



Subject Matter Expert

Cariann Harsh

Cariann Harsh is a Senior Advisor in Public Consulting Group's (PCG) Human Services practice with more than a decade of experience in the administration of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) programs for individuals with disabilities. Her work at PCG involves assisting state agency and provider partners in building programs grounded in person-centered thinking. Ms. Harsh works closely with states to create HCBS waivers intended to maximize individual choice and options for self-direction. She supports agency and provider partners in their efforts to enhance options for the provision of behavioral therapies for children with autism. In her role, Ms. Harsh conducts focus groups, manages stakeholder engagements, and conducts needs assessments for agency partners.

Expertise

- Disability-related issues with a focus on autism
- Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers
- Person-centered planning and person-centered organizations
- Self-direction in services intended for youth and adults
- Services designed to meet the needs of individuals with co-morbid conditions (disability/mental health)
- Employment program models designed for transitional age youth, focus on autism

Experience

Prior to PCG, Ms. Harsh played an instrumental role in creating an entirely self-directed autism waiver program for young children with autism in Massachusetts, and helped create the three Medicaid waiver programs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She worked closely with the quality management unit to create a comprehensive quality assurance system for all four waivers. She developed new provider networks for the autism waiver program, including designing the systems necessary for supplying specialty HCBS services to children with autism through the use of a fiscal intermediary service provider. Ms. Harsh also ran yearly training sessions for autism waiver program staff/providers. Topics included ensuring a person/family-centered approach to service provision, how to maintain and retain providers, and how to create collaborative approaches with other state agencies involved in the child/families system of care.

Presentations

Ms. Harsh recently presented at the National Home and Community-Based Services Conference on creating a participant-directed autism waiver program.

Professional Associations

Ms. Harsh served as an Advisory Board Member for the University of Massachusetts Medical Center's Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders (CANDO). She was also a State Team Steering Committee member of the Centers for Disease Control's "Act Early Campaign," Massachusetts Chapter.

Education

Ms. Harsh holds three Masters degrees, including a Masters of Public Administration from Harvard University, a Masters of Business Administration from Brandeis University and a Masters of Education from Lesley University. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ithaca College.