

Written Testimony

LD 744 Resolve, to Direct the Department of Health and Human Services to Perform Rate Studies and Rate determination for Providers of Certain Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder

April 13th, 2023

Good afternoon, my name is Melissa Hall and I am the Director of Life Works, our Community Support Services of Waypoint (formerly Waban) in Sanford, Maine. We provide to over 60 individuals, Community Support Services funded through MaineCare Waiver Section 21 & 29 services.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 744 directing DHHS to conduct rate studies and rate determinations for MaineCare Waiver Section 21 & 29 services for people with intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder in calendar year 2024.

My testimony is specifically in support for rate studies and rate determinations for Community Support Services for the viability of these services for the people we support now, on our waitlists and those seeking services in their future. Community Support Services under Section 21 & 29 have undergone significant rule and waiver changes following a rate determination which was conducted in 2020. The change in this service rate did not involve Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities provider input but was based on a rate study conducted for Section 18 & 20 with input from providers of brain injury services and services for persons with other related conditions.

Since 2020, changes in Community Support Services include a new tiered rate and service model along with a fixed 1 to 3 staff ratio for group services that significantly changes the model and billable service time. Additionally, to support Maine's recent adoption of the federal Home and Community Based Setting (HCBS) Rule, providers have increased required trainings for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), documentation and reporting requirements and experienced increased transportation costs also impacting this rate. To attract and retain DSPs during this time of ongoing staffing shortages highlights the needs for competitive wages set by a rate that supports the skills and complexity of the job and ongoing training needs.

Without a rate study and determination reflective of the current service model and requirements we will continue to see the collapse of programs and a growing waitlist for services. Please support LD 744.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Melissa J Hall

mhall@waypointmaine.org

Sanford, Maine