



Testimony in Support of LD 415

Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Targeted Case Management Services To Reflect Inflation

Health and Human Services Committee

Thursday, April 15, 2021

Good afternoon, Senator Claxton, Representative Myer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Laura Cordes and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP), the statewide association of more than 70 organizations providing services and support for thousands of children, adolescents, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout our state so that they can live full lives in the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of LD 415, *Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Targeted Case Management Services To Reflect Inflation*.

There are currently six different eligibility criteria for MaineCare Section 13, Targeted Case Management: children with behavioral health disorders, development disabilities, chronic medical conditions, and adults with developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, HIV, in addition to members experiencing homelessness.

Today you'll hear from experts in the field about how essential case management services are for both children and adults with IDD and Autism and how underfunded these services have become over time as health insurance, technology, travel, wages and associated taxes have all gone up while the reimbursement rate for Section 13 has stagnated, for over a decade.

Over the last several years the state has transferred nearly all of its case management services to community providers. This has unfortunately meant a myriad of unreimbursed duties that have fallen to case managers over this last decade, including, rep payee services, clinical supervision, occasional transportation of clients, the administration of both Support Intensity

Scale assessments and National Core Indicators interviews. Most recently, the state has added administrative and additional non billable training for case managers related to Maine's Home and Community Based (HCBS) rule compliance. The extensive list of annual and nonbillable trainings for case managers of children and adults with intellectual disabilities and autism has compounds the burden on case management agencies as well. I encourage you to review the testimony submitted by Bridget McCabe for a full list of billable and nonbillable services that case managers perform along with a list of training requirements.

As you've heard in previous hearings, MaineCare Section 21 and Section 29 have a combined waitlist of nearly two thousand people with intellectual disabilities and autism in Maine and there are over one thousand additional children waiting for Section 28 and Section 65 services. **For hundreds of children and adults on these waitlists, case management is the only service they are currently receiving.**

Because of the low reimbursement rate, most community case management agencies are only able to offer from \$16-\$18 per hour in starting pay. The State of Maine clearly believes case management services are critical to the coordination of care for children and adults across a broad spectrum of risk. In fact, the rate at which child protective caseworkers were being hired last year is between \$23.64 - \$30.26/hr. This pay disparity is not only fundamentally unfair, it creates an unhealthy competition for case managers and drives up the high turnover and unfilled positions that agencies across Maine are facing.

Case managers for children and adults with intellectual disabilities are on the front lines of care: identifying and reporting abuse, neglect and exploitation; navigating complex and overlapping systems of care; implementing plans to maximize community integration; and ensuring health and safety for an extremely fragile population.

We urge you to support this bill and to implement a rate that is fair and equitable and reflective of current costs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Cordes