

Talking Points for 2023 INARF Legislative Agenda

INARF's top legislative priority is focused on stabilizing the Intellectual and Developmental Disability (I/DD) industry after years of unprecedented challenges caused by the public health emergency and compounded by extraordinary workforce struggles and unimaginable economic turns. To create the budget predictability necessary for providers to ensure the health and safety of the individuals receiving supports, INARF requests consideration of the following:

Background:

Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF), commonly known as Group Homes, receive annual rate adjustments based on their costs or based on an inflationary factor using the CMS Nursing Home Market Basket.

Proposal:

FSSA is proposing to conduct HCBS rate reviews on a three-year cycle. In order to maintain parity between HCBS and ICF employees, INARF proposes **annual** percentage increases to Home and Community Based Services Family Support Waiver (FSW) and Community Integration and Habilitation Waiver (CIHW) rates at the same average percentage increase to ICFs in any year that a rate review is not completed and fully implemented beginning July 1, 2023.

Outcome:

- Stabilizes the industry across all residential and habilitation service areas utilizing consistent, predictable rates
- Provides budget predictability which will allow providers of HCBS services to hire and retain vital staff
- Maintains FSSA's goal of aligning Medicaid services with Direct Support Worker wages for similar services
- Regular, predictable rate adjustments will alleviate the inconsistency of relying on legislative and political action every two-year budget cycle, and it will allow for requests focused on specific service areas instead of the entire pallet of waiver services
- Regular rate review will allow for rate adjustments in response to environmental factors and the ever-changing market for services
- INARF political efforts can instead be utilized for industry necessities instead of biannual rate maintenance

In addition, INARF supports industry issues including:

- Dedicated funding to reimburse providers for new-hire and on-going annual training time for Direct Support Professionals
- Increased CIHW and FSW Case Management reimbursement rates. Case Management is the only service that every single person on a DDRS waiver is required to receive, however, Case Managers are constantly struggling with additional job responsibilities and larger caseloads due to dwindling staff.
- Increased First Steps rates to attract and retain Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and other vital services for early intervention in order to compete with clinical settings where rates are much higher.
- Increased Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) rates, in conjunction with the State's goal of employing more Hoosiers with disabilities