



LAURA KELLY, Governor • KATHY KECK, Chairperson • STEVE GIEBER, Executive Director

“To empower individuals with I/DD and their families to lead systems change, build capacity, and advocate for inclusive, integrated, accessible communities where everyone belongs and thrives.”

April 20, 2022

Good morning, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today on behalf of the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities. I am Liz Long, Policy Analyst for (KCDD).

There continues to be an increased need for quality services for people with disabilities in Kansas. The combined challenges of the pandemic and staffing shortages have impacted the quality of care and safety of persons with IDD. At the same time the monitoring of these services has been reduced by the number of KDADS staff available.

I am here today to ask for consideration of creating a state funded training program for the direct support professionals (DSP) working with persons with disabilities. Currently training cost paid out of the Medicaid rates. With the 48% staffing turnover for many providers the training cost is an ever-expanding part of their administrative costs.

This could alleviate some provider burden, standardize a minimum level of training for staff and improve the quality of services provided especially if Self Advocates and families who self-direct drive the course content development.

While Certified Nursing Aides focus on medical care, this training could emphasis persons rights, person centered supports, abuse neglect and exploitation reporting, crises response, behavioral health supports, emergency preparedness and basic first aid/CPR.

If this training was provided free it would be a savings to providers, who would still pay for the DSPs time of attending. It would also give persons hiring direct care staff a minimum standard that if they hired someone who's completed this training, they know they have a competency in several areas as well as meeting state licensing standards. It would allow a professionalism similar to the Certified Nursing Aides.

This would allow providers to use the training funds to further address low wages for Direct Support Professionals (DSP) who must work 2-3 jobs to support their families. The low wages also could help reduce to constant churn in DSPs. Increasing the level of training for all DSP would be like the rising tide raises all boats for our provider network.



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We ask at this time for your support to:

Create a training program for Direct Support Professionals, funded by the state to support a high-quality staffing pool, which will increase quality of life and reduce abuse neglect and exploitation of persons with disabilities.

Thank you. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

DD Act Values: Independence, Productivity, Integration, Capacity Building, Self-Determination & Inclusion in Community, Free from Abuse, Neglect & Exploration

KCDD Values: Person-Centered, Impactful Outcomes, Respectful, Collaborative, Innovative, Equitable Opportunity