

“A field of choices... Where abilities grow”



February 10, 2020

To: Kansas Legislature

From: Nicole Hall, Executive Director, CDDO of Butler County

Re: Invisible Kansans bill

Thank you for the opportunity to share information on behalf of those we serve in Butler County. I wanted to share some of the issues we are facing related to the need for increased funding for services.

Workforce:

- When the unemployment rate is high, it is more difficult for agencies to hire workers for people who need their help 24 hours, 7 days per week. It is also more difficult to find employees who are doing the work because they enjoy it and have a heart for it. Instead people take the job because it's just a job and often don't have the skills needed to be a good caregiver.
- All too often, I hear from providers that people are offered a job but then don't show up for their first day or don't make it through orientation. They are offered other positions that might pay more or they decide this job is not for them at the expense of the employer. Overtime is the only option at an extremely high cost!
- The starting pay often doesn't compete with other jobs in the area that don't require personal care, dealing with behavior problems and all the other things required of direct support professionals.

Other Service Issues:

- The reimbursement rate for Personal Care Services on the I/DD waiver is lower than the same service (by definition) on other waivers. We currently have just one provider in our county who hires and trains the staff themselves. The rate they are paid does not cover the cost involved with hiring and training the necessary staff so other agencies are not interested in providing this service. Families are left to self-direct (find and train their own staff). Some families don't have the knowledge or expertise to do this.
- Targeted Case Management (TCM) is a critical need for families to help them navigate both our service system and the education system for their loved one with special needs. In the past year, one of our providers stopped providing this service due to the low reimbursement rate and we've had as few as one provider option available at times. TCM providers have similar issues with trying to hire and maintain staff with the low reimbursement rate. It is another service that often doesn't cover the cost of providing it.

These are just some of the reasons I hope that you will support the bill for reimbursement rates to allow our providers to continue to meet the needs of Invisible Kansans. Without additional funds, I fear we will not be able to adequately address people's needs long-term.

*“A field of **choices**... Where **abilities** grow”*

