

## CONCLUSION

The recommendations for improvements and changes to the Ohio APS program contained in this report are comprehensive and will require an enormous investment of time and money at the state level. The suggestions listed in this report provide several options as solutions to improving the current structure and delivery of the APS system in Ohio. The importance of creating a strong infrastructure at the state level cannot be underscored in implementing these suggestions.

Prior to undertaking any suggested change, a carefully spelled out strategic plan should be developed that highlights the options and directions for change. In order to implement this plan successfully, involvement of “key players,” including local APS personnel, other community professionals, clients, and policy makers in planning and implementing changes is imperative. A task force should be created at the state level to oversee the implementation of the plan. Strong ongoing support from leadership at the highest administrative levels and consistent funding will be needed to promote changes that evolve under the direction of the task force.

Recognizing that any change made to the system ultimately requires the support of the individuals who are responsible to materialize the proposed change, it is essential to continue involvement of all the APS personnel including program managers, caseworkers, advocates, and community professionals at the local level. Their role in planning and implementing changes should be clearly defined for every step of the process. While this will be a slow and time-consuming process, the result will be a strong and effective statewide APS program in Ohio, which will have the support of legislators, professionals, services providers and the citizens of the state.