

Children’s Integrated Services (CIS): Effective, Innovative Service Delivery

Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) is Vermont’s ground-breaking, nationally-recognized integrated service delivery system that improves outcomes, supports children and families, and brings service providers together. By embracing integration as a core construct, Vermont makes it easier for families to get the support they need, and makes it possible for caregivers to work more collaboratively.

CIS provides health promotion, prevention, and early intervention services to pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children birth to age six, their families, and child development providers. Specialized child care serves children up to age thirteen.

CIS serves Vermont’s youngest learners, particularly those who have disabilities and are entitled to Early Intervention (EI) services mandated by Federal law. EI services are an entitlement for all children deemed in need of services, through the federal mandate Part C of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), or through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) Medicaid benefit.



Through CIS, families and early care and education providers gain access to a range of supports, from concrete financial assistance to nursing, specialized instruction, and the expertise of mental health clinicians.

CIS was designed to lessen, if not eliminate, the need for future services that are costlier and less efficient.

The program supports almost 1600 families around the state around each month. There are no income restrictions for CIS services.

CIS Coordinators by AHS District

BARRE

Family Center of Washington County *

BENNINGTON

Sunrise Family Resource Center *

BRATTLEBORO

Winston Prouty Center

BURLINGTON

Howard Center

MIDDLEBURY

Addison County Parent Child Center *

MORRISVILLE

Lamoille Family Center *

NEWPORT

Northeast Kingdom Community Action *

RUTLAND

VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region

ST. ALBANS

Northwestern Counseling/Support Services *

ST. JOHNSBURY

Northeast Kingdom Community Action *

SPRINGFIELD

Springfield Area Parent Child Center *

WHITE RIVER JCT. (HARTFORD AREA)

The Family Place *

WHITE RIVER JCT. (TUNBRIDGE AREA)

Orange County Parent Child Center *

[* = Parent Child Center]

What are CIS “bundled” services?

Some CIS services are included in a bundled case rate managed through regional contracts. Annual funding for bundled services is approximately \$12.3 million.

Services in these regional CIS contracts are:

1. Family-Child Health Nursing
2. Family Support Services
3. Part C Early Intervention
4. Early Childhood/Family Mental Health
5. Specialized Child Care Supports

Many of these services are provided through home visiting.

What are CIS “outside the bundle” services?

Other CIS services are paid for outside the bundled case rate. This includes home visiting programs Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting (MECSH), which are funded through the Vermont Department of Health. Other services are invoiced to CDD and paid on a fee-for-service basis. The budget for these services is based on utilization. They include:

1. Audiology
2. Developmental/Multi-disciplinary Evaluation to determine initial eligibility for Early Intervention services for children without Medicaid
3. Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy, and Physical Therapy
4. Transportation for Specialized Child Care
5. Vision
6. Interpretation (including sign language)

Are services being provided as needed, even if they are federally entitled?

CIS providers are required to provide services in a timely manner. Because of chronic underfunding and open positions/staff turnover, CIS providers are increasingly unable to provide the services within the timeframes that are mandated. Utilization goes down, even as demand increases.

Rather than use formal waiting lists, providers delay service delivery and can't provide services at the frequency necessary to deliver a “therapeutic dose”. They are also unable to provide all federally entitled services because of the lack of some professionals in Speech/Language, Occupational, and Physical Therapies in certain regions.

Is demand increasing?

Yes. Pandemic impacts are continuing, too many families struggle to meet basic needs, developmental screening and referral continues to expand, and CIS providers are required to spend a greater percentage of their time meeting multiple requirements for documentation.

As more services are needed, and additional funding is not provided, CIS providers will be even less likely to keep up with the demand and meet the federal requirements for timely response to families.

