

e-Therapist Bulletin August 2008

TIERED THERAPY RATES BECOME EFFECTIVE ACROSS THE BOARD SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

As of September 1, 2008 ALL occupational, physical and speech therapy services, including evaluation and ongoing services, will be authorized only at the tiered rates that became effective in February 2008. **All grand-fathered rates will end August 31, 2008.** Any service provided after that date should be billed at the appropriate tier rate. If this change impacts your continued provision of service to current or future Division consumers, and you haven't already done so, please contact your District Therapy Coordinator *immediately*.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS CONTINUE

As you are aware, the Division has been actively recruiting therapists to join the Division's existing cadre of dedicated professionals. Most recently we sent an announcement to all Arizona-licensed therapists. The response to our campaign has been very positive and we are currently working with interested respondents as they complete the Qualified Vendor process to become independent providers or identify potential agencies to apply with. We look forward to welcoming them into the Division's network joining all of you making a positive difference in the lives of persons with developmental disabilities. The Division is also researching what opportunities exist for the use of external staffing agencies or other resources to help meet more immediate therapy service needs in areas of the state that continue to be the most difficult to serve.

STATEWIDE VENDOR DIRECTORY TO BE ESTABLISHED

As part of our continuing efforts to expand resources in areas of the state currently underserved, the Division is releasing a statewide call for therapy service capacity. This is not the traditional vendor call that is consumer-specific. The "call" is intended to solicit your response as to your current capacity, as well as, where you are willing to accept new referrals and/or build capacity to accept referrals. We will use your responses to develop a statewide "Therapy Directory" that our District staff can access for referral purposes. The goal is to assist independent therapists and agencies with their business planning and capacity development by more fully understanding the scope of need and cost-efficiencies of reaching out to underserved areas. We are using our [wait-list database](#) to provide you with demographics including the number of individuals needing therapy services delineated by: type of therapy; District; city; zip code; rate tier; and age (0-3 and 3+). We are asking you to respond by indicating what District or Districts you are interested or able to serve (all or partial by city or zip code), what ages, current availability, overall capacity for DDD consumer services, specialty service(s), and your contact information. Information should be completed on the spreadsheet provided by the Division and returned to the designated Division mailbox. The Division will incorporate all vendor information received into a Therapy Directory. We will periodically update our wait list numbers and re-issue a call to all therapy vendors to update the Directory.

Division of Developmental Disabilities

As always, we encourage you to work closely with your District contacts to ensure we are maximizing all available opportunities to serve our mutual consumers. Please contact your District Therapy Coordinator should you have questions.

Both the wait list information and the response form are attached for your review and response. The information will also be posted on the Division's website under Vendor Information for future reference and use. As you review the wait list numbers and consider your current availability and/or potential growth keep in mind the average utilization for the age groups indicated. Utilization for our infants and toddlers 0-3 years of age is typically one visit a week in the natural environment. For those consumers age 3 years and older typical utilization is one visit bi-weekly (twice a month) and while natural environment is the preferred medium, overall utilization is a combination of both natural and clinic settings. The total number of units authorized for any one consumer will vary depending on each individual's needs and desired outcomes.

Please complete the [attached spreadsheet](#)  and forward your responses to the following mailbox for District access: DDTherapyDirectory@azdes.gov

We ask that you complete the spreadsheet regardless of whether you currently have the capacity to accept new referrals. As referenced earlier, we would like to use the information to create a statewide Division Therapy Directory. Your information is critical as we work to more effectively manage our overall therapy network resources.

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact your District Therapy Coordinator or email Linda Flores, Director of Program Services, at: LJFlores@azdes.gov

* Note that placement of an individual on the waiting list does not necessarily mean that the individual is not receiving services.

Consumers on the waiting list include:

- Consumers who are authorized for a number of units and providers are available to provide only a portion of those units; and,
- Consumer who are receiving services from one provider because their first choice of provider was not available, but who have asked to be put on the waiting list for the preferred provider.

In addition, the waiting list includes consumers who have chosen to be placed on the waiting list. Those situations include:

- Consumers or families who have chosen not to use an available provider;
- Consumers or families who have made a specific request for that provider and there is no current opening in that provider's capacity.

There are no Medicaid-eligible DDD consumers on the waiting list as a result of lack of funding for needed services.

The data for children, birth to three, indicates that a service has been identified on the family's IFSP, but does not necessarily indicate that the "planned start date" for the service has past