocacy issue that will in some way affect the local community.</i> Advocacy specifically refers to promoting legislation, policies or specific budgetary appropriations that positively affect a health issue. This may occur through decreasing barriers to accessing health services, providing an infrastructure conducive to effective health promotion programs, or directly increasing the resources and infrastructure of the public health system.	There are various issues currently discussed and advocated for by the local groups. For example, the change of a DMR title to Department of Developmental Disabilities will include wider range of population with developmental disabilities, not just people with Intellectual Disability. Consequently, the allocation and distribution of funds to particular groups within the department will increase the need for funds from the State government.

What specific law, policy or appropriation is being advocated for?	To include appropriation for individuals with disability other than ID who would be included in the pool of individuals receiving services from Department of Developmental Disabilities.
Who is doing the advocating? (Which organizations?)	ARCMass, M.A.S.S
Who is being lobbied?	State of Massachusetts
Whom will this issue affect?	All individuals and families who might be currently excluded from receiving services from Department of Developmental Disabilities (orig. DMR).
Were they or will they (in your opinion) be successful?	As long as there is strong support from advocacy groups and sufficient lobbying initiative at the State House level, the population in need of services is going to receive the funds. The lobbyist at the State House we met is very good and knowledgeable about the politics and ways to advocate for people with developmental disabilities. Additionally, the advocacy groups such as ARCMass are very strong and have a wide support base in all the parents and people touched by people with developmental disabilities.
Why or why not? What do they need to be more successful?	To be more successful they need a larger base of parents and community members. They need individuals to voice concerns to their legislatures and show up at State House meetings to speak. In addition, they need clinicians to lobby for their cause.
What are the consequences if they are not successful?	The individuals in need of services are going to be underserved due to the lack of funds. This is probably going to negatively affect not only the individuals and their quality of life but also their families.
If they are not successful, what other strategies can be used to achieve the same goal?	The organization can try to involve even greater number of supporters (parents, healthcare providers, lobbyists) to fight for the cause. Direct meetings with the chairman of the Health Committee to demonstrate the need for increase in funds for services provided by Department of Developmental Disabilities.
How can physicians and/or nurses be involved in this advocacy issue?	As healthcare providers – caring directly for this population, we can provide personal testimonies as to why this population is especially vulnerable and often lacking access to care.