

Testimony
Health Services Committee
Senator Lee, Chairman
January 3, 2018

Chairman Lee, and members of the Health Services Committee, I am Amanda Carlson, Part C Coordinator and Administrator of Children & Family Services for the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Division of the Department of Human Services (Department). I am here today at the request of the committee to provide information regarding the Child Find regulations for infants and toddlers and the possibility of a coordinated statewide Child Find system in North Dakota.

Child Find

The regulations for Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require each state participating in Part C to have a comprehensive Child Find system with the purpose of identifying, locating, and screening all infants and toddlers with disabilities birth through age two as early as possible. (See Attachment A for full regulations.) Currently the Department has two activities that support these requirements.

1. Birth Review Postcards – This activity is a joint effort with the North Dakota Department of Human Services, the North Dakota Department of Health and all birthing hospitals. Parents are presented with the opportunity to have additional information sent to them or to be connected to their local Right Track provider. If parents indicate an interest in connecting with their local Right Track provider, the hospital makes the referral to the family's regional human service center.

2. Right Track – This activity is done in collaboration with the regional human service centers and private providers located throughout the state. Right Track providers conduct development screenings and observations to assist families in determining if a referral to Early Intervention is desired and appropriate. Referrals to Early Intervention can be received from anyone or any entity, including physicians, family members, child care providers, other screening initiatives, etc. Anyone who comes into contact with the child and family can make a referral, as parental consent is not required for referral. Parental consent is required for participation in services, as Early Intervention is a voluntary service.

Coordinated System

As identified above, the Department’s required Child Find activities under Part C of IDEA is to identify, locate and screen all infants and toddlers with disabilities birth through age two as early as possible. Although Child Find is required in both the Part B and Part C programs of IDEA, the program requirements differ. A full examination of the entire Child Find activities currently taking place across the state would be essential to determine what can be combined or where collaboration could take place.

This concludes my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.