

Shattering Myths *about* People with Intensive Needs Living in the Community

Q: Can everyone with a developmental disability be served in the community? Are there individuals who are not able to live outside of an institution?

A: All people currently in institutions can live in the community.ⁱ

- Individuals with developmental disabilities who rely upon ventilators and portable oxygen, require positioning every two hours, and need suctioning live safely in their own homes with NOW waiver supports in Louisiana.
- People are receiving 24-hour care and support, 365 days a year, when needed, to be safe in the community. They also have a better quality of life.
- Nine states and the District of Columbia have closed all state institutions for individuals with developmental disabilities: Alaska, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia. People are living successfully in the community.

Q: Are people in Louisiana's developmental centers more challenging and disabled than people living in the community?

A: No.

- While many people remaining in the developmental centers do have multiple disabilities and extensive support needs, there are people with similar disabilities and more intensive needs who are living with their families or are supported in community programs throughout Louisiana.

Q. Are there services provided in an institution that cannot be provided in the community?

A. No.

- Any service that is provided in a developmental center can be provided in the community.

ⁱ Some people in Louisiana's developmental centers are there under a court order because of involvement with the criminal justice system. They are referred to as the forensics population. Whether or not they can be served in the community is under the jurisdiction of the court, and therefore, not a part of this discussion.