THE ALLIANCE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDER ASSOCIATION

"Early Intervention Providers Requesting $15M to Reverse 17 Years of Financial Neglect"

In the past 3 years the providers of the New Jersey Early Intervention System have been devastated by the improper handling of the implementation of the Early Intervention Management System (EIMS) back in 2018-2019, and more recently from the effects of COVID-19. As a result, provider agencies providing direct services to the children eligible for Part C of IDEA have suffered dramatically losing millions of dollars in reimbursement and jeopardizing the fragile Early Intervention System.

At present, the providers are receiving 60% to 65% of their annual revenues with no consideration for financial assistance from the Department of Health. Other Departments in state government have recognized their essential workers with emergency payments to support the continuation of direct services to the most vulnerable citizens of New Jersey.

The provider agencies are reimbursed by NJDOH on a fee-for-service basis for the face-to-face direct services provided to children and their families. These rates of reimbursement were established as a result of a rate study funded by the NJDOH back in 2002 and are inclusive of all costs (e.g. Paid Time Off, state and federal taxes, health benefits, travel, etc.). During the past 17 years, the rates have increased a cumulative total of 1.78%, whereas the Medicare Economic Index has increased more than 21% for the same period.

As a result of this disparity, all 52 of the provider organizations across the State are struggling with attracting qualified personnel to serve those children deemed eligible for services. These organizations are competing with the hospital industry, nursing home and assisted living industries, as well as the 573 public school districts throughout New Jersey (2018-19 School Year) that hire and retain related service disciplines (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy and Special Educators) in a clinic or congregate setting. It should be noted that many of whom are hired on a full-time basis vs. the predominant part-time practice in the EIS.
In an effort to ameliorate these financial hiring discrepancies, we respectfully request an immediate infusion into the NJDOH budget of $15M in State funds which includes the 5% reduction in rates levied against the EIS providers in 2009, plus an additional 4% to remain competitive within the therapy arena. This would translate into the following hourly rates:

- Developmental Intervention $90.24/hour + 9% = $98.36/hour
- Therapy (PT, OT, SP) $106.20/hour + 9% = $115.76/hour
- NJDOH Services Budget $151M + 9% = $166M**

The ABCD EIPA offers ourselves as a resource to members of the Legislature and the NJDOH to further clarify any of the timelines and issues related to this topic. During these extraordinary times and challenges with COVID resulting in the significant reduction in revenues, these resources would be extremely helpful in resolving the financial burden absorbed by the Provider Agencies for the past two years.

For additional information, please contact us at (609) 581-8375.

Patricia Carlesimo, Chair, ABCD EIPA
Cathy Chin, Executive Director, ABCD

The ABCD Early Intervention Provider Association (EIPA) has been in existence since 2006 and has been a tireless advocate for improving the Early Intervention System (EIS) and making recommendations to the NJDOH that foster provider sustainability in a competitive and changing environment. The thirteen member organizations of ABCD EIPA operate independent of one another and collectively provide services to more than 60% of the total number of children served in the State of New Jersey.

**The data utilized in this document was taken directly from discussions with the NJDOH and represents revenues aligned with the FY 2017 pre-COVID budget and service rates.