

Testimony
Health Services Committee
Senator Lee, Chairman
August 1, 2017

Chairman Lee, and members of the Health Services Committee, I am Tina Bay, Director of the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Division of the Department of Human Services (Department). I am here today to provide you an overview of services available through the DD division for children birth to age 3 with developmental delays and provide recommendations to the committee's study of the early intervention system.

Program

The program for infant and toddlers with disabilities (Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)) is a federal grant program that assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, age's birth through 2 years of age and their families. Part C is different from the Part B (3 thru 21 special education) section of IDEA, as Part C focuses on enhancing the family's ability to maximize their child's development and Part B focuses on the child's educational needs.

Currently there is no federal mandate that requires states to provide Part C services. However if the state's choose to apply and accept the federal grant, services must be provided in compliance with federal requirements. This means if state's use all of the federal grant money, they are still required to provide the services identified in Part C of IDEA with other funding (i.e. state money, co-payments). North Dakota is a minimal allotment state which is based off of the number of infants and

toddlers in our census date. Our 2017-2018 grant award amount is \$2,247,675. The Governor has assigned the Department as the lead agency to manage the Part C program.

The following activities are required Part C programs:

- Direct Services;
- Interagency Coordinating Council;
- Technical Assistance;
- Child Find (right track & birth review);
- Administrative activities (professional development, application, monitoring, annual reporting; and
- Service Coordination (DD Program Management).

The following activities are voluntary Part C programs that ND supports but is not required by federal law to offer:

- Audiologists;
- Experienced Parents.

Currently the DD Division has a service titled Infant Development, which is similar to early intervention, in the Medicaid 1915(c) home and community based waiver. This has been a great benefit for the ND families that choose to apply for Medicaid as it not only gives them access to infant development, if they have additional needs that can be addressed by other waiver services, they are able to access them as well. It also provides families with Medicaid as a secondary insurance to assist with other Medicaid State Plan services.

The following chart reflects the number of infants and toddlers that had an active support plan during the reporting period.

Date Range	# of Children
7/1/12 – 6/30/13	1933
7/1/13 – 6/30/14	2298
7/1/14 – 6/30/15	2565

Recommendations

The Department offers the following recommendations:

- Study all possible funding options to support the Part C system;
- Study all collaborative options within the early intervention/early childhood system across the state to support Part C services (i.e. right track, experienced parent, audiologist);
- Study the infrastructure of North Dakota and other states to determine if changes could be made to better support the Part C system;
- Examine the current early intervention system for inefficiencies, both in terms of fiscal and practice.

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