

WV Birth to Three Communications to the Field

Subject: Family Cost Participation Task Group

Released: January 8, 2008

The purpose of this email is to give you information regarding a Task Group that is currently in process. The charge to the group is to review the requirements of IDEA related to family cost participation, gather information about what other states are doing, and provide feedback to BTT/DHHR. Members of the Task Group are mostly members of the ICC and some of you may have read ICC minutes that mentioned the group's work.

As background:

WV Birth to Three is currently serving about 2,000 children more annually than in 2002. We are working hard to meet the requirements of IDEA, to identify eligible children and families and provide needed services in a timely manner.

Thanks to the hard work of folks in the field too, we are doing a pretty good job of meeting the requirements of IDEA. (In fact, WV Birth to Three recently received the highest rating possible from the U.S. Dept of Education regarding how we are implementing Part C- you can read about it on our website under IDEA2004).

That being said, and despite the growth in number of children served, BTT funding has been not increased. We receive only \$2,000,000 annually from Federal education funds. That allocation is based on population of infants and toddlers in the state - not based on the number of children we serve - so as we serve more children, the proportional funding decreases.

We are currently evaluating options for additional funding. And, since IDEA allows states to have family cost participation for IFSP services, this is something that we must evaluate.

Under IDEA, family cost participation can mean using a family's private insurance with their consent, and/or having a system of fees for families. Many states are using one or both of these options. As we consider the financing needs of BTT, we are obligated to consider how/if these would work in WV.

I want to be clear that no decision has been made to develop policies/procedures to utilize private insurance or fees - the Task Group is only gathering information about what other states are doing. If any decision is made in the future to utilize private insurance or fees, you can be assured that there will be much opportunity for discussion.

We are also continuing our monitoring and quality assurance efforts so we can all be sure that funds are being spent effectively for services in accordance with IDEA.

Thank you for your support - and if you have questions, please send them to my email address at pamroush@wvdhhr.org

Thanks again.

Pam

Pam Roush, Director
WV Birth to Three