

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTS DIVISION NEWSLETTER

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COVID-19 STATUS REPORT – NEW MEXICO

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Cases of COVID-19 have increased dramatically across the country and throughout New Mexico. In the United States, there are over 14 million cases and over a quarter million deaths. In New Mexico as of November 30th, the number of cases surpassed 99,000 and there have been over 1,500 deaths.

Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham issued the most recent Public Health Order (PHO) on December 2nd which is effective through December 30th. This Order establishes the tiered “Red to Green” system for N.M. counties. “The county-by-county framework enables counties, and the businesses and nonprofits within their borders, to operate with fewer restrictions when they slow the spread of the virus and drive down test positivity rates,” said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. “It’s been a difficult year and an especially difficult past month. We must remain as vigilant as ever to contain and beat the virus; we also must look for ways to lessen the burden on our communities wherever possible, while never swerving from our top priority – protecting New Mexicans and saving lives.... Nothing about this virus has changed,” said Gov. Lujan Grisham. “And what we can all do to fight it – and to help members of our local communities avoid infection and get back to more safe day-to-day activities – hasn’t changed either. Avoid gatherings. Wear a facemask. Avoid spending time with non-household members. Stay at home whenever – whenever – you can. These are best and indeed our only tools as we seek to prevent and minimize the illness and suffering and death so many of our neighbors in this state continue to grapple with.”

(See <https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>)

COVID-19 CASES AND DEATHS
NEW MEXICO HCBS POPULATION
THROUGH NOVEMBER 30, 2020



COVID-19 CASES AND DEATHS
NEW MEXICO HCBS I/DD POPULATION

CONFIRMED COVID-19 POSITIVE	266
CONFIRMED COVID-19 DEATHS	15

COVID-19 CASES BY REGION

Metro	96
Northeast	22
Northwest	39
Southeast	54
Southwest	55
Total	266

COVID-19 STATUS REPORT – NEW MEXICO

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The impact of COVID-19 on New Mexico's Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) population reflects what is happening across the country and across the state. As of November 30th, there have been 266 cases of COVID-19 in the I/DD population and 15 deaths. Almost 80% of these cases are in the DD Waiver population. Most concerning is that almost 80% of these cases were in the two months of October and November. See the attached charts.

The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) is working with providers throughout the state and across the Department of Health to reduce risks of contracting COVID-19 and to support those who have contracted COVID-19 to obtain appropriate care and supports. Unfortunately, the effects of COVID-19 are significantly impacting our system of care and support. COVID-19 is a respiratory disease meaning that it is airborne and can spread rapidly including from those who are asymptomatic (e.g., do not demonstrate symptoms). And, as suspected, research is showing that it can be particularly devastating to those with I/DD.

In line with the Governor's instructions, DDSD is asking that all direct service providers, vendors, therapists, behavior support consultants, case managers, consultants, community support coordinators, families, guardians, and individuals receiving services **heed the Governor's instructions to stay home and only access outings that are absolutely necessary for your health, safety, and welfare. This includes limiting travel, limiting face-to-face visits, and limiting person-to-person contact to only what is necessary for your health, safety, and welfare.** It is important that we all work together to mitigate the spread of the virus, to protect each other, and to protect ourselves.

DDSD's COVID-19 guidance can be found at <https://nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>. Additional resources can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

COVID-19 CASES BY TYPE OF WAIVER

DD Waiver	210
Mi Via Waiver	47
Medically Fragile	9
Supports Waiver	0
State General Fund	0
Total	266

DD WAIVER SERVICE

Community Integrated Employment	4
Customized In-Home Supports	16
Family Living	50
Intensive Medical Living	1
Respite	1
Supported Living	126
Case Management Only	11
No Services (new allocation)	1
Grand Total	210

MI VIA RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR EMERGENT HEALTH ISSUES

Submitted by:
Jen Rodriguez, Community Programs Bureau Chief

Mi Via participants and consultants should contact the DDSD Regional Office when encountering emergent issues. Mi Via participants and consultants can benefit from advocacy by a DDSD Regional Nurse or other DOH clinical resources, including but not limited to, the DOH Medical Director and TEASC. DDSD encourages you to reach out to the DDSD Regional Office for resources and advocacy during any health crisis situation. Use your resources!



COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND DIRECTIVES

Submitted by:
Scott Doan, Deputy Director (Acting Director) and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

Guidance and directives issued by DDSD are required to be followed by agencies and individuals served by the home and community-based (HCBS) Medicaid waivers. The following are several important directives that must continue to be followed and are published again here for your information.

New Mexico's Public Health Order

All individuals who receive services administered through DDSD must follow the Public Health Order that states "all New Mexicans should be staying in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services. When New Mexicans are not in their homes, they must strictly adhere to social distancing protocols and wear face coverings to minimize risks. These sacrifices are the best contribution that each of us can individually make to protect the health and wellbeing of our fellow citizens and the State as a whole. In accordance with these purposes, this Order and its exceptions should be narrowly construed to encourage New Mexicans to stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities."

As stated in DDSD COVID-19 Response Memo #27 issued on July 31, 2020, to be clear, it is the position of DDSD that individuals receiving services administered by DDSD (DD Waiver, Mi Vi Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, and State General Fund services) should stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services as per the Public Health Order. Should individuals and/or their guardians choose to leave their home and access the most essential activities and services, they assume the same risk of contracting COVID-19 as all others in New Mexico assume that risk (please see the most recent Public Health Order under Additional Information section).

Outdoor Family and Guardian Visitation

Beginning August 1, 2020 outdoor visitation may begin for Family Members and Guardians for individuals in Supported Living and Intensive Medical Living Services. Indoor visitation is not permitted at this time.

Therapy (OT, PT, SLP) and Behavior Support Consultant (BSC) Requirements for conducting essential health care face to face clinical session using COVID-19 Safe Practices Beginning August 1, 2020 Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Behavior Support Consultants may resume face to face therapy (clinical sessions) in the home. Therapists and Behavior Support Consultants must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices (under Additional Information section). Clinical sessions must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance with the Provider.

Provider Agency Nurse Visits

Beginning August 1, 2020 Provider Agency Nurses may resume face to face visits in accordance with DD Waiver Standards. It is required that the notes resulting from these visits must be entered in Therap in accordance with March 20, 2020 Guidance Document (please see the attached document). Provider Agency Nurses must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices.

Planning Meeting Requirements

It is the expectation that DD Waiver Interdisciplinary teams (IDTs) and Medically Fragile Waiver teams meet to discuss and plan for COVID-related needs and changes to service delivery. The same expectation applies for Supports Waiver and Mi Via Waiver participants and their identified supports. Consultants and Community Supports Coordinators, along with any other support the participant chooses, should discuss and make changes and or requests, as appropriate.

For additional information, see the following sites:

- State of New Mexico COVID site
<https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- COVID Safe Practices
<https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-safe-practices/>
- Public Health Orders and Executive Orders
<https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>
- DDSD's COVID site
<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>
- CDC COVID site
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WHEN WEARING A FACE MASK

Masks make communication difficult for the Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing



Speak slowly, clearly and at a normal volume



Make sure hearing aid users have them on



Rephrase remarks when not understood



Keep background noise in the room to a minimum



Take turns when speaking



Face each other (at least 6ft apart)

COVID RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Submitted by:
Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The following web resources have information about COVID-19 for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

Advocacy and National Organizations

- Center for Public Representation <https://www.centerforpublicrep.org/covid-19/>
- Institute for Community Inclusion <https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/>
- NCAPPS (National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems) <https://ncapps.acl.gov/home.html>
- SARTAC (Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center) <https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/>
- TASH <https://tash.org/tash-covid-19-response-and-resources/>
- The ARC <https://thearc.org/covid/>
- UNM Project ECHO COVID 19 Response <https://echo.unm.edu/covid-19>

Federal Government

- CDC COVID site <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

- CDC site about People with Developmental and Behavioral Disorders <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-developmental-behavioral-disabilities.html>
- CDC COVID Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/shared-congregate-house/guidance-shared-congregate-housing.html>
- U.S. Office for Civil Rights <https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/index.html>

State of New Mexico Government

- DDSD's COVID site <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>
- New Mexico COVID site <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- COVID Safe Practices <https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-safe-practices/>
- NM COVID County-Specific Data <https://cvprovider.nmhealth.org/public-dashboard.html>
- Public Health Orders and Executive Orders <https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>
- Early Childhood Education and Care Department <https://www.nmeced.org/>

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON QUALITY (ACQ) UPDATE

Submitted by:
Wendy Corry of Corry Consulting

The Advisory Council on Quality Supports for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (ACQ) is very pleased to announce the formation of a new ACQ Executive Committee. Co-chairs Daniel Ekman and Lisa Blue will be joined by Tracy Perry, Director of Direct Therapy Services in Las Cruces and Virginia Lynch, service coordinator from Zia Therapy Center in Alamogordo. We would also like to express our great appreciation to the outgoing Executive Committee, co-chairs Lecie McNees and Patrick Anaya, and Member-At-Large Kathleen Holmes Cates for their tremendous hard work and dedication to the work of the ACQ. The ACQ also welcomes new member Jenni Bartz, a representative of the Medically Fragile Family Advisory Board. In addition, seven people representing self-advocates, providers and advocacy organizations have been recommended by the ACQ and have been forwarded to the Governor's Office

for approval. Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to be part of this important body. The excitement and enthusiasm generated by the ACQ is inspiring.

The ACQ is also pleased to announce a new Living Care Arrangement (LCA) subcommittee, led by Marie Velasco, DDW Program Manager. The purpose of this committee is to provide a venue for LCA providers, individuals, guardians, and the community to provide input on upcoming DDSD Service Standards revisions in regard to Living Care Arrangement Services. Living Care Arrangement services include Supported Living (SL), Family Living (FL), Intensive Medical Living Services (IMLS), and Customized In-Home Supports (CIHS).

HOLIDAYS DURING COVID-19

Submitted by:
Lisa Storti, Office of Constituent Supports

During this stressful time of COVID-19, it is especially important this year that we find safe ways to connect with our family and friends during the holiday season. With COVID-19 drastically changing daily life for families in 2020, it stands to reason that the holidays will be much different from years past, as well. For some, it means celebrating without loved ones. For others, it means staying home instead of traveling to see relatives or enjoying time away. Whatever the case, 2020 forces us to adapt old holiday traditions to the new conditions, or to create new traditions altogether.

As cases continue to increase rapidly across the United States, the safest way to celebrate the holidays is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. This doesn't mean that you can't reach out and contact those who can't be with you. Some ideas for celebrations and staying connected this year include:

- Shop online sales the day after Thanksgiving and days leading up to the winter holidays.
- Use contactless services for purchased items, like curbside pick-up.
- Participate in a gratitude activity, like writing down things you are grateful for and sharing with your friends and family.

This year, minimize risk by moving the celebration online and organizing a virtual gathering. Even if it's not the same as being in the same room, setting up a group video chat still allows everyone to be together. To help things go smoothly, test your chosen virtual gathering method ahead of time to work out any kinks. To improve the video conferencing experience, consider:

- Enlarging your viewing screen by using your TV as a computer monitor
- Using a laptop or tablet instead of a smartphone

And here are some of the on-line platforms to use to gather virtually:

- Zoom - their group video calls are free for 40 minutes (hint: start a new call after 40 minutes)
- Google Meet - anyone with a Google Account can create a video meeting, invite up to 100 participants, and meet for up to 60 minutes per meeting for free.
- UberConference - free videoconferencing with no PINs or downloads needed

Free one-on-one video calls through FaceTime, Apple iPhones or Zoom.

ROBIN LEINWAND ANNOUNCED AS THE NEW STATEWIDE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CONSULTANT

Submitted by:
Betsy Finley, Bureau Chief, Clinical Services Bureau



The Clinical Services Bureau would like to welcome Robin Leinwand, MOT, OTR/L, as the Statewide Occupational Therapy Consultant for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver. She joined the team in late September and has been getting oriented to her new role.

Robin's background includes over 9 years as an Occupational Therapist providing services in DD Waiver, school-based, and early intervention settings. In her role as adjunct faculty with the UNM Occupational Therapy Graduate Program, Robin has developed community programs and been a co-instructor for the Pediatrics course. Before moving to New Mexico, she was a kindergarten teacher in Northern Colorado.

Robin is a strong advocate for collaborative service delivery and presents on this topic at the local, state, and national levels. She is passionate about giving therapists and team members the tools needed to support their clients and caregivers. When not working, Robin enjoys the outdoors, reading, and being entertained by the antics of her two 8-month-old kittens.

Please feel free to contact Robin for assistance with OT clinical issues and general assistance related to therapy services through the DD Waiver. Robin can be reached securely via SCOMM in Therap or, for emails that do not contain PHI, at robin.leinwand@state.nm.us. Please join us in welcoming Robin to her new role in Clinical Services Bureau and DD services!

THANK YOU ESSENTIAL WORKERS!

Submitted by Casey Stone-Romero Community Inclusion Manager

Not only is 2020 the 30th Anniversary of the ADA, but it is also the 75th Anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's theme is Increasing Access and Opportunity. For more information on NDEAM you can visit: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam>.

In honor of NDEAM, DDSD would like to recognize individuals that worked in essential positions through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Tim works at Clark's Pet Emporium. His position was definitely essential for anyone who owns a pet and needs pet supplies. Some of Tim's duties include upkeep and maintenance of the small animals. In addition to cage maintenance, Tim is also responsible for helping to sanitize the store and keep it free of clutter. Melinda Garcia, Employment Director for Adelante, shared Tim's story with us and he was also featured in the October edition of Round the Roundhouse.

Jason started working at Little Green Bucket in November 2019, a local community composting collection service. He is responsible for washing the buckets after the compost has been collected. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, composting businesses were determined to be an "essential service," so Little Green Bucket continued operations using enhanced safety and disinfection practices. Jason has faithfully worked throughout the pandemic, consistently working hard to ensure Little Green Bucket's members have sanitary compost collection buckets. Jason is proud of his ability to clean over 200 buckets in one shift, a significant increase from the 50-70 he would complete when he first started his job. Thanks to Alex Luce, Program Director from Mandy's Farm, for Sharing Jason's story with us. Juanita Watson & Tony Horta-Campos of Benchmark shared several employment stories with us including these.

Patrick works at Walgreens. He enjoys his co-workers and the customers. He also appreciates his work schedule, which is in the middle of the day. It allows him to spend the morning at home and then go on a bike ride after work. Patrick says he has not faced challenges related to working during the pandemic, he enjoys being an essential worker, and feels good about helping people. Mike, works at the NM Game & Fish Department. What he enjoys about his job are the people, the place and that he knows what he is doing. During the pandemic most people have been working from home and Mike misses daily conversations with the Assistant Director Jim and his co-workers.

Tony works at Las Cumbres. He enjoys every part of his job and especially enjoys going to work. Tony worked throughout the pandemic and experienced a reduction in hours, however he is working back up to his regular weekly schedule.

DDSD extends a sincere thanks to ALL essential workers!



Tim and his job coach Evan at Clark's



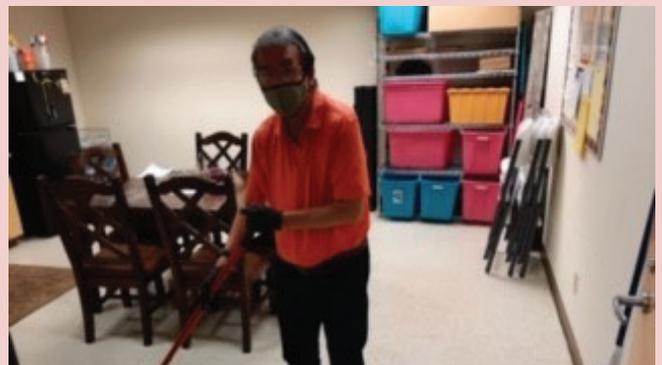
Jason at Little Green Bucket



Patrick at Walgreens



Mike at NM Game & Fish



Tony at Las Cumbres

MEDICALLY FRAGILE WAIVER FAMILY HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by:
Iris Clevenger, RN, Medically Fragile Waiver Program Manager

In November, parents of children and adults served by the Medically Fragile Waiver wrote to share their thoughts and appreciation for the waiver with the Department of Health. The waiver provides access to Medicaid for some children who might not otherwise qualify and services that are usually provided in the family home. Here are excerpts from some of the family messages:

“Having the waiver has allowed us to enjoy and cherish the many memories we’ve created through the years in a home setting where my son has received great care with his health, safety, and well-being as a priority. He has been a part of our everyday lives and the waiver has allowed this.... Additionally, having a voice for the quality care received daily is important to me.” -Elisha

“My daughter has a better quality of life thanks to help from the Medically Fragile Waiver.” -Stephanie

“I wouldn’t know what I would do without the medically fragile waiver. It is an essential and critical piece of my son and family’s lives. Please keep in mind families and especially the children on the medically fragile waiver and how much we need this waiver to stay and have continued services.” -Marthann

“My 2 1/2 year old son Caleb cannot speak. He is fed using a feeding tube. He has 100+ seizures a day and is working on sitting up. But he also has a smile of pure joy.... What does this waiver mean to my son and family? We can BE a family.” -Victoria

“...my son suffered a cardiac episode in 2009. He was only 16. It left him completely dependent on others to care for him 24/7. He is 6’9” and requires 2 caregivers all day long. The waiver program is essential for his care and without it- he would suffer tremendously. Because of the benefits of this program- he has no skin breakdown and is very healthy- staying out of the hospital....This program is a life saver- in so many ways.” -John

“Having access to the Medically Fragile Program in our home has made a huge difference in reducing our stress levels. With all the challenges we have faced, the reduced financial burden has been a great blessing....We and our sweet daughter Mira thank you!” -Chris, Robyn, Mira

“I am the parent of a medically fragile child and I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate being able to have my daughter on this waiver, it is of much help to her needs....” -Fabiola

“This program is essential for my daughter’s health and well being.... This program has many positive benefits to ensure our children and families can continue to live some sort of normalcy during such challenging and uncertain times as now.” -Michelle

“I brought my daughter home from the hospital for the first time at 13 months old with a trach and ventilator, on a variety of drugs and needing so much care.... My daughter will be 5 yrs old next month and she has thrived, she no longer has the trach and ventilator, but she still has a g-tube along with many physical (CP) and developmental challenges.... The Medically Fragile Waiver is critical to my family. It has allowed my family to stay together, to remain a family.” -Jessica

A sincere “Thank You!” to all our families who shared their heartwarming stories and expressed their thoughts. The Medically Fragile Waiver grew from the grass roots work of families like these. Their support and advocacy help to sustain it.



Mr. Martin today



My little visitor

CONGRATULATIONS TO NM'S NEWEST ACRE CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS!

Submitted by:
Casey Stone-Romero, Community Inclusion Manager

Partners for Employment, a collaborative project between NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, DDS and the University of New Mexico, Center for Development and Disability, is pleased to announce that an additional four professionals are now ACRE Certified. The ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) Certificate is a nationally recognized certificate that never expires. New Mexico now has 129 individuals who are ACRE certified. Partners for Employment offers scholarships to those who have completed the College of Employment Supports training to obtain their ACRE certificate. Having this certificate shows that the recipient has completed the required competency-based training and assignments which cover many of the skills and knowledge essential to providing quality person-centered services to individuals with disabilities. If you are interested in the ACRE Certificate, College of Employment Services or any of the other many training and networking opportunities available through Partners

for Employment please visit their website at:
<https://unmhealth.org/services/development-disabilities/programs/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/>.

Congratulations!
Casilda Gallegos
Charlotte Hatfield
Selinda Turner
Ronald Seidel
Suzanne Kuschneret



CERTIFIED EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL™ CERTIFICATION

Submitted by:
Casey Stone-Romero, DDS Community Inclusion Manager

APSE, the Association of People Supporting Employment, created the first national certification program for employment support professionals called the Certified Employment Support Professional™ or CESP™ certification. The CESP™ program is the first in the nation to create national guidelines to validate and support the training currently provided in the field.

Unlike training programs that provide a certificate of completion, the CESP™ certification sets a standard of knowledge and distinguishes employment support professionals who have shown they have the skill and competence to perform the requirements of the job. The CESP™ exam seeks to define the benchmarks for knowledge and competency in the field in the following areas: 1) Application of Core Values and Principles to Practice & Legislation and Funding; 2) Individualized Assessment and Employment/Career Planning; 3) Community Research and Job Development; 4) Workplace and Related Supports, and 5) Ongoing Supports.

Partners for Employment (PFE), a collaboration between the UNM/CDD, DDS and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) assists with scholarships to cover the cost of the test for those who have completed the College of Employment Supports training. The following twenty-seven professionals passed the exam:

Les Flores
Brittany Edwards-Sharpe
Regina Bejarano
Donna Dickson
Brittany Nash
Ronald Seidel
Chelsea Chairion
John Mann
Karen Georgina
Rebecca Cobos
Bryant Ragsdale
Linda Fisher
Lorena Villalovos

Stacy Duskey
Galina (Gala) Yershevich
Amanda Wolf
Staci O'Connor
Dominique Nunez
Corina Huerta-Coronado
Steve Scarton
Olga Alvara
Holly Bird
Daniel Timlen
Sonia Acosta-Zubia
Alice Englisbee-Peake
Alexandrea Rios
Kevin Phillips

Congratulations to these leaders in Supported Employment! New Mexico now has 62 CESP™ statewide. For more information about the ASPE CESP™ certification, please visit www.apse.org. If you are interested in taking the exam, please contact Casey Stone-Romero at Casey.Stone-Romero@state.nm.us.



ASPIRATION RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE NEW MEXICO DD SYSTEM

Submitted by:
Betsy Finley, RN Clinical Services Bureau Chief

Many people with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) are at risk for aspiration because they have difficulty with swallowing (dysphagia). When someone has dysphagia, food or fluids, including saliva, can slip into the lungs instead of going into the stomach. When this occurs, the person usually begins to cough to clear their airway. Some people cannot adequately cough to clear their airway. In addition, sometimes very small amounts of fluids or saliva may enter the lungs without triggering a cough. This is known as “silent” aspiration. Aspiration may also occur if someone has gastric reflux. This means the contents of the stomach can go backwards up the esophagus and enter the lungs. This can occur in anyone, including people who have a feeding tube.

People who aspirate may develop chronic inflammation of their lungs and are also at risk of developing an acute infection called aspiration pneumonia. Aspiration pneumonia is a serious illness and, although many people recover, it is known to be one of the leading causes of death for persons with I/DD nationally and in New Mexico. Some people with I/DD may have unique or highly individualized signs of illness or infection, including when they have aspiration pneumonia. These signs may be obvious or subtle and may occur slowly or suddenly. Examples include leaning to one side or not being able to complete typical daily tasks. Being aware of these individualized signs of illness is very important since it allows families and support staff to identify an illness quickly and get prompt medical treatment.

Aspiration cannot be totally prevented but there are some things that can manage or minimize the risk of it occurring. The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) has prioritized awareness about aspiration risk management for many years. Key elements in the DD Waiver system include providing ongoing Aspiration Risk Management (ARM) training for providers and using two tools: the Aspiration Risk Management Screening Tool (ARST) and the Comprehensive Aspiration Risk Management Plan (CARMP). These tools are used to identify the level or severity of the person’s aspiration risk and guide planning and supports to meet their individualized needs.

Resources: New Mexico also has multiple resources available for people with known or suspected aspiration risk. These are available to anyone in the New Mexico DD system. The DDSD Regional Offices, the Bureau of Behavioral Supports (BBS) and the Clinical Services Bureau (CSB) are available to provide consultation and contact information about a variety of available resources. For information about your local Regional Office or specific waiver program areas, visit <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/>.

Key contacts are listed below.

Aspiration Consultation: Jacoba (Kotie) Viljoen Ph.D., MSN-Ed, RN, CCRN-K, CDDN is the Clinical Services Bureau Aspiration Risk Management Nurse. She may be contacted for general information about aspiration risk management and all available resources at Jacoba.viljoen@state.nm.us.

SAFE Clinic: The Adult SAFE Clinic offers supports and assessment for feeding and eating. This free, multidisciplinary Clinic is available to teens or adults with I/DD who eat orally or who have a feeding tube. It offers consultation from a physician, dietician, SLP, PT and, if needed, an OT and Behavioral Specialist. This Clinic is currently offered remotely via secure video conferencing. Advice is given, and a report is provided to the person, their family, PCP and team members. DDSD/CSB also supports the Pediatric SAFE Clinic located at the UNM-Center for Development and Disability. Email Jacoba.viljoen@state.nm.us.

Specialty Seating Clinic: The Specialty Seating Clinic, located in Albuquerque, provides evaluation for specialty wheelchairs and creates custom molded seating systems that support proper positioning. Good positioning can minimize the risk of aspiration and increase mobility and quality of life. The Clinic staff and Physical Therapists are experienced in working with people with I/DD and collaborate with insurance and Durable Medical Equipment dealers. The Clinic is currently offering remote evaluations and limited in-person services at this time. Contact Jason Lavy, Seating Clinic Manager at 505-222-4610 or Jason.lavy@state.nm.us.

UNM PARTNERS: DDSD collaborates closely with the Continuum of Care project (COC) <https://coc.unm.edu/> and the Transdisciplinary Evaluation and Support Clinic (TEASC) <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/departments/family-community/practice/teasc.html>. Both programs offer a variety of training and clinical supports for persons with I/DD.

We hope you find this overview helpful. Please reach out if additional assistance is needed. elizabeth.finley@state.nm.us

ELECTRONIC VISIT VERIFICATION (EVV)

Submitted by:

Melanie Buenviaje, HSD/ESB and Marc Kolman, Deputy Director

The New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) and the Department of Health (DOH) are implementing the electronic visit verification (EVV) system, as mandated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in Section 12006(a) of the 21st Century Cures Act. You may find additional information on what is required of all states at:

www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/hcbs/guidance/electronic-visit-verification/index.html.

Implementation of the EVV system is around the corner and will go-live in New Mexico on **January 1, 2021**. EVV allows for accurate service tracking, reporting, and billing for direct caregiver services. HSD is working with *Palco* and *Fiserv* to implement EVV in accordance with federal guidelines. The New Mexico Medicaid EVV system is called **AuthentiCare®** and is owned and operated by *Fiserv*.

Due to the short timeframe for implementation, all All providers for waiver services listed below will be required to use **AuthentiCare®** effective January 1, 2021. Access and use of the **AuthentiCare®** system will be provided at no cost to providers.

The following waiver services are required to be included in EVV:

Mi Via

- Homemaker/Direct Support
- In Home Living Supports
- Respite Standard

Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DDW)

- Respite/Respite Group
- Customized In Home Supports - Family Natural Living Supports
- Customized In Home Living - Independent Living

Supports Waiver

- Personal Care
- Respite

Training

system was provided the week of December 7 for self-directed waivers and on December 14 and 15 for agency-based waivers (see the table below for a full list of trainings). Training presentations and recordings of the trainings are available in both English and Spanish on the *Palco* website at <https://palcofirst.com/new-mexico/>.

Open the News & Updates section and select the training recording you are interested in viewing. Open the waiver section and select the training presentation you are interested in viewing.

Enrollment Packets

Enrollment Packets were mailed to self-directed participants in early December. Participants and EORs who have not received a packet can find them on the *Palco* website under the Employee Forms heading in each waiver section.

Additional Information

Additional information can be found on the *Palco* website at <https://palcofirst.com/new-mexico/> including user guides, trainings, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), enrollment packets, and more.

Consolidated Customer Service Center

A Consolidated Customer Service Center (CCSC) is available to provide information about all Medicaid programs, including EVV. The CCSC can be reached at 1-800-283-4465 and is available Monday through Friday from 7 am to 5 pm. Select option '5' for EVV.

- Call center hold times may be longer than usual.
- If you are unable to find an answer to a particular question. Please email nmconduentsupport@palcofirst.com.

The AuthentiCare® System

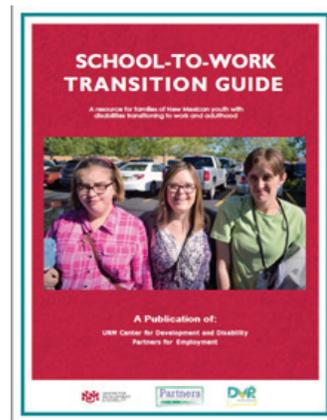
- Uses telephone landlines and/or GPS-enabled mobile devices to track the delivery of caregiver services.
- Is web-based and paperless.
- Allows the agency provider and/or the employer of record (EOR) to review the claim before confirming it for submission to the fiscal management agent (FMA)/Conduent for payment processing.
- Provides real-time service information to the agency provider and/or EOR.
- Access to **AuthentiCare®** will be provided at no cost to the provider agency and EOR.

Thank you for your cooperation and we look forward to working with you on this important project.

SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION GUIDE UPDATED

Submitted by:
Steve Scarton, Statewide School to Work Transition Lead

Partners for Employment (PFE), a collaboration between the UNM/CDD, DDSD and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) recently released an updated version of the School to Work Transition Guide. The updated version of PFE's School to Work Transition Guide is now available for download in both English and Spanish on the PFE website (see <https://www.cdd.unm.edu/other-disability-programs/partners-for-employment/>). Updates in the 2020 version of the guide include revised terminology for New Mexico's three graduation pathways and an expanded list of resources for students who are deaf or hard of hearing or who are blind or visually impaired.



DDW SERVICE STANDARDS UPDATE

Submitted by:
Marie Velasco, DDW Program Manager

The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) is currently in the process of updating the Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DDW) Service Standards. DDSD has established standards to guide service delivery and promote the health and safety of people supported by DD Waiver provider agencies. The DDW Service Standards establishes provider agency requirements for service delivery through the DDW Program. The current DDW Service Standards can be found on the following webpage: <https://www.nmhealth.org/publication/view/policy/4173/>.

Implementation date is expected to be July 1, 2021.

Please contact Marie Velasco, DDW Program Manager at marie.velasco@state.nm.us for any questions, comments or feedback. For more information, please visit our DDSD website, under State General Funded Services, there you will find a Program Overview, Information sheet, and Application available. See <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/sgf/>.

E-BLASTS FOR SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER

Submitted by:
Tammy Barth, Manager, Provider Enrollment Manager

The following emails were distributed to the field during the months of September through November:

- DDSD Memos and Documents – Sent 9.1.2020
- DDSD Memos and Documents - Email #2 – Sent 9.1.2020
- DDSD Memos and Documents – Sent 9.16.2020
- DDSD Memo regarding Temporary Rate Increases and ACQ Notice Openings – Sent 9.17.2020
- Flu Shot Reminder – Sent 9.23.2020
- DDSD COVID-19 Status Update and DD Waiver Rate Increase Document – Sent 10.1.2020
- DDSD Memos and Documents – Sent 10.15.2020
- COVID19 Vaccine Planning Meeting for ICF and HCBS Waiver Providers – Sent 10.16.2020
- COVID19 Vaccine Survey Discussion ICF and HCBS Waiver Providers – Sent 10.16.2020
- DDSD COVID-19 Status Memo and other supporting documents – Sent 11.2.2020
- EVV Survey – Sent 11.4.2020
- Clarification RE: EVV Survey – Sent 11.5.2020
- DDSD Memos regarding DSP Staffing Shortage Crisis, DHI SFY 2021 ANE Guide and Supports Waiver COVID-19 Response – Sent 11.13.2020
- Foward@14 Materials/Flyers – Sent 11.16.2020
- DOH-HSD EVV Provider Communication - Sent 11.17.2020
- DDSD COVID-19 Status Update Memo and Current Public Health Order – Sent 11.19.2020

FAMILY SUPPORTS AND REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Submitted by:
Submitted by Juanita Salas, Program Manager

The New Mexico Department of Health - Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) wants to remind everyone that the New Mexico Family Supports and Reimbursement Program is still being offered. The purpose of this program is to provide access to funding for a variety of services, supports, and goods for individuals and/or their families who are on the Developmental Disabilities Waiver (DDW) waitlist and who are not eligible for Medicaid services.

For more information, please visit our DDSD website, under State General Funded Services, there you will find a Program Overview, Information sheet, and Application available. See

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/pgsv/sgf/>.

DDSD OUTREACH TO MI VIA PARTICIPANTS

Submitted by:
Jen Rodriguez, Community Programs Bureau Chief

On November 2, 2020, DDSD staff began contacting Mi Via participants remotely in an effort to ensure their health and safety and provide an additional layer of support and oversight during this unprecedented time of a global pandemic. DDSD staff are reaching out 1-2 times per month and speaking to Mi Via participants, guardians, family members and/or employer of records, and engaging in an open dialogue based on a series of

questions about the participants' current situation to include general wellbeing, health and medical appointment status, Service and Support Plan (SSP) implementation, budget utilization and service and support needs. DDSD is also offering any support needed at the time of each call. So far, it has been well-received and it's a great way for DDSD to get to know the people we serve better.

NEW HIRES & RETIREMENTS

New Hires:

No new hires

Retirements:

Gloria Collins, Registered Nurse-Advanced on November 1, 2020

Kathy Baker, Healthcare Surveyor-Supervisor on December 20, 2020

ABOUT US

The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division is located at 810 San Mateo PO Box 26110 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505 Our website: www.nmhealth.org

FOR INFORMATION CALL:

(505) 476-8973 or Toll Free: 1-877-696-1472 or email us at SANTAFEmailbox.ddsd@state.nm.us

DDSD NEWSLETTER STAFF

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If you would like to write an article for the next issue of the DDSD Newsletter, have suggestions or comments, please contact Marc Kolman, DDSD Newsletter Editor-in-Chief at 505-476-8839 or Marc.Kolman@state.nm.us.