



**Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities**

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

**Governor Murphy's FY'25 Budget Proposals for
Individuals with Developmental Disabilities
and their Service Providers**

ABCD thanks Governor Murphy for his partnership to broaden the social bargain, by helping to bring a previously excluded class to full citizenship through the continued expansion of investment and services to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Statewide, the proposed budget represents 1% growth in the new fiscal year. Noteworthy investments include:

- Annualizing the January 1, 2024, wage increases for direct support professionals and supervisors to ensure that they continue to receive salaries commensurate with the support they provide through an investment of \$20.9 million in State dollars.
- Enhancing training for direct support professionals on topics that include health and safety, trauma informed care, and individual rights through an investment of \$5.25 million in State dollars.
- Expanding the NJ WorkAbility program to allow people with incomes over 250% of the Federal Poverty Level to not lose their NJ FamilyCare benefits through an investment of \$31.8 million in State dollars.
- Expanding the annual income limits by \$10,000 for the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) and Senior Gold prescription discount programs through an investment of \$12 million in State dollars. Funds for Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged the Disabled (HAAAD) will also be increased.
- Ensuring a minimum of \$95 per month for every household receiving SNAP benefits through an additional \$6 million in State dollars. To enhance security, SNAP EBT cards with microchips will be distributed through an additional appropriation of \$1.65 million in State dollars.
- Incentivizing homeowners to create affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or convert existing units through an appropriation of \$10 million in State dollars.
- Ensuring that review and results of initial licenses, certification and permits are completed in a timely manner (especially pertaining to health care professionals like PT, OT and ST), ending the long-standing shift of DCA licensing boards' revenue to support State Policies salaries.
- Increasing wages under the Personal Preference Program to match the change in the minimum wage through an investment of \$10 million in State dollars.

But there is more work to do.

Despite last year's whopping 8.7% inflation rate, there was no across the board increase proposed to counter the costs 2023 left in its wake. ABCD will continue to advocate for this increase to better allow our executives to retain all staff, reward high performers, ensure adequate resources for safe and appropriate physical environments and for high quality support coordination, and deliver on the expectation of the IDD community and the public at large to enable people with IDD to fully participate in an integrated community.

Notwithstanding the national problem of employing licensed rehabilitation therapists, resulting in many infants and toddlers especially in low-income and underserved communities not receiving services or not getting them in a timely manner, there was no proposed increase for Early Intervention. ABCD will continue to advocate for an increase to continue the trend of expanding access and minimizing and preventing permanent disabilities in our children.

Facing a dearth of opportunities for adults to attain, keep and improve skills and functioning for daily living, because reimbursement rates are not based on existing standards, ABCD will continue to advocate for an increase to physical, occupational, and speech language and hearing therapies in DDD day services so that people can have access to long-term remedial care.

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