

Meeting summary for ID/DD Member Call (03/13/2024)

Quick recap

The meeting covered a wide range of topics related to the OHA Convention, the EFO scholarship program, BWC matters, the Safety Grant program, remote supports, home and community based services rules, proposed career planning and individualized supports rules, EV rules, the 2023 DSP compensation survey, federal activities, and upcoming employment quality programs.

Summary

OHA Convention, EFO Scholarship, BWC Updates

Debbie reminded attendees about the upcoming OHA Convention and encouraged early registration to avail the early bird discount. She also shared that the registration link was in the chat, and attendees could also book their hotel stay simultaneously. Diane then joined the meeting and provided two updates. The first was about the EFO scholarship program, where the deadline was extended to May first due to glitches in the FAFSA program. The second update was about BWC matters.

BWC Premium Reduction and Safety Grant Changes

Diane reported that the Bureau of Workers Compensation (BWC) approved an 8% reduction in premiums for those in the state fund, effective from July 1st. She also discussed changes to the BWC's Safety Grant program. Originally a program for testing and approving safety devices, the program has shifted to providing funding for equipment that promotes worker health and safety. However, due to its popularity, the program ran out of funds and is currently closed. Diane expects it to reopen in June, and encouraged those who hadn't applied before to prepare their applications in advance.

Safety Grant, Lift Replacement, Remote Support Guidance

Diane shared her insights about the Safety Grant program's moratorium list, especially concerning the replacement of lifts in buildings. She advised to bundle the lift application with other accessories, ensuring it will be approved. She also mentioned the availability of assistance from the Ohio Council of Home Care (OCHCA) and Sedgwick for members. Debbie then discussed new guidance on remote supports, emphasizing that it is not an on-demand service and must be included in a service plan. She clarified that staff monitoring remote supports must be awake and that it's not suitable to have remote support 24/7, especially if an individual has staff in the home. Debbie also highlighted a package of four home and community based services rules.

Proposed Rules and Feedback Requested

Debbie discussed proposed rules related to career planning, individualized supports, specialized medical equipment, and healthcare assessments. She requested feedback on these rules and highlighted concerns about the specialized medical equipment rule, which could disallow the repair or replacement of damaged equipment due to confirmed misuse, abuse, or neglect. She also expressed concerns about the healthcare assessment rule, which she felt could exclude certain treatments or services. Debbie asked for feedback by the end of the day the next day. Additionally, she mentioned changes to the EV rules and requested feedback on these as well. Josh shared his comments on the EV rules, emphasizing the need for clarity and the removal of duplicative language.

2023 DSP Compensation Survey and Federal Activities Update

Debbie discussed the upcoming 2023 Direct Support Professional (DSP) compensation survey. She mentioned that the Department plans to release the survey on April 15th, with responses due by June 30th. The Department will provide training for different types of providers, including those who have never completed the survey. Debbie emphasized the importance of a high response rate and the need to advocate for a more accurate representation of the data. She also provided updates on Federal activities, mentioning the President's State of the Union address and the President's budget. She noted that while there was little focus on healthcare in the address, the President's budget included a request for 150 billion dollars for HCBS services over a 10-year period. However, she expressed skepticism about the likelihood of this request being approved.

Employment Quality Program and Arpa Funding Update

Debbie discussed various topics including an upcoming employment quality program and the application process for Arpa funding. Josh provided an update on the employment quality program, mentioning that the department is ready to begin the application process for Arpa funding. Debbie also mentioned an upcoming meeting with CMS and shared information from the CDC about assisted living. Towards the end of the meeting, Debbie reminded attendees about upcoming deadlines and emphasized the importance of accurately reporting Provider Relief Funds to avoid potential recoupment.

Next steps

- Register for the Oha Convention before April 4th to get the early bird discount.
- Diane will share the updated scholarship program deadline and changes with her team and encourage them to apply.
- Debbie will review the proposed rules and provide feedback to the Department by Friday.
- Debbie will share the fact sheet from the White House in the chat.
- Josh will attend the webinar on the employment quality program application process.

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