Background
The Center for START Services, a program of the Institute on Disability/UCED, University of New Hampshire, has developed a comprehensive assessment process for states, communities or regions to evaluate their current service systems and make recommendations for improving the access, appropriateness and accountability of services for individuals with IDD and mental health needs. The goal of this analysis is to learn about what is working and what is missing or not working within the current service system and to determine next steps to improve services and outcomes.

Methods
Four primary methods are used to gather information about the existing service system and to create opportunities for constituents to provide feedback about how to address issues.

• Community Survey
• Focus groups
• Family interviews
• Review of cost data related to current services

Results
Communities consistently cite the need for improved training and expertise among providers, better access to mental health services and access to appropriate crisis services as their greatest needs.

Public Health Model & Services
A three-tiered approach to improved services for individuals with IDD and behavioral health needs

- **Primary Intervention**: Increased training and expertise within the larger community
- **Secondary Intervention**: Access to mental health services provided by individuals with knowledge and expertise in IDD
- **Tertiary Intervention**: Establishment of a crisis intervention continuum that begins with what to do at home, how to call for help early on, and a safety net in times of crisis

Thanks to the following for participating in this project:
• The Division of Disability & Rehabilitative Services of the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
• The New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities
• The North Carolina START Project
• Joan Beasley, PhD
• Andrea P. Caoili, LCSW

Conclusions
A three-tiered approach to services based on the World Health Organization’s public health prevention model can be applied to improve services to support individuals with IDD and mental health needs. The WHO’s tertiary care model provides a framework for assuring that the 3 A’s (accessibility, appropriateness and accountability) are addressed within a service system. The three levels include:

- **Primary Prevention**: Increased expertise and training to inhibit the onset of difficulty;
- **Secondary Prevention**: Services that can detect difficulties or conditions and accurately address them in order to prevent exacerbation;
- **Tertiary Crisis Prevention**: Services to help stabilize someone or bring someone to maximum ability after a condition is presented.

The model demonstrates the efficacy of a more systematic approach to developing effective services for individuals with IDD and mental health needs.

Visit centerforstartservices.org
Or email Ann Klein at ann.Klein@unh.edu