

# The UPDATE

## News and Information for Massachusetts EI Providers October 2017



### Important Dates...Mark your Calendar!



**October 11, 2017; 10—11am: DPH Webinar:** Universal IFSP Implementation

**October 24, 2017; 10—11am: DPH Monthly Webinar:** Presentation by Prevent Blindness, Resources and Supports for Families

**November 1, 2017:** Program Director Session—Aligning the SSIP with General Supervision

**November 9, 2017: ICC Meeting:** Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough, MA

### Welcome

The Department is pleased to welcome **Diana Sullivan** as the new **Program Director for Northern Berkshire EI Program**. As a licensed Massachusetts Family Child Care provider for 12 years, she went back to school for her degree in Early Care and Education, after her own family's experience with early intervention. For the past five years, Diana has worked with the Northern Berkshire EIP as a developmental specialist. In addition to this role, she has been the program's Quality Assurance Coordinator, chairperson of their forms committee, interim clinical supervisor, and their agency-wide Quality Assurance Committee member, where she was recently appointed Chairperson of the committee. Please join us in welcoming Diana to her new role!

The Department is pleased to welcome **Kelly Petravicz** as the new **Program Director for South Bay Lawrence**. Kelly has her Master's degree in Elementary and Special Education. She taught in the public school setting for 10 years before transitioning to EI as a developmental specialist at South Bay Lowell. Kelly has been with South Bay for 7 years and is a certified infant massage instructor, NBO administrator, and a Mother Woman group facilitator. Please join us in welcoming Kelly to her new role!



### DPH Updates

#### **Transportation for Early Intervention (EI): PT-1 Facts for Providers, Families and DPH**

The EOHHS Human Services Transportation Office has developed a Fact Sheet that outlines the responsibilities of all parties involved. Please review the attached [PT-1 Facts for Providers, Families and DPH](#). The Human Services Transportation (HST) Office plans to update this document periodically, so please provide any feedback to your Regional Specialist. The Department will forward this feedback to the HST to incorporate into subsequent document updates.

#### **NCSEAM Family Survey Update**

October is the first of two distribution months for the NCSEAM Family Survey. Service Coordinators should be giving a Survey, cover flyer and self-addressed stamped envelope to families whose children have been enrolled in EI for at least **six months**, who did not receive a survey in March 2017. Please ask them to encourage families to complete and return their Survey.

Service Coordinators should remind families that there are two ways for them to return their completed Surveys. The Survey should be put in the envelope provided and sealed. Then it can either be dropped in the mail or initialed on the back flap and handed back to the Service Coordinator. Programs can choose whichever method works best for them. We hope that having two options will help to increase return rate.

Information about the “whys and hows” of the Survey are available on the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project website at [www.eiplp.org](http://www.eiplp.org) under the Family Survey tab.

We invite you to look at and share with families, the new video link below from the DaSy Center that makes the case for improving child outcomes by supporting families and measuring family outcomes.

[Supporting children by improving family outcomes Video](#)

If you have questions or need assistance with anything related to the Family Survey, contact Suzanne Gottlieb at: [suzanne.gottlieb@state.ma.us](mailto:suzanne.gottlieb@state.ma.us).

## **Web-based System (EIIS/EIFS)**

As most of you know, the current EIIS and Fiscal systems are outdated and inefficient. Originally built in the 1980s, they have limited functionality and the growth in the MA EI system over the past decade has strained both systems’ capacity.

Our new system will be built to have:

- Paperless documentation of client and service data
- Web-based access with secure/role-based access
- HIPAA compliant security
- Standardized claims handling

At our most recent Stakeholder group (Web-system In Progress-WIP) meetings, we realized that as more individuals begin to join the conversation, there is a need to review some of the general information that has been shared in past communications, so we will be including general Q & A style updates in our monthly newsletter and we will be sending additional materials out to Agency and Program Directors.

Please contact Noah Feldman with further questions at [noah.feldman@state.ma.us](mailto:noah.feldman@state.ma.us) or 617-624-5532.

## **October 2017: Questions & Answers about the New EI Web-based System (EIIS/EIFS)**

### **1. Which EI data systems will be replaced?**

DPH will be replacing the EI Information System (EIIS) and the fiscal system. EIIS will change significantly from the current application at the program level.

DPH is NOT replacing the program specific billing systems that you use currently. Program will still be responsible for having a billing system to submit claims to all payers.



### **2. Will EI programs pay for the implementation and use of the new system?**

There will be no costs associated with the use of the new EIIS software to the EI programs.

### **3. Will EI programs be required to keep a paper copy of all client and service records?**

No. The new EIIS will allow for all data, including IFSP documentation and clinical notes, to be stored electronically. The new EIIS will replace the child’s paper record.

### **4. How will EI programs and clinicians access the new EI system?**

The new EIIS will be web-based and accessible to all staff with a login and password.

### **5. What are the specifics of the hardware that EI programs will need to purchase?**

DPH will provide EI programs with the technical specifics once the program has worked with the vendor to define the hardware specifications.

The state will provide a recommended timeline for hardware purchases. It is not to anyone’s benefit to purchase hardware today that may be obsolete once the system rolls out.

### **6. Will DPH reimburse EI programs for purchasing the new hardware?**

The state has budgeted resources to support the overall implementation of the new systems. This will include financial assistance for hardware purchase. Details on the resources available to programs will be shared in more detail once they are finalized.

## 7. Can I use my EMR instead of the EIIS?

Yes! You will need to configure your EMR to reflect the same data fields collected in the EIIS and upload the data from your EMR into EIIS (there will be a guide released to help programs with this process).



### Policy & Clarifications

Policies and clarifications will be posted here if there are any.



### Data Manager Update

#### **Preliminary Compliancy Reports**

Five fiscal year 2017 preliminary reports were sent out on October 10th for a final review by EI programs of all records that have not meet compliancy. These reports include the following:

- IFSP Timeliness
- Individual Transition Plan
- Individual Transition Plan discussion date
- Timeliness of LEA Referral
- Timeliness of Transition Planning Conference



EI programs will have until Friday, November 3, 2017 to update EIIS and TSS data and transmit to DPH. The final compliancy reports will then be distributed to EI programs by the end of the calendar year.



### EITC Update



#### **Foundations of MA EI Part 1**

We have received a lot of comments about the registration for Foundation of MA EI Part 1 being full. Based on the needs of the system, we will be adding additional Part 1 trainings in March and May. Registration for those trainings will be on the EI Training Center website in the coming months.

#### **Foundations of MA EI Part 2: PIWI**

Please remember, as you send new staff to the Foundations Part 2: PIWI training, that they should have families they have been working with in their individual caseloads. This training requires participants to spend much of the day in small groups, reflecting on their work with their individual families. We would suggest that people attend this training after working in EI for 6 months.

#### **NEW Professional Development Opportunities**

The EI training center website has some new Communities Of Practice (COP) offerings and trainings. We have a new BDI-2 COP scheduled for December, a COP for cohort 3 program directors and PIWI champions, as well as registration for the upcoming supervisor trainings. If you have not looked at the new BDI-2 module yet, we would encourage you to do that as well!

[www.cvent.com/EVENTS/Calendar/Calendar.aspx?cal=989eaea2-9183-43ca-9654-50e460d66645](http://www.cvent.com/EVENTS/Calendar/Calendar.aspx?cal=989eaea2-9183-43ca-9654-50e460d66645)



### Forms & Materials

Forms & materials will be posted here if there are any.



## Specialty Services Updates



### **EI Specialty Service Providers for Autism**

A number of new programs offering ABA services for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder have been opening across the state. There has been much confusion and misinformation about these agencies, many of them center-based, and offering services to the Early Intervention population. Since the addition of Boston Behavior Learning Centers earlier this year, there have been no changes to the list of approved SSP Autism providers in EI. Recently, some of the approved providers have expanded beyond their assigned catchment areas in order to increase capacity. Any EI programs that are included in this expansion have received an email from Joan Rafferty.

It has come to the attention of the Department, that some of these new agencies have approached EIPs indicating that they are an approved DPH program, have listed "early intervention" on their website and/or have indicated to families that they are an approved EI provider. At this time, EIPs may contract only with the approved SSP Autism providers. Should any changes to the approved provider list be made or any new options for contracting become available for your EI Program, you will be informed by the Department. Please contact Joan Rafferty, [joan.rafferty@state.ma.us](mailto:joan.rafferty@state.ma.us), if you have any questions about the approved providers for your catchment.

### **EI Program SSP Contacts**

On August 3, an email was sent to all EI Program Directors requesting contact information for any staff member at your program who has been designated to be the coordinator or liaison for Autism, Vision Loss, or Hearing Loss. (In some cases, you, the program director, may be that contact person.)

I have heard from about 40 programs; I am still waiting for information from about 20 more. A database has been developed resulting in specific distribution lists for each of these specialty areas that can be targeted when information specific to that specialty area needs to be dispersed. Events for children with hearing impairment, informational webinars on Autism insurance, or vision loss related to Zika – are just some examples of the types of information that will be offered to these staff members. Program directors will continue to be notified as well. Check your inbox for the August 3 email that has the "EI Program SSP Contacts Template." Please return the completed form to Joan Rafferty [joan.rafferty@state.ma.us](mailto:joan.rafferty@state.ma.us) as soon as possible.



## Resources

### **WANTED: Program Directors for Research Study Still Needed: IDEA Transitions in MA: Part C to Part B for Children with ASD**

*The June Update featured this request. Thank you to those who responded, but we would like to hear from more of you. Please take a few minutes to consider participating in this important study. The valuable information that you can provide to the study is critical. This is a great opportunity to be the voice of Early Intervention in this work!*



The Department of Public Health is collaborating with researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children and Harvard Medical School on a research project examining the transition from early intervention (EI) to preschool for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The project seeks to interview early intervention coordinators, providers, specialty service providers and physicians who serve children with ASD in the EI and preschool special education systems, as well as in the health care system. We are specifically interested in how the current service systems support or create challenges in providers' capacity to serve children with ASD; and, what the barriers and facilitators of effective service coordination and relationship building during this transition period are. We hope that the information we collect will improve knowledge of how to best provide support for families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who must make the transition from early intervention services to preschool-based services. We will be recruiting providers of children with ASD between the ages of 3-5 years old. If you're interested in participating in a brief 30-60 minute interview, please contact the Project Director, Morgan Crossman by email ([mcrossman@mg.harvard.edu](mailto:mcrossman@mg.harvard.edu)).

## Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry: Childcare Facilities

CDC's sister agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), is working to ensure that child care facilities are not located on or near environmentally hazardous sites. As part of this initiative, ATSDR has developed a suite of tools and resources to help you protect young children where they learn and play, and has integrated key guidance into its cooperative agreement program with states:

- The new [Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education Guidance Manual](#) describes the health implications of the sites chosen for child care and early learning facilities, explains the elements of ensuring sites are safe, and offers tips and tools for health departments interested in building a child care safe siting program. The manual and related fact sheets and checklists are now available on ATSDR's [website](#).
- ATSDR has incorporated Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education as a key activity in its [cooperative agreement program](#), which supports 25 state health departments. The funded states will implement programs to
  - Assess the current status of early care and education and environmental exposures in their state
  - Develop partnerships with key stakeholders
  - Implement policies and practices to ensure safe siting
  - Evaluate their chosen approaches

Please explore these resources and share them as appropriate with your staff.

## Institute for Health & Recovery (IHR)—Coping Strategy Video

IHR would like to share a new resource for helping young children who have experienced trauma. The NPR link below will connect you to a short article and a delightful video. The coping strategy in the video is useful for *all* children, not just those who've experienced trauma. View the article and video [here](#).

As always, please contact [karenwelling@healthrecovery.org](mailto:karenwelling@healthrecovery.org) or [karengould@healthrecovery.org](mailto:karengould@healthrecovery.org) for any training and technical assistance needs, and to get your hand-delivered (brief training included) Trauma-Informed Tip sheets.



## Events

### Free Event for Children with Hearing Loss

The MA Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program is hosting a free family social at WiggleKids in Swansea (262 Swansea Mall Drive). This event will be held on November 4<sup>th</sup> from 2-4PM. Refreshments will be served. This event is free, but please RSVP to [sarah.stone@state.ma.us](mailto:sarah.stone@state.ma.us) as space is limited. Please also let us know if any accommodations, including ASL interpretation, are requested.

For more information about WiggleKids you can check out their website [www.wigglekids.org/](http://www.wigglekids.org/)

Please share with your families.

Massachusetts Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program presents an event for families who have a child who is deaf or hard of hearing

**Family Social** **FREE EVENT!**  
Registration is required

**WiggleKids**  
All Ages - All Abilities

262 Swansea Mall Drive, Swansea, MA 02777

**Saturday, November 4th**  
**2PM-4PM**

Please join us for this FREE fun family event! All ages are welcome. Refreshments will be provided.

Space is limited, so please RSVP to Sarah Stone at 617-624-5912 or [sarah.stone@state.ma.us](mailto:sarah.stone@state.ma.us)

If you are Deaf or hard of hearing, or are a person with a disability who requires accommodation, please contact Sarah Stone at (617) 624-5912 or [Sarah.Stone@state.ma.us](mailto:Sarah.Stone@state.ma.us)

## Special Events at The Discovery Museum in Acton, MA

Throughout the year, The Discovery Museum in Acton, MA hosts special events for individuals with Autism, Vision Impairment and Hearing Impairment. The Accessibility And Inclusion event series – Especially for Me offers dedicated hours and free museum admission for families facing developmental challenges. During these events, they offer accommodations that increase access to museum exhibits and provide an opportunity for families to network with one another in an understanding environment.

The event titles indicate the types of accommodations provided, but any family that would benefit from the accommodations is welcome.

In 2017 they will offer 25 *Especially for Me* events, including:

- Autism-friendly evenings
- Sensory-friendly afternoons
- Mornings for families of deaf, hard of hearing, and KODA infants and toddlers
- Evenings for families of deaf, hard of hearing, and KODA children
- Visually impaired family evenings

*All are events free, but require pre-registration online through the links on the website, so that they can plan appropriately. Dinner, including gluten-free options, is available at all evening events.*

**Please note: from June 17, 2017 to mid-December 2017, our Science Discovery Museum building will be closed for expansion and renovation and will not be available for use during Especially for Me programs. The Children's Discovery Museum and Discovery Woods will be open. When the building re-opens as our unified museum building, it will be fully ADA compliant and all exhibits will be accessible!**

For more information, visit The Discovery Museum's website at [www.discoverymuseums.org/visit/accessibility-inclusion-especially-me](http://www.discoverymuseums.org/visit/accessibility-inclusion-especially-me).

## Newborn Behavioral Observations System Certification Program

**The Newborn Behavioral Observations system (NBO)** is an *infant-focused, family-centered relationship-based tool*, designed to sensitize parents to their baby's competencies and individuality, in order to foster positive parent-infant interactions from the very beginning. The NBO is flexible and can easily be integrated into hospital, clinical or home visits.

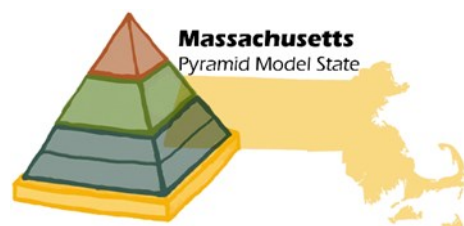
Continuing Education Units (3 credits) are now being offered for the NBO certification program. These will be awarded by the University of Massachusetts at Amherst Continuing and Professional Education on completion of the program. The cost for all three credits is \$16. For more details, please see [flyer](#).

## Conversations Between Practitioners and Researchers: Working with Families and Young Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

A cross-panel discussion supporting collaboration between researchers and clinicians on the value of a systematic research approach for clinical intervention. For more details, please see [flyer](#).

## Pyramid Model Learning Communities

The fall schedule for the regional Pyramid Model Learning Communities has been posted. Don't miss out on this FREE opportunity to connect with colleagues in your region! For more details, please see [flyer](#).



**Comments, contributions or feedback, please contact:**

**Patti Fougere**

**[Patti.fougere@state.ma.us](mailto:Patti.fougere@state.ma.us)**

**617-624-5975**