



Department
of Health

Provider Workforce Capacity Task Force Update

March 14, 2024

Marina Yoegel, Task Force Co-Chair
Lidiya Lednyak, Task Force Co-Chair

Task Force Members

- **Co-Chairperson:** Marina Yoegel
- **Co-Chairperson:** Lidiya Lednyak
- **Parent:** Amy DeVito
- **Parent:** Leah Esther Lax
- **Personnel Prep or Training:** Brigitte Desport
- **Provider Rep:** Steve Held
- **Provider Rep:** Robin Stegman
- **Muni Rep:** Heidi Bond
- **Discretionary:** Lynn Shea
- **State Agency:** Elina Tsenter
- **State Agency:** Patricia Zuber-Wilson
- **DOH Staff:** Raymond Pierce, Peter Baran, Mike Iorio, Diane Ginsburg, Douglas Arthur, and Jennifer Sandshaw
- **Advisor:** Roxana Inscho

Original Task Force Proposed Charter

Charge: To develop recommendations for the Department to increase provider workforce capacity to deliver Early Intervention services to eligible children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. The objective is to improve timeliness of Early Intervention service delivery for children and families participating in the Early Intervention Program.

Committee Accomplishments

- The Council's Workforce Capacity Task Force committed to supporting the NYS Bureau of Early Intervention in its goal of building capacity in the Early Intervention workforce.
- Accomplishments:
 - Recommended reducing the number of clock hours required to become an approved provider from 1600 hours to 1000 hours.
 - Developed competencies for academic preparation programs to utilize in developing coursework and specialization in early childhood and early intervention.
 - Developed a companion document to support institutions of higher education to integrate the competencies.
 - Finalized surveys for caregivers and providers regarding the use of telehealth in NYS.
 - Provided feedback on the NYS Bureau of Early Intervention Telehealth Guidance Document.
 - Informed the development of a webpage regarding the Bureau's Early Intervention Competency Areas.

Competencies for the Delivery of Early Intervention Services

- The taskforce identified 5 competency areas specific to the NYS Early Intervention Program that capture the academic and professional preparation needs of the NYS Early Intervention System.
- Competences are evidence-based, reflect recommendations from national professional associations across disciplines, are in line with applicable federal and state laws regulating Early Intervention therapists and teachers in their work with infants and toddlers with developmental delays, and their parents/caregivers.
- Incorporate recognition that cultural and linguistic competence are central to successful Early Intervention practice.

Competencies for the Delivery of Early Intervention Services

- Competencies shared with graduate programs and professional organizations that train Early Intervention professionals to increase early childhood curricula content, training experience, and to promote exposure and skills-building by offering field experience in early childhood settings.
- Competency areas were approved by the Council and disseminated on 1/31/2022.
- Companion document was developed and disseminated on 10/2023 with the launch of competency webpage.

Competencies for the Delivery of Early Intervention Services

1. Typical and atypical childhood development and behavior (birth to three) to support evaluations, monitoring of progress, and the creation of developmentally-appropriate, individualized strategies in partnership with caregivers.
2. Multi-cultural and diversity factors related to engaging and working with Early Intervention families.
3. Understanding the parent-child dyad and enhancing families' capacities to help their children through communication, coaching, coordination and collaboration.
4. Use of evidence-based, family-centered best practices with families and caregivers via parent/caregiver collaboration, coaching and strengthening family capacities.
5. Reflective practice and reflective supervision to support self-reflection and on-going professional development.

Current Projects: The City University of NY

Academic Research Partners

- As part of the academic partners' review of the competencies additional recommendations issues were raised regarding structural issues in NYS impacting EI workforce capacity:
 - Current NYS Education Office of the Higher Education and Office of Professions regulations - standard curricula in Early Childhood Special Education, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Language Pathology academic programs do not require students to learn about Early Intervention or engage in clinical experiences with infants/toddlers and their families.
 - Lack of college-level Early Intervention course content, and clinical experiences devoted to Early Intervention and the birth to three population.
 - Internships in home and community settings do not typically occur and/or are not counted toward students' licensure or certification.

Current Projects: The City University of NY Academic Research Partners

- To examine and act upon the recommendations made by the academic partners, the NYC Early Childhood Research Network was engaged who identified a funder to support a research project to review requirements and make recommendations about gaps in fieldwork placements and identify opportunities to include Early Intervention competencies.
- Submit report to the Bureau through the Council Workforce Capacity Taskforce with recommendations for the regulations for certification or licensure in the 4 disciplines
- Draft report submitted to the task force on 2/2024
- Task force sent feedback to research team on 2/2020
- Final report received on 3/1/2024
- Committee Chairs submitted Report to the Bureau on 3/6/2024

Current Projects: Graduate Program Approval

- The task force is currently finalizing recommendations to enhance workforce capacity via the provider approval process by:
 - Setting up a process **to count course work** hours associated with the Competency Areas, when obtained in combination with clinical fieldwork placements in birth to five settings, towards the 1000 clock hour requirement when submitted by graduates as part of their NYS Bureau of Early Intervention individual provider applications.
- Proposed process documents disseminated to academic programs for review. Final feedback received 12/1/23.
- Feedback integrated and sent for final task force review 2/20/24.
- Final task force feedback received 3/7/2024

Next Steps

- Analyze Speech language Pathology Assistant structures and expectations in other State Early Intervention Programs.
- Finalize recommendations to develop a graduate program approval process and deliver next set of recommendations to the Bureau of Early Intervention.
- Convene academic partners across NYS to expand exposure to NYS Competency Areas and create a forum for academic programs to discuss the creation of concentrations and specializations in Early Intervention.
- Awaiting the completion of Telehealth Surveys by parents and providers disseminated by NYS BEI on 3/4/2024.

Questions

