

The UPDATE

News and Information for Massachusetts EI Providers November 2018



Important Dates...Mark your Calendar!

November 27, 2018: Monthly EI Webinar; 10a—11a: Update on EI Web-based System and American Sign Language (ASL) Program Presentation

Save the Date: December 5, 2018: Web-based System Stakeholder Meeting

Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Conference Center, Marlborough, MA

December 12, 2018: Program Director Session: Empowering Programs...Stories from the Field: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Conference Center, Marlborough, MA



DPH Updates

Empowering Programs...Stories from the Field

We are very excited to inform you that registration is now open for the upcoming Program Director Session: **Empowering Programs...Stories from the Field** scheduled on December 12, 2018.

This year's session is a one day professional development opportunity for programs and DPH. Agencies, programs, providers, and parents will be coming together to learn how programs are implementing DPH priorities at their program or in their individual practice. Programs will have the opportunity to hear personal experiences, successes and gain ideas in supporting BDI-2 fidelity, PIWI, and the IFSP process. In addition, programs will leave the day with a list of state and national resources they can use at their program. The day will end with a brief presentation of critical questions that DPH has developed based on the Massachusetts Early Intervention Mission Statement and Key Principles.

The session will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza in Marlboro from 9am – 3:30pm. Coffee and tea will be available in the morning and lunch will be on your own. Programs are encouraged to invite supervisors and team leaders. Registration will be capped at 120. Please register on the EITC website at www.eitrainingcenter.org.

EI Web—based System

Meeting with EI agencies has been very informative and we appreciate everyone taking the time for these discussions. In these meetings we shared that we will be beginning stakeholder meetings on December 5th. These stakeholder meetings will be facilitated by DPH and will cover specific topics that we need information and input on from providers. It will assist in decision making necessary for the development of the Web-based system. An agenda with topics and times will be sent out prior to the meeting so that agencies/programs can determine who should participate.

Please contact Noah Feldman (noah.feldman@state.ma.us) with any questions.

Family Engagement: A Note from Roxanne

As the Statewide Family Engagement and Collaboration Coordinator for the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP), I am excited to have the opportunity to "engage" with you and your program leadership, in identifying ways you can engage with the families you serve.

I am available to meet with you, your Assistant Program Directors, Supervisors and/or Team Leaders to brainstorm strategies that will support you in achieving your Family Engagement goals.

I hope that you will invite me to your programs so that we can get to know each other and work together on this important goal. Please contact me at roxanne.hoke-chandler@state.ma.us to discuss a convenient time to meet.

Mediation & Due Process Hearing Forms

The DPH has developed forms for parents who wish to file a formal complaint, request mediation or a due process hearing. These forms were the recommendation of a Stakeholders Group facilitated by DPH to complete a self-assessment of the family rights notice and policies related to dispute resolution options.

The self-assessment was an Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) directed activity. Stakeholders included an ICC parent, EI Program Director, staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Problem Resolution System), Bureau of Special Education Appeals and the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

The charge from OSEP was to self-assess the EIOS policies and procedures and information in the family rights notice to ensure alignment with the requirements of Part C. The outcome of the review was that the EIOS policies and procedures substantively met the corresponding regulations.

The feedback as to whether content in the family rights notice provided sufficient information as outlined in the federal regulations was mixed. There were positive comments about the family-friendly language; however, there was also general consensus that the content about formal administrative complaints, mediation, and due process hearings was limited and did not afford parents sufficient information to determine which option best suited their needs.

The Stakeholders discussed the benefits and the disadvantages of having forms accessible online. The recommendation to have online forms provides both an additional means of informing families of their options for dispute resolution and a framework for parents to include necessary information.

Each form will have a companion document written in an FAQ format. The companion document describes the process, timelines, scope and limitation of the activities. Attempts to resolve the disagreement at a local level are also encouraged.

The forms and FAQs will be translated into multiple languages and available on the DPH and EIPLP websites. Timelines for completion of translation and posting have not been finalized, but DPH wanted to make providers aware of their pending availability. We will keep you posted and will review the materials on a DPH monthly webinar prior to roll out.

Electronic Signatures

In the July 2018 edition of The Update, guidance was provided regarding the requirements for documentation, specifically contact notes. This guidance ended with:

"As more programs begin using electronic health records, a process to obtain a staff signature on every contact note must be identified."

Several programs and agencies working in Early Intervention have moved to utilizing an Electronic Health Record (EHR), and the issue has arisen regarding the acceptance of an electronic signature versus a hand-written signature on documents such as progress notes.

After consulting with the DPH legal team, it has been confirmed that electronic signatures are acceptable on documents where a hand-written signature has to this point been the common practice.

Any programs wishing to sign documents using an electronic signature will be required to sign an attestation verifying that a process is in place to authenticate staff signatures. The agency must maintain an internal verification process on file and make this available on request.

For Specialty Providers using an EHR, EIPs should request documentation of their internal process to authenticate staff signatures and request an attestation that a verification process is in place. Sample language for the attestation is attached for your information. Please contact Joan Rafferty (joan.rafferty@state.ma.us) with any questions.

Sample Language for Electronic Signature Attestation

By signing this attestation, I agree that:

- _____ (agency) is currently using an electronic signature to sign progress notes and other documentation.
- a process to authenticate staff signatures and verify security is on file and available upon request.

Agency Representative: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



Specialty Services



From the Roots Up – A Family’s Journey Through Services for Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program has developed a wonderful tool for families and practitioners alike! Nicknamed, *The Tree*, this document highlights the various services a family may utilize from early intervention right through to transition to school and beyond. This two sided document is an easy read with programs categorized on each "leaf" and additional information on the reverse side. If downloaded, it is meant to be printed on legal sized paper.

It is hoped that families and professionals alike find this to be a useful tool to engage in conversations with families of children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Next steps include formatting "The Tree" for the web and having it translated into additional languages. Please share with staff and families, graphic is attached!

SAVE the Date: Specialty Summits—June 20, 2019

Half day summits will provide an opportunity for EI staff to meet with Specialty Providers and discuss current research, best practice and collaboration. More information to come this Spring ([flyer attached](#))!

June 20, 2019 from 12:30pm to 3:30pm



Forms & Materials

DPH Dropbox www.dropbox.com/sh/cpewylr7bcoefyv/AAA89_dDxWMwa0mb7Jj7gZ3fa?dl=0

MA Clearing House www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse



Resources

Let’s Participate: AT for EI

Let’s Participate has revised and updated their project website (www.letsparticipate.org) and executive summary. To view the executive summary, click [here](#).



Since the project's end, they've reworked the website so that it serves two purposes: 1) to provide general information about AT and how to use it with young children with disabilities; and 2) to guide those who might be interested in replicating the Let's Participate model. The site now contains numerous ready-to-be-used Power-Points and trainings, one-pagers on finding the right AT, background information on our project and model, our project findings, guidance on how/why to set up a lending library, how to use AT to increase participation, and lots of resources, activities and examples. Please know that although their project is officially over, they have funded the website to stand for two years with the hopes that it will be a resource to providers across the state.

DEC Learning Decks/Professional Development Webinars (www.dec-sped.org/learning-decks)

Writing Functional Outcomes as an IFSP Team

Increase knowledge and skill of writing functional outcomes based on family priorities and learn about resources available to support the team in writing high-quality outcomes.

Thursday, November 29, 2018 from 1pm—2pm

DPH Update, November 2018

Policy & Clarifications

Transportation for Early Intervention (EI)

PT-1 Facts for Providers, Families and DPH

1. The EI Provider should submit a Transportation Request (TR) for all children attending their site that need transportation services. If a child is MassHealth eligible, a PT-1 should be submitted as well.
2. The EI Provider is responsible for the submission of the PT-1. This is completed electronically via the MassHealth Customer Web Portal at: <https://masshealth.ehs.state.ma.us/cwp/login.aspx>
3. When completing the PT-1 form or making any changes you must always select the PT-1 Type "**Early Intervention**" (never any other options, this includes never selecting change of address).
4. Prior to submitting the PT-1, providers must first confirm the member's residential address as well as an alternative pickup/drop off address if applicable. If the residential address is not the address currently on file with MassHealth, (it will auto-populate on the on-line PT-1 application) the member or guardian must update the address by contacting MassHealth and Social Security (if applicable). If the member has MassHealth through Social Security they will have to change their address with Social Security. EI Providers are not able to make this change. As a temporary work around, providers can put the current residential address in the "alternate address" area on the PT-1 form.
5. Address Changes — All MassHealth members utilizing transportation through the PT-1 will require new PT-1 forms for adjudication whenever they report a new residential address to MassHealth. To avoid any interruption in services, treating providers must submit new PT-1 requests within 30 days of the member's address change.
6. It can take up to 4 business days for the PT-1 to be processed. MassHealth customer service sends notification to the Broker, the participant and the EI Provider. The EI Provider can then coordinate with Broker.
7. Providers can check the status of the PT-1 application electronically at the Portal by clicking on "Search PT-1 request" under PT1 Request Management and then providing the information requested.
8. Once transportation is approved with a TR or PT-1, the Broker and the EI Provider must communicate with each other to initiate a start date, confirm the attendance schedule, pick up and drop off times, etc. The Broker and Program should not delay transportation due to a lack of routes or vendors. If you experience any delays in getting transportation started please contact the email or phone number below so that the issue can be addressed.
9. When transportation services need to be placed "on hold" for reasons such as hospitalization, vacations, etc., the EI Provider must notify the Broker immediately.
10. When a child is discharged from the program, the EI Provider must notify Broker of discharge immediately, there is no way to discontinue a PT-1 electronically.
11. If the EI Program is moving to a new location please submit new PT-1 forms for all children reflecting the new address. Please follow normal DPH procedures regarding new site approvals.
12. Complaints about transportation can be made by Participant, EI Provider or DPH directly to HST in order to ensure follow up. Complaints should be emailed to HSTComplaintIncident@massmail.state.ma.us.
13. EI providers with any issues or questions can also contact Vera Kirrane. She can be reached at 617-847-6556 or vera.kirrane@massmail.state.ma.us.
14. MassHealth Customer Service Center: 1-800-841-2900.

Institute for Health & Recovery (IHR)—National Child Traumatic Stress Network

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (www.nctsn.org) has provided resources in case of disaster.

The Wallet Cards: Family members will have family, medical, and emergency information at their fingertips. In addition to family info, the card gives numbers and websites for a variety of emergency services. Have family members carry a card at all times so they are prepared in case an event occurs when family members are not together.

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/family-preparedness-wallet-card>

The Fact Sheet: Helps you learn the steps to take BEFORE an emergency event. <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/family-preparedness-thinking-ahead>

Both resources are available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Armenian, and Russian.

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



Comments, contributions or feedback, please contact:

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