

**CQI Workgroup on Part C Fees
and
Ability to Pay**

**Meeting Summary
DMHMRSAS - 13th Floor Conference Room
July 27, 2000**

Those attending: Shirley Ricks, Liz Hutton, Anne Simmons, Sheila Null, Emily Dreyfus, Barry Mason, Steve Waldron (Guest), Christa Shifflett, John Jackson, Forrest Mercer, and Mary Ann Discenza.

Those absent: Anne Lucas, Joy Yeh, Martha Adams, Joan Pine, Joe Sharrer, Geri Pratt, and Patti Seklemian.

Shirley Ricks shared with the workgroup that Commissioner Kellogg would not be attending the meeting today. She indicated that staff met with Commissioner Kellogg on July 25th and shared with him the progress the workgroup is making toward finalizing the ability to pay process and the development of a statewide fee scale. Staff shared with Commissioner Kellogg the workgroup's draft on the Ability to Pay Practices and the draft of the 4th fee scale. Shirley personally commended John Jackson for his work with the families (Emily Dreyfus and Christa Shifflett), who he met in Charlottesville to come up with the draft of the 4th fee scale. Commissioner Kellogg thanked the workgroup for its commitment and hard work on this activity and for coming up with a process to make early intervention fees reasonable for families. The Commissioner encouraged the workgroup to continue our work and to put together a packet of the Ability to Pay Practices for the Office of the Attorney General. He wants to ensure that the work we have done does not violate any state and federal regulations as well as to identify any other legal barriers that would prevent us from moving forward with the work to assist families with fees. He requested that staff from the Lead Agency get with Julie Stanley, Assistant Commissioner to put together the packet of information for OAG.

Staff met with Julie Stanley on the morning of July 27th. She also was pleased and appreciative of the hard work the workgroup has done on fees. She requested that staff finalize the changes with the workgroup for the Ability to Pay Practices and get the packet of information for the OAG to Commissioner Kellogg as soon as possible. She indicated she reviews all information for Commissioner Kellogg's signature and would do a review of the information before it goes to him.

At the Early Intervention Agency Heads meeting on July 25, 2000, Commissioner Kellogg commended the workgroup for the work it has done in addressing family fees. He stated the information would have to go to OAG for review and to ensure applicability to state and federal

regulations. Commissioner Kellogg asked that all of the agencies consider the funding needs for Part C as needs are increasing since there has been a 16% increase in child count. He reminded agency heads that it is the responsibility of all of the agencies that are included in early intervention system to help fund Part C.

The next item of business involved an update about the private provider survey. To date, 7 responses received, no data reported about the amount of fees private providers are collecting, providers' policies and procedures, etc. After discussion workgroup members agreed about the need for follow-up to increase the number of respondents and Christa S. agreed to follow up with local coordinators to remind them about the deadline for the data collection. The deadline for submission is August 8th. Workgroup members agreed to help Barry with the analysis of the data received.

Workgroup members spent some time discussing the development of the report for the General Assembly due in December, 2000 as well as other outstanding tasks/activities the workgroup needs to undertake to complete its work. Around this discussion, members agreed to the following: Christa S. will revise the 4th fee scale at the upper end of the scale (e.g. include family income of \$200,000); final review of the draft *Guiding Principles* - Shirley, Anne and the Early Intervention Management Team (EIIMT); *Family Information* document (handout for families at intake) - John J., Sheila N., and Wanda Pruett; *Appeals Process* form(s) and procedures - Anne S.; and *Financial Agreement* form - Barry Mason, and Emily Dreyfus; draft letter to VICC in response to recommendation to exempt special instruction from fees - Liz H., and Mary Ann.

John J. presented another iteration of the draft document entitled *Part C Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Ability to Pay Practices*. Pertinent points from the presentation:

- Families need information at first contact, e.g. description of the local early intervention system, explanation of charges, information about sliding fee scales, etc. Members agreed that the information should be informative and direct and more importantly, the first priority should be a determination of what the child and family needs and then deciding how to pay for what the child and family needs.
- On page 3 paragraphs should be bulleted and the bulleted information should be included in the family information sheet handout.
- Services that are at no cost to families, e.g. evaluation and assessment, etc. should be stated up-front.

Changes will be made to the document as identified above and forwarded for internal review to Julie Stanley, Assistant Commissioner for final review before going to the Attorney General's Office. Members agreed that it was not necessary to see the document again unless substantive changes were

made after the internal review. John J. also asked members to review the document again and if there were material changes to submit them ASAP and if necessary, outstanding issues would be resolved by phone/conference call.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned. **The next workgroup meeting is scheduled for Monday August 21, 2000 from noon until 4:00 PM. Please note: the location for the meeting has been changed. The workgroup will meet at the Department for the Visually Handicapped which is located at 397 Azalea Avenue in Richmond. The meeting will take place in the Conference Room in the Administrative Headquarters Building.**