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WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities supports disability investments in 2025-2027 state budget

Legislature approves maintaining Medicaid funding at current levels, increasing funding for in-home care workers who help people with disabilities, and greater support for students for disabilities

Overnight the State Legislature passed and Gov. Evers signed into law a state budget that includes important provisions that maintain the critical health and home and community-based care services (HCBS) that keep people with disabilities productive members of their communities and workplaces, and out of expensive Medicaid-funded institutions.

The budget provides the money needed to keep Wisconsin's Medicaid programs running as they do now. Those dollars pay Wisconsin health and long-term care workers who care for people in every Wisconsin community.

Importantly, the budget continues funding for a Family Care minimum fee schedule. This ensures residential providers will be paid at least a base rate no matter where they are in the state or what Family Care MCO they contract with. It is important to maintain and build a more robust provider network that has a stable and sufficient operating budget to run their local businesses.

The budget also increases the Medicaid rates for Personal Care, Home Health Care, and Private Duty Nursing, three groups of workers who provide vital support to people with disabilities and families. BPDD appreciates the continued efforts to address the critical shortage of care workers.

Grassroots disability advocates across the state have worked for months to elevate the importance of raising the low special education reimbursement rate so students with disabilities can be successful and local public school districts have the resources they need. BPDD supports these parent advocates who understand the challenges their children and schools face to deliver the education they have a right to under the law.

While this budget does not implement the Governor's original proposal to raise the special education reimbursement rate to 60% sum sufficient funding, it is a step forward to reimburse school districts for 42% of special education costs in the first year of the budget, and 45% the second year. The current reimbursement rate is 32.1%.

This budget puts Wisconsin in a strong position to maintain the critical investments that keep people with disabilities in their homes and prepare students with disabilities to be productive contributors to their communities.

BPDD remains concerned that reductions in federal funding and/or shifting more costs onto states will create large state budget holes. We stand ready to work with the Governor and legislature to maintain and improve the programs that people with disabilities rely on.