

## DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

# QUALITY MANAGEMENT BULLETIN - JANUARY 2025

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

Transmittal Date - 01/30/2025

Happy New Year everyone! With a chill in the air its time to refresh and renew the expectations for continuous process improvement with a new vigor! This month's newsletter discusses the outcomes of a recent survey sent by the Division.

### **Incident Reporting Process Change Survey**

The Division is considering a change to the current Incident Reporting process where Qualified Vendors would enter incidents directly into the AHCCCS QM Portal. On December 5, 2024, the Division released a survey to solicit feedback on the time required to implement this proposed change. The survey closed on January 3, 2025 and below are a few initial observations from the survey:

- 225 responses were received
  - 205 from Qualified Vendors (182 unique vendors)
  - 20 from DDD staff
- 69 comments were provided (DDD comments were excluded)
  - Categories of comments/questions include:
    - Requests for Training
    - Questions on the QM Portal functionality and Implementation
    - Questions on the rationale/reason for the proposed change
    - Comments on increased administrative burden
- Breakdown on reported timeframes:
  - 0-30 days - 30%
  - 31-60 days - 19%
  - 61-90 days - 19%
  - 91-120 days - 32%

The Division continues to assess current processes to ensure alignment and compliance with the requirements outlined in the 2024 CMS Access Rule (Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services final rule).

### **National Core Indicators (NCI) Update**

The NCI State of the Workforce for IDD (NCI-IDD SoTW)<sup>®</sup> 2023 report is now available. The NCI-IDD SoTW is the most comprehensive data on provider agencies and the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce

providing direct services to adults (age 18 and over) with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

A few report highlights:

- In 2023, states collected data from 3,934 provider agencies representing 325,591 DSPs in 26 states and the District of Columbia. The data for 2023 suggest some positive trends for the state of the IDD DSP workforce. For example:
- Across the nation, the median hourly wage for DSPs is \$17.20 which is almost a dollar-and-a-quarter increase from the median hourly wage of \$15.98 increase over 2022.
- The weighted average turnover ratio was 39.7% and of those 24 states that also conducted the NCI-IDD State of the Workforce in 2022 survey, 17 states demonstrated a decrease in turnover ratio.
- On average, 38.1% of agencies report they turned away or stopped accepting referrals due to staffing issues, down from 49.7% in 2022.

State DD agencies have worked tirelessly to address the ongoing workforce shortages for DSPs, and this data suggests slight but hopeful trends in key indicators. HSRI and NASDDDS will continue working closely with state partners to identify opportunities to use these data to further strengthen service delivery systems and ensure DSPs are valued for their essential role in supporting people with disabilities.

The [2023 NCI State of the Workforce Survey results](#) include the report, report summaries, and state-specific data.

Thank you again for your unwavering commitment to continuous improvement and relationship building.

Please send Incident Reports to the appropriate District email below:

- District Central - [DDDCentralIR@azdes.gov](mailto:DDDCentralIR@azdes.gov)
- District East - [DDDEastIR@azdes.gov](mailto:DDDEastIR@azdes.gov)
- District North - [DDDDistrictNorthIncidentReports@azdes.gov](mailto:DDDDistrictNorthIncidentReports@azdes.gov)
- District South - [DDDD2IR@azdes.gov](mailto:DDDD2IR@azdes.gov)
- District West - [DDDWestIR@azdes.gov](mailto:DDDWestIR@azdes.gov)