The Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia (ITCVA) action report series focuses on efforts underway to improve the long-term sustainability of Virginia’s Part C early intervention system. You’ve told us about the fiscal challenges and provider shortages you are facing on the local level. We hear you, we understand you, we appreciate your hard work, and we are working on your behalf every day to address these challenges. These are challenges we have faced and successfully addressed before in the ITCVA, and we can do it again by working together and focusing on actionable strategies to make improvements.

Actions to address Medicaid managed care challenges:

- As a result of ITCVA’s request for further study by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), we were able to announce on August 29, 2019 a change to the previous requirement for the release of information/assignment of benefits form to identify the specific Medicaid managed care organization. The OAG determined that a consent form that consents to disclosure to “my child’s assigned Managed Care Organization” is sufficient to meet Part C and HIPAA requirements. This eliminates the need for a new form any time the child’s MCO changes.
- The EI-MCO Workgroup that was convened by the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB) met in October and will meet again on November 13th. During the October meeting, solutions to the following challenges/areas of confusion were finalized and confirmed by the MCOs and local system managers: processes for submitting IFSPs to and verifying receipt of IFSPs from MCOs, billing codes that do not need to be listed on an IFSP in order to be reimbursed, IFSP effective dates, and billing for make-up visits.
- DMAS has started work on a database that will manage the roster process. Once complete, this will eliminate the need for local lead agencies to submit monthly rosters to each of the MCOs and will provide the information MCOs need to efficiently process claims. Two local system managers have been identified to work with DMAS on this project.

Actions to address provider shortages:

- In follow-up to the August meeting between DBHDS and DMAS, representatives of the two agencies met again this month to continue discussing the funding and provider shortages we are experiencing in EI.
- We submitted a formal written request to DMAS to expand Medicaid-reimbursed telemedicine services to early intervention and have responded to follow-up questions from the individual at DMAS who can act on this request.
- Concerns about provider shortages were discussed at the September meeting of the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council (VICC) and were shared by ITCVA staff during a presentation on early intervention with Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) stakeholders.
• Based on suggestions from local system managers during the September 24th statewide meeting, ITCVA has added the following activity to the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP): Grow Virginia’s early intervention workforce by increasing the number of college students who are exposed to the field of early intervention, enhancing recruitment and retention strategies, and exploring options to expand who can be a qualified provider and how qualified providers can be used within the system.
• We have submitted a written request to DMAS to allow some new providers to be EI certified and provide EI services and to expand what services can be delivered by some existing certified providers.

**Actions to address broader fiscal picture:**

• The budget decision package submitted to the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) by DBHDS included a request for an increase in funding for Early Intervention. Decisions about what, if anything, will be included for early intervention in the final Governor’s budget will not be known until the Governor presents his proposed budget in December.
• During an October meeting, DBHDS and DMAS discussed the need for a new rate study for early intervention services. DMAS is working to determine whether that is an option within existing funding and personnel resources.
• Concerns about fiscal shortages were discussed at the September meeting of the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council (VICC) and were shared by ITCVA staff during a presentation on early intervention with Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) stakeholders.
• Based on suggestions from local system managers during the September 24th statewide meeting and recommendations from the State Leadership Team on Local System Capacity, ITCVA is forming a stakeholder work group to explore new ways to organize Virginia’s service delivery system to maximize the use of available fiscal and personnel resources. The work group will examine opportunities for shared infrastructure, including possible efficiencies in billing practices.

**Bonus: Strategies to try at the local level**

Please see attached list of ideas for recruiting and retaining personnel.

*Have a strategy to recommend? Please send it to Kyla Patterson, k.patterson@dbhds.virginia.gov.*