

## Summary of 1/15/2025 IDD member call

Pete Van Runkle said Governor DeWine announced earlier in the week the opening of universal changing stations at a rest stop on I-71 in Fayette County. They were the first of a number of changing stations to be installed during 2025 and 2026. Pete posted [a link](#) to a map of where the stations would be located for anyone who needed them while transporting someone.

Pete said DODD had completed the 2024 DSP compensation survey report. It was embargoed, but Debbie Jenkins received a copy. We could share information from the report verbally. The report would be helpful in our budget adequacy along with data the coalition gathered.

- 1) 1529 agencies completed the survey which represents about 97% of the total claims
- 2) The report contains a listing of providers who did not respond
- 3) Vacancy rates decreased from 20% in 2022 to 16% in 2023
- 4) The system wide turnover rate is still just above 50%
- 5) As of 12/31/23, 27% of DSPs had less than 6 months on the job, while 44% had 2 years or more
- 6) Agencies serving 20 or more individuals were more likely to offer fringe benefits such as insurance, paid leave, retirement, etc.
- 7) The average starting wage increased from \$13.00 to \$13.95 from 2022 to 2023
- 8) The average regular wage increased from \$15.28 to \$15.56 from 2022 to 2023
- 9) The average hourly compensation increased from \$19.84 to \$21.65 from 2022 to 2023
- 10) Estimated starting and average wages for July 2024 were \$16.04 and \$17.04.
- 11) The survey included a few questions regarding expectations for 2024. Most agencies responded that they plan to use the budget rate increases for increases to DSP wages, followed by quality/training, bonuses, fringe benefits and technology. There were two good quotes as well.

Turning to the budget, Pete reported on committee chairs appointed by Speaker Huffman and President McColley. The House now was following the Senate model of not having Finance subcommittees but having parts of the budget heard by standing committees. The chairs were as follows:

### House

Finance – Rep. Brian Stewart

Medicaid – Rep. Jennifer Gross

Health – Rep. Jean Schmidt

### Senate

Finance – Sen. Jerry Cirino

Medicaid – Sen. Mark Romanchuk

Health – Sen. Steve Huffman

The Finance Directors for the House and Senate were David Reedy, a former Senate deputy, and Ray DiRossi, respectively.

In all likelihood, the Medicaid committees would hear the DD issues in the budget. Ultimate decisions on key issues would be made by the two leaders.

Pete mentioned a recent article in Gongwer News Service that discussed DODD's budget submission, which was submitted in October and made public in November. The article was somewhat misleading in discussing proposed funding increases. Pete clarified that agency budget submissions were written with public disclosure in mind and did not represent the results of subsequent closed-door discussions. The increased funding mentioned in the budget submission was because of increased waiver utilization, not higher rates. Nonetheless, Pete referred to Debbie's comment on the previous week's call that Director Hauck said we would be OK in the executive budget.

Pete discussed articles about OhioISP that were in Memo Monday. The most important one was about provider feedback on OhioISP. This could be done either by completing [a survey](#) or participating in a [regional meeting](#). He encouraged members who had concerns or suggestions to take advantage of one or both opportunities. DODD was interested in feedback to inform potential changes to OhioISP. The other article discussed what he felt was the real reason they were looking at changes, which was compliance with the quality measures part of the access rule. Ohio was a MFP state, so our compliance deadline was in 2026. The state wanted to make sure they were collecting the required information, but also would consider provider feedback.

Pete also provided a link to DODD's [ECHO program](#) on multi-system youth for anyone interested in that topic. ECHO was a facilitated collaboration among providers to share best practices.

Josh Anderson said DODD was putting several ICF rules into clearance for 5-year rule review. The changes did not appear to him to be substantive. We would share them in News Bites for members to review.

Pete called on Bradley Wyner, who said the first Milestones OhioISP training for ICFs was coming up on February 5 in Toledo. It was covered in Memo Monday as well.