

Meeting summary for ID/DD Member Call (01/08/2025)

Quick recap

Debbie discussed the upcoming educational foundation scholarship program, the proposed changes for waiver services related to employment support, and the potential impact of the proposed transition from the current vocational habilitation service to a new service called Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST). She also highlighted the changes to the rules for group employment supports and career exploration services, and the potential impact of these changes on their operations. Additionally, Debbie and Pete discussed updates on federal rules, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, and the proposed rule change to the HIPAA Security Rule, with concerns raised about the potential impact on their operations.

Next steps

- Ohca members to share scholarship program information with eligible employees by March.
- Ohca members providing vocational habilitation services to respond to Debbie's questions about community integrated rate usage by the end of the week.
- Ohca members employing people with disabilities to respond to Debbie's questions about group employment supports and career exploration services by the end of the week.
- ICF providers to ensure all Ohio ISP plans are in the DODD system or have a plan to complete this.
- ICF providers to monitor for updates on Station MD funding beyond the current fiscal year.
- Ohca members interested in the proposed HIPAA security rule changes to review the rule and send comments to Pete or Debbie.

Summary

Ohca Dd Member Call and Budget

Debbie welcomed everyone to the Ohca Dd Member call and discussed the upcoming educational foundation scholarship program. She shared that the Department of Health and Human Services had not signed the contract with Assist, and they were having internal conversations about the Support Intensity Scale (SIS) assessment. Debbie also mentioned that the Governor's budget would be introduced in February and that the Department was likely to include requests for additional funding. She also discussed the proposed changes for waiver services related to employment support, which the team had concerns about. Debbie encouraged everyone to share the scholarship program link with their employees and to stay updated on the budget process.

Transition to Basic Employment Skills

Debbie discussed the proposed transition from the current vocational habilitation service to a new service called Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST). She explained that the new service would have two tiers, with one catering to individuals aged 55 or older and the other aiming towards competitive integrated employment for younger individuals. Debbie also mentioned that the department plans to remove the community integrated rate for the BEST service, which has been used for smaller group settings in the community. She expressed concerns about the potential impact of this change and requested data from members who utilize the community integrated rate for vocational services.

Community Integrated Rate and Rule Changes

Debbie discussed the potential changes to the community integrated rate for the new best service and the impact it might have on their members. She emphasized the need for responses from the team by the end of the week to advocate for changes before the rulemaking process begins on January 17th. Debbie also highlighted the changes to the rules for group employment supports and career exploration services, which may exclude certain services from being provided in a provider-owned or controlled setting. She sought the team's input on how these changes might affect their operations, particularly if they employ individuals with disabilities.

Employment Services Changes and Updates

Debbie discussed the department's proposed changes to employment-related services, which she expressed concerns about. She emphasized the need for data and scenarios to demonstrate the potential negative impacts of these changes on individuals and their ability to achieve competitive, integrated employment. Debbie also shared updates on federal rules, including the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act and the Think Differently Database Act. She noted that these acts, while not directly impacting current services, may lead to increased demand for services and provide more information on available resources. Debbie assured the team that she would keep them updated on these developments and share relevant information as it becomes available.

Social Security Fairness Act Update

Debbie informed the team about the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, which eliminates the windfall elimination penalty for public pension recipients. This means that their social security benefits will increase, with an estimated average increase of \$360 per month. Debbie emphasized the importance of monitoring and reporting any changes in income, especially for those on the disabled adult child benefit. Stephen added that the increase is retroactive to January 2024, and recipients will receive a lump sum to catch up. The team was advised to be aware of these changes and their potential impact on patient liability and claims processing.

Federal Regulatory Items and Dodd System

Debbie discussed the retro and a news bytes article related to federal regulatory items. She then passed the discussion to Josh, who informed the team that Dodd had formally filed the mui rule and there would be a public hearing on February 13th. Josh also mentioned that the new version of the rule would be available in news bytes this week. He further discussed the Ohio ISP, stating that it is now required for all individuals in an Icf and that there are still some plans that have not been transferred to the Dodd system. Josh advised that even if all plans are not transferred, providers should have a plan to make that happen and be making progress towards it. He also mentioned that Dodd had met with surveyors on a monthly basis and that they were considering training for the surveyors. Lastly, Josh mentioned that more definitive numbers around the number of plans in and out of the system would be provided in the next couple of weeks.

Ohio Developmental Disabilities Updates

The meeting covers several updates related to Ohio's developmental disabilities services. Josh provides information about upcoming communication on compliance and potential updates to the Ohio ISP template, with in-person feedback sessions planned for March and April. Pete underscores that the Ohio ISP updates will involve gathering input through surveys and focus groups, including some changes required by federal regulations. Debbie mentions that registration is open for regional trainings on the Milestones Ohio ISP for ICF providers. She also discusses a new service for non-medical transportation to competitive integrated employment, which currently cannot be billed due to an issue with the Medicaid system, but providers will be able to backbill once resolved. Additionally, the new healthcare assessment service through StationMD is now able to be billed for waiver recipients, while the state will continue funding it for ICF residents through the fiscal year.

HIPAA Security Rule Update Discussion

Debbie announced a couple of updates and handed over to Pete, who discussed a proposed rule change to the HIPAA Security Rule. Pete explained that the rule, which has not been updated since 2017, aims to strengthen cybersecurity aspects and would apply to providers and payers. He noted that the proposed rule could be a significant lift for smaller entities and that there is a 60-day comment period. Pete also mentioned that the new administration might not be hospitable to regulations and suggested that there could be a better way to achieve more security without being overly burdensome. He encouraged anyone interested in the area to review the rule and consider commenting.

New Administration and ISP Compliance

In the meeting, Debbie and Pete discussed the potential impact of the new administration on their operations. They also touched on the proposed rule and its implications. Debbie acknowledged her lack of technical expertise and suggested that others might benefit from understanding the technology. Dan raised concerns about the

crossover between Dodd Regs and Department of Health Regs, specifically regarding firewatch procedures. Debbie promised to consult with a board member, Ken Daly, who is knowledgeable about safety codes. Dan also inquired about the status of Medicaid surveys and the ISP deadline. Debbie explained that the states are behind schedule and that the ISP deadline has been extended. She also clarified that the ISP compliance would be monitored through the licensure survey and any non-compliance would be addressed through a plan of correction. The team agreed to reconvene the following week to discuss further.

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