

Announcement of NAQ Name Change

The National Association of QMRPs was founded in 1996 to provide educational experiences, exposure to best practices, networking opportunities and skill and knowledge acquisition primarily to those individuals working as Qualified Mental Retardation Professionals (QMRPs) in programs for persons with developmental disabilities across the United States.

The first national conference was held in Lake Tahoe, Nevada and included QMRPs, case managers, discipline-trained professionals, as well as first level staff and supervisors and managers.

Much has happened since those formative years and the membership of NAQ has grown to reflect a wide range of individuals and interests. Participation includes those working in ICF/MR and waiver programs as well as those in supported employment and advocacy settings.

As you know, many states in response to self advocates and with an understanding of the negative impact of language, have turned away from using the term mental retardation except for diagnostic or reporting requirements. In fact, the American Association for Mental Retardation changed its name to the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

After much dialogue with advisory board members, systems stake holders and other interested parties, a decision was made to change the name of the organization to the National Association of Qualified Developmental Disability Professionals. Please know that staff persons working in settings that utilize the designation QMRP will continue to be valued and supported.

Though the organization's name has changed, NAQ's commitment to providing high quality services and supports to persons with

developmental disabilities has not. The Association recently announced the creation of a certificate program especially designed for bachelor level graduates who are working in the field of developmental disabilities.

If you have any questions regarding this name change, or would like to learn more about the certification program, please feel free to contact Holly Janczak at hjanczak@qddp.org. For additional information on NAQ please visit www.qddp.org.