

# SWAN Meeting with OPWDD Commission, Dr. Ted Kastner

Wednesday March 20, 2019

## Attendees

OPWDD: Dr. Ted Kastner, Kate Marlay, Greg Roberts, Neil Mitchell, Allison McCarthy, Roger Bearden

SWAN: Barb DeLong, Kathy Bunce, Jim Karpe, Elly Rufer, Pat Curran, Brad Pivar, Meri Krassner, Roy Probeyahn, Fran Kerimian

## Summary

The Steering Committee of SWAN met with OPWDD Commissioner Dr. Ted Kastner on Wednesday March 20, to express our concerns, and hear his vision and plans. SWAN presented our three top priority concerns:

- the workforce crisis caused by inadequate wages,
- the move to Managed Care
- the need for data to support wise planning and policy-making.

For more details on these, please see our “leave-behind” document.

Dr. Kastner listened carefully. He responded thoughtfully and with candor. He clearly has gained insight into how OPWDD works and demonstrated an understanding of the initiatives of the agency. We are hopeful that this will be a “fresh start” opportunity to create mechanisms for real input from the advocacy community of parents and self-advocates.

## Dr. Ted Kastner’s responses, in brief

**Work force.** The Commissioner expressed sympathy for the low wages and hard work of the Direct Service Professionals.

**Managed Care.** The policy document on Specialized IDD Plan-Provider Led (SIP-PL) is currently being reviewed internally by NYS. After that is completed, the document will be released for public comment.

**Data to guide planning and policy-making.** Dr. Kastner acknowledged that OPWDD needs to make improvements in this area. SWAN is working closely with OPWDD’s recently appointed Chief Data Officer, Dr. Tamika Black.