

**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



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June 4, 2008

To: David Peretto, Board Chairman, West Mont, Inc.

From: Paul Kindt, Quality Improvement Specialist

Re: Quality Assurance Review

Enclosed is a completed Quality Assurance Review of West Mont, Inc.'s residential and vocational services. This review was focused on services provided under contract with the Developmental Disabilities Program. The information is a compilation of direct observation and documentary review conducted throughout the past several years. The purpose is to service as a periodic review and establish a base point for future quality assurance activities.

I would like to thank the staff and management of West Mont, Inc. for their cooperation and assistance in the completion of this task. The staff and management of the program you administer are among the best I have encountered while working in the human services field. I look forward to continuing a working relationship with the staff and management of the agency.

Sincerely,

Paul Kindt, Quality Improvement Specialist

cc: Kris Bakula and Richard Saravalli, Co-Presidents
Larry Lovelace, Regional Manager, DDP
Tim Plaska, Community Services Bureau Chief, DPHHS/DDP

QUALITY ASSURANCE

SUMMARY REPORT

for

**WEST MONT, INC.
2708 BOZEMAN AVENUE
HELENA, MT.
59601**

**EVALUATION CONDUCTED
JUNE 2008**

by

**PAUL KINDT
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SPECIALIST**

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

Scope of Review

The purpose of this summary is to serve as a periodic review of the quality of services provided to individuals with developmental disabilities by West Mont, Inc. Information was gathered through personal observation, interviews, and documentation review. The Quality Assurance Review is conducted as a requirement of quality assurance through contractual agreement with the State of Montana.

Administrative

West Mont, Inc. is private, not-for-profit provider of residential, vocational and transportation services in the Helena area. The contract with the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) is to provide services for individuals with developmental disabilities. The company's day to day operation is directed by co-presidents Kris Bakula and Richard Saravalli. Overall supervision for the organization is provided by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Fiscal Management

The provider, West Mont, Inc., is a not-for-profit entity and maintains the necessary financial documentation. Taxes and insurance were maintained and current during the period surveyed. A review of billing invoices was also conducted with no discrepancies noted. A desk audit dated February 2, 2008 was also reviewed. The auditor found no significant deficiencies and found the corporation to be a low risk auditee. The only issue of note in the audit was the separation of the West Mont, Inc. and the West Mont Foundation.

The financial records of the West Mont Foundation were also provided for review. The auditor's conclusion again was nothing remarkable noted. West Mont, Inc.'s Board of Directors in 2002 established the Foundation for Independent Support Services Inc. now named the West Mont Foundation. The Foundation is a 509(a) 3 not-for-profit entity designated to support the mission and services provided by the agency. The West Mont Foundation receives no federal or state monies and is excluded from the DDP contract.

The administrative staff have been actively involved in the process of reviewing and adjusting individual service projections in anticipation of the implementation of the DDP rates system. Region IV, in which the provider is located, is scheduled to implement rates beginning July 1, 2008. Information requested of the agency by the DDP central office has been readily provided.

Personnel/Hiring/Training

West Mont, Inc. historically has experienced a significant turnover of staff. Such turnover has been noted throughout personal care services in the state of Montana. This trend led to legislative action to increase pay in contracts held by direct care providers. Since the implementation of this wage increase, West Mont, Inc. has noted a decrease in the number of

employees terminating from the agency with a corresponding an increase in the length of employment.

As per state policy, background checks are completed on all direct care applicants prior to hire. West Mont, Inc. also reviews driver's records at intervals prescribed by their insurance agent. This information was made available to the reviewer and was assessed with Mark Erler, the Program Director.

New direct service employees are required to complete orientation training. The orientation consists of 16 hours of training including; a tour of the work area and agency, history on philosophy of the agency, organizational chart, community resources, personnel and payroll instruction, policy and procedure review, individual client information and confidentiality, adult protective services and reporting requirements, body mechanics and safety instruction. All training is conducted by Jean Morgan, Quality Assurance and Training Coordinator. Incidental training, specific for each worksite, is completed by the location manager. New employees are also scheduled for additional training within the first 90 days of employment. This training includes first aid, CPR and Mandt.

An additional training requirement, enacted by the State of Montana DDP in October 2007, is the College of Direct Support curriculum. West Mont has enrolled all staff in Tier 1 of the curriculum. Staff employed by the agency at the date of implementation have all have completed this level of training. For staff hired after implementation are required to complete Tier 1 training within six months of their hire date. A review of current staff indicated that all have completed or are projected to complete Tier 1 within the prescribed timeframes.

Programmatic

Quality Assurance

West Mont, Inc. has an extensive internal quality control system. Area managers conduct ongoing reviews and provide a quarterly summary to the Quality Assurance and Training Coordinator. This information is assessed and a targeted area of the review will be further evaluated by the coordinator. This ongoing process and oversight provides for a comprehensive administrative appraisal and verification of documentation. These materials were made available during the conduct of this review.

In addition, each area is assigned a safety representative. The safety representative conducts monthly site reviews. Information from these reviews is reported to managers for their action. The safety representative's information culminates in the completion of an annual safety inspection. These annual safety inspections are conducted in each of the provider's residential and vocational sites.

IP (PSP) Planning and Preparation

In reviewing completed plans, it was determined that documentation received from West Mont staff was comprehensive and thorough. This was collaborated by feedback received from case managers who also indicated individual planning documents are completed and forwarded in a

timely manner. In the fall of 2007, the developmental disabilities program initiated a change in the planning process. Plans were changed from individual planning documents to a personal support plan. This system wide change was instituted in order to place the emphasis on a person centered process. The change is being implemented individually as annual plans become due. Full implementation will take one year to accomplish. Feedback from case managers and West Mont staff indicate that the agency has embraced this change and have been diligent in completing and submitting necessary documentation within the new time frames.

Incident Management

Since the inception of the incident management system, West Mont, Inc. has taken a pro-active role. The agency has adopted the philosophy and process in reviewing incidents. Staff of West Mont, Inc. have diligently reviewed incidents, responded to trends and thoroughly investigated critical incidents as needed. Agency personnel have been cooperative and responsive to investigations from the developmental disabilities program and adult protective services (APS).

Services Reviewed

Residential

West Mont, Inc. provides residential services in eight settings within the Helena community. This number was increased with the construction of the Humbolt Apartment complex located behind the Melodee Respite House. This complex was built with agency funding, without state assistance. The design is consistent with West Mont's efforts to place the agencies emphasis on building smaller, more personal living environments. This trend has been demonstrated by the fact that all of West Mont's newer facilities have been designed and built as apartment complexes. Each apartment has two bedrooms and is home to two individuals. The facilities are staffed and licensed as group homes, but allow for more individualized space and privacy.

A major remodel occurred at the South Hills home. A bedroom and bathroom were added to the home through the use of combined state and agency funding. This construction allowed for two additional individuals to have access to private bedrooms.

The following are a list of other renovations completed by the agency during the period covered by this report. Whirlpool bath tubs were installed in bathrooms at the Fern, Dorothy, South Hills and Townsend homes. Fern House underwent an extensive renovation to install a fire suppression system as requested by licensing. Ceiling lift and track systems were installed in both Dorothy and Fern House, reducing risk to staff and consumers during transfers.

Each residential site maintains weekly reviews of water temperature. Homes with wells maintain regular laboratory analysis of the water. This documentation was reviewed and verified during home visits.

Vocational

West Mont, Inc. provides work services in two main sites in the Helena area. Both areas were visited and services reviewed. Documentation of job assignments and tasks were reviewed. A

review of consumer satisfaction surveys indicate a general satisfaction with services provided by West Mont, Inc.

The Farm in the Dell provides a variety of work activity consisting of tasks associated with production of tomatoes and tomato products from the greenhouses; preparation and distribution of floral arrangements; irrigation and gardening on the location; and the production of fire starters. Individuals are also involved in tasks associated with the care of the numerous animals that live at the farm.

The Work Services Center serves as a base of operations for supported employment as well as in house production. Paper sorting and shredding, ice packaging and laundry occur on site. Product distribution and janitorial are tasks which occur away from the facility. Such work tasks provide individuals with the opportunity to earn compensation.

West Mont also operates in home (PASS) programs which are activity based programs. Leisure and community activities are utilized to keep individuals engaged. Three homes currently have individuals involved in these programs. Effort is made for individuals to rotate throughout the homes and also to access community sites.

Supported Living

Supported living services provided under the Developmental Disabilities Program are conducted in apartment settings that are licensed as group homes. These congregate sites all for individual freedom, yet allow for necessary support through shared staffing. A review of these services is included in the narrative related to residential services. West Mont, Inc. also provides this category of services to individuals under the physically disabled waiver. Those services were not included in this review.

Transportation

West Mont, Inc. provides incidental transportation as needed for individuals who reside in their facilities. Weekday transportation is also provided for individuals living and working at the Farm in the Dell. Vocational activities including flower deliveries and janitorial services also include transportation. Those involved in PASS programs in West Mont's homes are transported to activities or other locations throughout the community.

Community Supports

During the period covered by this report, West Mont, Inc. had up to five people receiving services under this funding category. Reviews of the current support plans of four of the individuals were reviewed. Two of the plans were for provision of vocational services. One of the two is paid for with state general fund dollars. The third plan reviewed also provides residential support, in addition to, vocational support. The fourth plan is focused on the purchase of goods or services with West Mont, Inc. serving as the fiduciary for the community supports funding.

A review of all four plans indicated general satisfaction with the services provided by West Mont, Inc. The review also indicated the service plans are based on the individual's preferences and needs. All plans showed modification over time and objectives were clear and measurable.

Other

West Mont, Inc. has on staff nursing personnel who provide ongoing monitoring of individual conditions and also provide guidance for residential staff. The availability of nursing staff increases the agencies ability to respond to the medical needs of their aging clientele. Monthly nursing observations are provided to the incident management committee for individuals considered for high risk review.

It should be noted that West Mont, Inc. has been diligent in its efforts to establish a home to address the individuals with medical needs. The conversion of one of the Dorothy complex homes to a medical group home is underway as of the writing of this document. West Mont, Inc. is working closely with DDP and their Medical Director Jean Justad to successfully transition to this new service.

Conclusion

The last review of the agency was completed in 2004. Therefore, this review of West Mont, Inc. will serve as a base point upon which future quality assurance activities will be conducted. No significant areas of concern were noted at this time.

The evaluator will continue ongoing monitoring of the program and be available for consultation upon request. Overall, it is this evaluator's impression that West Mont, Inc., as a provider of service, is clearly focused on the individuals receiving their services.