Brief Overview:

Covid-19, State and Federal Updates for Persons with IDD and Autism

Maura Sullivan
Senior Director
The Arc of Mass 6/10/21
Goals for today

- Vaccine update IDD Community
- Review of the DDS Budget: in Conference Committee
- Update on Nicky’s Law Implementation: July 31st
- American Rescue Plan for MA Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)
- The latest disability related news from the Biden/Harris administration
- Committee hearings on legislation begin
- Discussion
Covid-19 update

• New Cases: hovering in the 100-200
• Total Confirmed Cases: 662,154 as of 6/7
• Total Deaths: 17,911
• Full Vaccinations: 3,835,277
• Home vaccine option expands eligibility
• IDD community awaits guidance
More good news

- Virus activity in congregate care homes decreased by 7 persons to 37 persons. State ops dropped by 1 case to 9 while provider homes have 28 cases—less than 5 deaths reported.
- One state facility reported less than 5 cases. As of this report, we have these #s for catching virus by setting: 49% for the facilities; community state–op at 27.5% & private at 21.7%.
- Schools and private special ed schools
Positive budget - now in Conference Committee

$220M for the DDS Community Day and Work
$84.9M for DDS to support Respite and Family Services.
$79.9M to fully fund Turning 22
$36.6M for specialized services for Adults with Autism.
$27.1M for DDS Transportation services
$7.9M for the Disabled Persons Protection Commission
$387.9 million for Inclusive educational opportunities Special Education Circuit Breaker.
$2M for grants offered through the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative
$1 million to enhance employment opportunities for young adults with disabilities.
$500,000 for supportive technology and remote services for individuals.
$500,000 for DCF quality assurance improvements in light of the David Almond tragedy
Budget amendment passes through both chambers for continued appropriations

- On target for implementation on July 31, 2021
- Must pass legislation to align statute and regulations for successful implementation
- Public hearing on regulation with commentary from The Arc and DLC
MA HCBS Funding

• **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** provides a one-year 10% increase in federal matching for HCBS funds (projected $420 million for MA)
• MA will submit its initial Spending Plan to CMS by June 12th, which will focus on immediate wage enhancement
• **MA strategy for supporting HCBS using ARPA funding** (posted May 28th)
• The funding from the one-year 10% increase can be spent until March 31, 2024.
• **The Arc of MA HCBS Factsheet**
Biden’s Request for Info

- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) RFI - seeking comments to assess whether agency policies and actions equitably serve all eligible individuals and communities (e.g., disability community)
- White House factsheet - Biden-Harris Administration Efforts to Support Full Participation and Equality for People with Disabilities
Getting ready for hearings

• Have you contacted your legislators on bills that are important to you?

• Platform is growing, check it out here:
  • www.thearcofmass.org/advocacy/bills
Discussion

contact: Sullivan@arcmass.org

www.thearcofmass.org