



Colorado
Cross-Disability
Coalition

655 Broadway, Suite 775
Denver, CO 80203
303-839-1775

Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (CCDC) Introductory Statement:

Who are we? CCDC is the only statewide organization run by and for people with all types of disabilities. Cross-disability means that we believe that issues affecting those with different disabilities are common and that it is best for us to work together on public policy issues. Our members are people with all kinds of disabilities including mental illness, brain injury, developmental disabilities, mobility impairments, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing and people who are blind or visually impaired along with people with chronic illness and multiple disabilities. We are a membership organization with both individual and organizational members. Most of our individual members are people who have the most severe disabilities and multiple disabilities that have not been heard elsewhere. Most live well below the poverty level and rely on publicly funded health care programs for survival.

Our mission is to promote social justice and create systems change that benefits people with all types of disabilities—by any means necessary. Our vision is that people with disabilities will be able to enjoy the same things as non disabled people and will be treated with respect and dignity, particularly by the people that are paid to serve us.

Our request is simple—that people with disabilities be part of any discussions and processes that will affect our lives. We need to be part of the planning and discussion at all stages, not just at the end. We are capable of representing ourselves and while other stakeholders certainly have a place no one other than people with disabilities who are connected to a community of people with disabilities should be the formal disability representative. We say this with knowledge that we have a solid history, when we have been listened to our proposals have not only helped people but saved the tax payers millions. During the last budget crisis the disability community made a proposal to change how we screen for long term care that saved \$17 million dollars the first year and have cost avoided incrementally each year thereafter. Consumer Directed Attendant Care is another example of a program that saves money and improves quality of care.

We will oppose any legislation that does not include us in planning and governance.

Other major issues include addressing retaliation by providers that occurs if we complain and increasing accountability and transparency in government programs.

Sheila Hicks and Sheryle Hutter are the two board members that do most of our legislative work, Julie Reiskin is the Executive Director and we have a group of volunteer lobbyists.