

Dianne Cote
Personal Onsite Development
LD 473

In Support of LD 473

Resolve, to Expand the Eligibility for and Increase the Number of Hours of Applied Behavior Analysis Services Authorized by the MaineCare Program

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

April 6, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee.

My name is Dianne Cote, I am the Executive Director of Personal Onsite Development. We are located in Auburn Maine and provide work and community support services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), I am in strong support of LD 473.

Since 2019, we have asked for support to ensure adequate access to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services for adults with IDD who have complex high behavioral needs and are receiving services under MaineCare Sections 21 or 29.

Currently, children can receive ABA services through school or community settings upwards of 139 hours each year, but when they reach adulthood they are limited to only 16.5 hours per year. Many adults who require a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP), a functional assessment and/or a Behavior Management Plan are currently unable to access Board Certified Behavior Analysts who are willing to do the work under such limited circumstances. 16.5 hours, for example, this is barely enough time to write an individual positive behavior support plan, and is an inadequate amount of time to be able to write a more complex behavior management plan. Those who provide this service want to do right by the individuals who require such a plan in order to manage their behaviors.

I agree with the testimony submitted by MACSP. This unfunded mandate leaves individuals with the highest behavior management needs without adequate resources to address the behaviors constructively, and perpetuates a cycle of inadequately managed behavior that impacts quality of life, housing stability and placement decisions and access to the community. Fewer providers are able to support people with complex needs, due to an inadequate rate and lack of reimbursement for the utilization of clinicians such as BCBA's. Crisis management is not a solution, nor are costly out of state placements which separate people from family, and community supports.

Increasing the number of hours of behavioral consultation can lead to effective treatment and support of the Mainers with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who have high behavior management needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dianne L. Cote

Personal Onsite Development

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