

# COVID-19 IMPACTS: CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES

MORGAN COLE, MPP  
DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES  
APRIL 21, 2020 TESTIMONY FOR SHW/HHS

# CHILDREN'S INTEGRATED SERVICES

Early Intervention

Specialized Child Care

Service  
Coordination

Early Childhood and  
Family Mental Health

Strong Families VT  
Home Visiting

# SUMMARY OF COVID-19 IMPACTS & RESPONSE

## Service Impacts

- Shift to remote service delivery, some barriers to engagement
- Providers report increased complexity of cases
- Significant drop in referrals, anticipate potential later surge in population need to address COVID-19 impacts on families

## Fiscal Impacts

- Revenue loss due to decreased caseloads and referrals
- Consideration of possible FY21 impacts and payment reform

## State Response

- Supporting use of remote service delivery
- Increased flexibility in meeting federal and state requirements
- Creation of Provider Retainer Fund for near term fiscal relief
- Regular communication and sharing of practice resources
- *Pending:* July 1 contract impacts

## COVID-19 IMPACTS: FAMILIES & SERVICES

- **Increased Family Needs:** Additional family stressors, household economic impacts, and child care closures resulting in more complex family needs
  - Anticipate increased population and family needs as state reopens to mitigate developmental, economic, and child safety impacts of COVID-19
- **Remote Service Delivery:** Shift to remote service delivery, per VDH guidance. Telemedicine and/or telephonic delivery allowable for nearly all services under the bundle and fee-for-service Early Intervention.
- **Service Continuity:** Some disruptions to services as parents struggle to connect remotely or choose not to engage in remote service delivery
- **Specialized Child Care (SCC) Coordinators** providing support to families, FSD, and programs serving essential workers' children with specialized needs
- **SCC Transportation** continuing where needed

## COVID-19 STATE RESPONSE: FAMILIES & SERVICES

- Guidance issued to halt nearly all in-person service delivery
- Increased allowance for services delivery via remote methods
- Additional flexibility for meeting federal and state requirements regarding service delivery
- Collaboration with Building Bright Futures for family resource sharing
- Communication Mechanisms
  - Official guidance released, FAQ pending
  - Weekly resource emails
  - Weekly partner call
  - VDH Q&A

## Immediate and Ongoing Impacts

- Initial drop in billable caseloads of 5-25%
- Staffing challenges impacting service delivery and reimbursement

## Anticipated Impacts and COVID-19 Recovery

- Significant drop in referrals (up to 75%) likely to further reduced caseloads in near term
- Subsequent surge in case complexity and caseload possible, exacerbating difference between case rate and service delivery cost
- Considerations regarding July 1<sup>st</sup> transitions:
  - Provider admin capacity to execute new (sub)contracts
  - End of Specialized Child Care Coordinator supplemental grants
  - Impact of contract reductions paired with fiscal stressors and likely increase in population need

# COVID-19 IMPACTS: FISCAL

## Near Term Response

- Provider Retainer Fund under development for CIS Bundle contractors, based on initial reports of ~20% caseload reductions, planning for 3 months of payments. Demonstration of lost revenue required.
- Early Intervention private therapists eligible for DVHA provider retainer fund

## Payment Reform and July 1<sup>st</sup> Contracts

- Contract changes planned for July 1 include reallocation of funds based on a standard case rate of and reported caseloads, resulting in contract reductions in 5 regions, increases to 4. This coincides with the end of the specialized child care supplemental grants.
- DCF is considering available options for mitigating impact of payment reform changes and COVID-19 population needs with the available budget

COVID-19 STATE  
RESPONSE: FISCAL