

## ***Please Support Increased OT Rates in LD 498 or in the supplemental budget***

### **What is pediatric occupational therapy?**

Pediatric occupational therapy helps children to improve developmental skills, educational skills, and emotional-behavioral skills to enhance functional performance and independence throughout their environments.



### **What type of skills are addressed in pediatric occupational therapy?**

- gross motor development
- fine motor development
- self care skills
- social skills
- peer interactions
- time management
- executive function
- vocational planning
- strength
- coordination
- cognitive skills
- executive function
- calming strategies
- self advocacy
- independence at home, school, or community
- managing impulsivity
- self regulation
- social interactions

### **Reimbursement Comparison**

The rate of reimbursement for MaineCare is one of the *five lowest in the U.S. at \$50.40/hour*. This compares with the national average of \$95 per hour, with some states as high as \$162. As far as we can determine, it has been at least 20 years since OT rates were increased.

### **Impact on Clinic Owners**

*“In the past month one of my therapists resigned to go to work in hand therapy in a hospital instead of in pediatrics for better pay and benefits. While interviewing to fill her position, I interviewed a therapist making \$60 per hour as a per diem therapist, more than we are reimbursed per hour. These are just two of many qualified therapists no longer working in pediatrics due to low reimbursement rates.”* -Jamie Kiesow, MS OTR/L and owner of StoreySmith Pediatric Clinic located in Cumberland, Maine

*“It is extremely difficult to continue providing services at the MaineCare reimbursement rate. Each year I struggle with whether our clinic needs to cap the number of children on MaineCare, thereby putting on waiting lists. I fear that if something doesn't change soon to increase rates, I will be forced to take this action.”*

-Jillian O'Brien, MS OTR/L and owner of Pediatric Development Center located in Westbrook, Maine

*“Our agency has picked up for two clinics that have closed within the last year. In both cases the therapists moved out of state for more lucrative opportunities. Our clinic has also lost several therapists over the past 5 years, as therapists find it impossible to financially remain working in pediatrics with such a low reimbursement rate.”*

-Ryan Gallant, MS OTR/L and owner of Gallant Therapy Services located in Augusta, Oakland, & Lewiston, Maine

### **Parent Testimonials**

*“Having Occupational Therapy consistently over the years has helped my son and given him confidence. He struggled in so many areas like self care, being in a group of peers, writing, using scissors, and self regulation. He now is able to do so much! He can tie his shoes, use scissors, button his clothes, ride a bicycle. He has better coordination, he used to trip and fall a lot. He is able to work with peers communicating and compromising. Occupational Therapy has had a huge impact in our lives.”* -C.W., Westbrook, Maine

*“It taught us how to parent in a way our child could best receive it. We have learned tools to help him function best. We can spot when he is beginning to escalate and thereby use tactics to guide him into a more regulated state. I know how to best advocate to get him support in all settings. OT's showed us a strengths-based, but firm, positive approach with an individual plan vs a one size fits all solution. OT has truly been life changing for us.”* -B.A., Gray, Maine