

# Meeting summary for ID/DD Member Call (06/04/2025)

## Quick recap

The meeting covered updates on federal and state budget discussions, focusing on their impact on Medicaid funding and developmental disability services. Key topics included budget reconciliation in the Senate, proposed tax cuts, changes to ICF reimbursement, and implementation of the Ohio ISP. The meeting also addressed upcoming system changes for waiver services and ICF assessments, as well as scholarship opportunities for staff certifications.

## Next steps

- [Debbie and Pete to visit DC next week for hill visits with Senators and Representatives to discuss Medicaid concerns, especially regarding provider tax.](#)
- [OHCA members to reach out to Republican state senators or US representatives they have close relationships with to explain potential impacts on DD services.](#)
- [Dodd to work on improving Ohio ISP system, including transitioning to Salesforce and incorporating a bot to reduce redundancies.](#)
- [Dodd to provide training on new assessments \(PHQ-2, PHQ-9, and GAD-7\) for waiver SSAs and ICFs.](#)
- [OHCA members to review scholarship information on NewsBytes and apply within the 2-week application period if interested.](#)

## Summary

### Federal Budget Reconciliation Update

Debbie provides an update on the Federal budget, focusing on the ongoing discussions in the Senate regarding budget reconciliation. She explains that the Senate is now considering the House-passed version, with concerns about potential changes and their impact on securing enough votes in both chambers. Debbie highlights key issues, including overall spending amounts, the cost of implementing tax cuts, and the approaching debt ceiling deadline in mid-July. She also mentions concerns about potential Medicaid coverage losses under the House-passed version and its impact on State Medicaid programs.

### Federal and State Budget Advocacy

Debbie provides an update on federal budget discussions, noting President Trump's increased involvement in the Senate's deliberations. She mentions that she, Pete, and Erin will be visiting DC next week to advocate for Medicaid funding, particularly focusing on the provider tax. Pete then discusses the state budget, emphasizing the tight timeline for both federal and state budget processes. He highlights the importance of timing, as Ohio's Medicaid program in the state budget depends on state legislation passing before federal legislation. Pete also shares resources for accessing and understanding the state budget bill and its various components.

## State Budget and Medicaid Cuts

Pete discusses the recent changes in the state budget, focusing on tax cuts and their impact on Medicaid funding. He explains that a flat income tax of 2.75% will be implemented in 2026, resulting in lower state revenue. The Senate has reduced Medicaid funding by 1% in the first year and 1.5% in the second year of the budget. Pete expresses disappointment that proposed increases in waiver rates for disability services were not included in the bill, which may lead to workforce challenges. However, he notes that language supporting ICF rates and professional workforce development remains intact. The Senate also removed proposed increases to the personal needs allowance for ICF residents.

## Legislative Updates on Care Provider Policies

Pete discusses the legislative process regarding personal needs allowance and Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) for care providers. The House initially proposed increasing the personal needs allowance to \$75, but the Senate removed this provision, likely keeping it at the current \$50. Regarding EVV, the House included language prohibiting claim denials based on EVV, but the Senate removed this as well, meaning EVV implementation will likely continue as planned. Pete also mentions that supported decision-making language was removed from the budget, with the Senate preferring to address it through separate legislation (Senate Bill 35).

## State Budget Process Update

Pete provides an update on the state budget process, highlighting some wins and disappointments in the current bill. The ICF formula continues, and the professional workforce development add-on is maintained. However, language for collecting data on waiver services costs was not included. Debbie mentions that there may still be opportunities to address some items, such as EVV, in the Conference Committee. Pete then outlines the upcoming steps in the budget process, including Senate Finance Committee hearings, the omnibus amendment, and the expected floor vote. He notes that the Conference Committee process might be accelerated this year due to potential federal actions related to the hospital tax.

## ICF Reimbursement and Active Treatment

The meeting focused on ICF reimbursement, particularly regarding active treatment. Debbie reports that the department provided cost report data on active treatment, but it was not user-friendly or reliable. The group emphasized to the department that reimbursement drives the options ICFs can provide for residents' active treatment, and that current ICF reimbursement rates are lower than waiver rates for day programs. They suggested potentially moving active treatment out of direct care and reimbursing it similarly to protected costs, with waiver rates as a maximum. Debbie's goal is to ensure that programmatic discussions about service provision are not separated from reimbursement considerations.

## Ohio ISP Implementation Progress Update

The Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) provides an update on the Ohio ISP implementation. As of May 9th, ICFs have completed 72.5% of plans, county boards 82.1%, and DCs 74.9%. DODD acknowledges some ongoing challenges but reports no citations directly tied to ISP implementation. They are working on system improvements, including reducing redundancies and incorporating a bot to automatically populate related questions. The department also discusses the potential addition of three new assessments (PHQ-2, PHQ-9, and GAD-7) to comply with CMS Access Rule requirements, though they clarify these specific assessments may not be mandatory.

#### System Changes and Scholarship Updates

Jason and Debbie discuss upcoming system changes for waiver services and ICF assessments. They remind attendees about the open scholarship application period for staff certifications. The next week's call is canceled due to Jason and Debbie attending the NASDDDS conference in Washington, D.C. Attendees are advised to check Newsbytes for updates and to contact Jason or Debbie if needed during their absence.

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