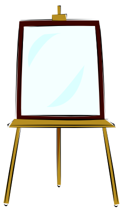
The Update:

News and Information for MA Early Intervention Providers

June 2011

Welcome to the June Edition of "The Update." This is a periodic newsletter focusing specifically on issues and information in MA Early Intervention. This issue will highlight upcoming Battelle Developmental Inventory—2 (BDI-2) Update; Questions and Clarifications—BDI-2; Focused Monitoring Update; FY10 Local Determinations; Transition Survey; FY11—Annual Report/Self Assessment; and, EI Annual Fee Update

Battelle Developmental Inventory—2 (BDI-2) Update



The implementation timeline of ***January 1, 2012*** for the determination of eligibility for all children referred to the Massachusetts Early Intervention System using the ***Battelle Developmental Inventory – 2* (*BDI-2)*** is fast approaching. The Department and the Early Intervention Training Center continue to provide training and support to local programs regarding this transition.

The EITC is providing another *Training of Trainers* opportunity for programs that are currently using the BDI-2, or are moving forward with the implementation and have been administering the tool for at least three months. Participants for these trainings should be staff members who have experience administering the BDI-2 at their programs and are responsible for training other programs staff on the tool. Each program will receive a training packet of materials to support implementation of the BDI-2. Two *Training of Trainers*' opportunities and Battelle Overview Trainings will be offered this summer in July and August. The dates and locations of these trainings will be available on the EITC website soon. In addition, the EITC will continue to support programs with mentorships on the Battelle.

Questions & Clarifications—BDI-2

Clarification regarding the BDI-2 "Date of Testing" and EIIS "Date Tool First Used"

This is DPH clarification for providers regarding the BDI-2 "Date of Testing" on the worksheet and the "Date Tool First Used" (defined as the date that the tool was first used for the current evaluation) question on the EIIS Evaluation form when the Battelle is used with a family and their child over a period of time.

Often a clinician will begin the assessment process with the parent at the initial visit by asking the interview questions of the Adaptive and/or Personal-Social sections of the BDI-2. The remainder of the testing is then scheduled at a later date. The <u>Battelle Developmental Inventory, 2nd edition, Examiner's Manual</u> states, and conversations with Riverside Publishing reiterate, that "testing may occur over several days if necessary; however, it should always be completed within a 2-week period" (page 21). If this does happen, the first date of the administration of the test is considered the BDI-2 "Date of Testing," whether the child's age changes or not. In fact, Riverside's electronic data manager reverts back to the first date that the tool is administered for its "Date of Testing." In the case above, this date is the date that the interview questions, under the Adaptive and/or Personal-Social sections of the BDI-2 began.

If a provider administers any section of the BDI-2, on one day and the remainder of the test cannot occur within a 2-week timeframe then the test must be re-administered. You can ask the parent if the interview questions from the Adaptive and/or Personal-Social domains differ and then update accordingly. Testing with the child will need to be repeated. The "Date of Testing" and the EIIS "Date Tool First Used" now become the current date.

Transfers and Re-referrals

For children who had a previous evaluation using the Michigan prior to January 2012, and the child was subsequently discharged (either because the child was no longer eligible, moved away or declined services) the program is not required to use the Michigan if the family returned for an evaluation at a later date. The Battelle may be used to determine the new eligibility.

If a child is transferred to a program from another EIP where the Michigan was administered, the receiving program must use the same tool, in this case the Michigan, to determine eligibility for consistency in reporting child outcomes.

FY10 Local Determinations

Each state must have in place a State Performance Plan that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements of Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and describes improvement activities. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) of the U.S. Department of Education requires that the Massachusetts DPH use the most recent Annual Performance Report (APR) data, from four compliance indicators in the State Performance Plan (Timely Services, Initial IFSP meetings within 45 days, Transition, and Timely Correction of Non-Compliance), to make "Determinations" annually on the performance of local Early Intervention Programs.

States must use the same four categories as OSEP in making Determinations of the status of local programs. These categories are:

- ► Meets Requirements
- ► Needs Assistance
- ► Needs Intervention
- ► Needs Substantial Intervention

The following is a summary of the Local Program Determinations; 48 programs "Meet the Requirements" of IDEA; 6 programs "Need Assistance;" 3 programs "Need Intervention" and no programs were found to need "Substantial Intervention." Technical assistance will be provided by the DPH Regional Specialist for those programs in the "Needs Assistance" category to address areas of concern. For those programs in the "Needs Assistance" and "Needs Intervention" category, your Regional Specialist may request a corrective action plan to correct the identified area(s). If a corrective plan is already in place, the DPH will continue data verification to ensure compliance within a 12 month timeframe.

There were 48 programs that demonstrated 100% in all four Compliance Indicators after the follow-up process. In addition, there were 32 programs who demonstrated 100% in all four Compliance Indicators for two years in a row; and an additional eight programs that did the same for three years in a row. The Department of Public Health would like to acknowledge and commend the following programs:

Programs that demonstrated 100% in all four Compliance Indicators for three years in a row:

Children's Community Early Intervention Program
Criterion – Wachusett Early Intervention Program
May Center for Early Intervention
Minute Man Arc for Human Services, Inc.
North Berkshire Early Intervention Program
Project BEAM Early Intervention Program
Taunton Area Early Intervention Program
Thom Neponset Valley Early Intervention Program

Programs that demonstrated 100% in all four FY 2010 Compliance Indicators and performed at or better than the state baseline percentage in eight additional measures:

Criterion – Wachusett Early Intervention Program
Greater Fall River Early Intervention Program
KDC Early Intervention Program/Plymouth
South Bay Early Intervention Program - Fall River
Taunton Area Early Intervention Program

Transition Survey

FY11 Transition Survey System - Final Submission

The FY 2011 deadline for submission to your Regional Specialist is **Friday, July 29, 2011**. Prior to your final submission, review all reports within the application to make sure that questions have been completed and all forms have been entered. A report of EIIS children discharged on or after 7/1/2010 and referred to an LEA has been emailed to program directors via SFED. Please use this report to ensure that all appropriate discharged children have been entered into your Transition Survey System.

FY12 Transition Survey System

A FY 2012 version of the Transition Survey System will be sent out to EI program directors via SFED at the end of June. This application will be used to capture transition questions for LEA-referred children who have been discharged between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. The Department will be working on incorporating the transition questions and reports into EIIS for next year.

Focused Monitoring Update

The DPH held a Focused Monitoring (FM) Feedback Session at the May 12, 2011 ICC Meeting. The session offered an opportunity for stakeholders and ICC members to hear about the FY11 FM activities and provide input to the Department on the process for FY12.

In FY11, the FM process shifted from identifying priority areas that were tied to compliance and used the process and components of FM, to gather information about program practice that will help guide the DPH in providing guidance and in making policy decisions. Eight programs were visited in FY11, and the FM team concentrated efforts on information gathering, looking at day-to-day practice, and identifying best practices.

The Priority Area and Data Sources focused on Data/EIIS Issues; Clinical Judgment; Transition practices and Changes/Shifts in the number of children served and units of service. Several Best Practices were highlighted in previous editions of The Update. Proposed changes in the FM process for FY 12 are as follows:

- Incorporate additional DPH staff with expertise in priority area of the visit as needed.
- Incorporate the program director in the pre-audit call and desk audit process
- Incorporate vendor agency and program staff into the visit as needed
- Increase program staff participation
- Allow more time to debrief

Priority areas for the upcoming year may include Family Outcomes, Local Determinations, Change/Shift in service. A recommendation to use the FM process to support new program directors was also discussed. The Department will continue to keep the field informed of the onsite selection process and programs will be notified well in advance of any onsite to allow ample time to prepare for the visit.

FY11—Annual Report / Self Assessment

FY 11 – Annual Report / Self Assessment The Annual Report/Self Assessment is used for federal reporting requirements of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report and is used in identifying areas of noncompliance and in making Local Determinations.

The FY11 Annual Report/Self Assessment will be sent to EI programs by the end of June or early July. The Annual Report/Self Assessment System is an Access database that will be used by EI programs for the collection of the following information:

- Program contact information
- Process/data verification
- Health & Safety affirmation
- Client timeliness of services reporting
- File Review

The deadline for submission of the FY11 Annul Report will be **September 16, 2011**. Further details and instructions will be sent to program directors later this month or early next month.

EI Annual Fee Update

In the past, the DPH determined the amount each vendor was projected to yield from the fee system for a given year, and the funds were deducted from invoices by the DPH, to recoup the proceeds during the fiscal year based on the assessment amount.

The DPH not did project the expected yield from each provider and adjust invoices for FY11. Instead, at the close of FY 2011, providers will notify the DPH of the total amount of money they collected. This information will be gathered using a survey similar to the one used in previous fiscal years. The DPH will compare the survey results to the information contained in EIIS to determine if the amount reported by each program is reflective of the amount that should have been collected. The DPH will conduct a review of the income verification and fee collection activities in cases where there is a discrepancy between the information submitted by providers and EIIS. It should be noted that, <u>for children whose family size and/or gross income are incomplete in EIIS, the DPH will assign the highest fee amount ($1,500 annually) for purposes of determining the amount that should have been collected.</u> Therefore, it is critical that this information is correctly and completely reported in EIIS for clients who need to provide the data.

EI Annual Fee FAQ

The Department has responded to the following questions regarding the Annual Fee.

Can we deduct alimony/child support from a family gross annual income, and then determine the annual fee?

No, a program should determine the fee based on the family's gross income without deducting alimony and child support.

Determining Annual Family Income and Attestation Requirements

EI programs must verify a family's income by reviewing and completing the Income Attestation Form using <u>one</u> of the following:

- Most recent tax return <u>or</u>
- Most recent W2(s) and/or 1099(s), <u>or</u>
- Last two (2) consecutive pay stubs/advices
- If none of the above is available, a written statement of salary or wages, documenting the amount and periodicity of payment (e.g. weekly, monthly) from the employer will be permissible. The statement must include company/employer name, address, phone number and supervisor/human resource staff signature.

All income must be verified annually, no later than the time of IFSP signature or within 30 days of when a family requests a redetermination of their fee assessment.

A copy of the Income Attestation Form must be maintained in the child's EI record

If a family is receiving service coordination only and wants telephone contact not home visits, how is the service being provided, documented on the EIIS IFSP form?

The EIIS IFSP form only collects information on home visits, center-individual, group and specialty services. There is no place in EIIS to document the fact that a family is not receiving face-to-face visits. So if a family is only receiving service coordination that should be documented in the child's file and does not need to be entered anywhere in EIIS

If a family wants service coordination to be done as a monthly home visit, is it documented on the EIIS IFSP form as home visit 1x/month?

If a family receives ***face-to-face*** *service coordination on a monthly basis (remember service coordination does not need to be provided in a face-to-face meeting) it should be documented on the EIIS IFSP as a home visit/1x/month.*

If any member of the family is a Mass Health recipient, does the family have to pay a fee?

No, the family is exempt from the fee if a child or family member is a MassHealth recipient.

*** Reminder related to completion of the Family Fee Exemption Request Forms.**
A family must submit documentation in the form of receipts with the Family Fee Exemption Request Form. The Department can not approve an exemption without supporting documentation. Thank you.

Comments and questions to:
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