



April 23, 2019

Dear New York State Early Intervention Providers:

On behalf of the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO), serving as the collective voice of all 58 local health departments, we are writing to reinforce our gratitude for your commitment to the families receiving service through the County Early Intervention program in New York State.

As you know, the 2019-2020 proposed executive budget included a 5% rate increase for targeted provider types including licensed speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physical therapists. According to New York State Department of Health, this rate increase was proposed following careful review of capacity rate data available within the Department. NYSACHO fully supported the proposed 5% rate increase, with a caveat that this increase be extended and inclusive of all Early Intervention service provider types including service coordinators and evaluators.

Every year, NYSACHO engages in strategic lobbying activities with key decision makers within the Governor's Office, Executive Branch, New York State Senate and New York State Assembly. Extending the rate increase to include all providers was one of the priority budget requests NYSACHO focused on this year. We also worked with partners from multiple children's advocacy groups to coordinate our messaging and ensure we were being consistent in our push for an all-encompassing provider rate increase. After reviewing the final enacted budget, we were disappointed to see that our request was not included this year.

We know firsthand how important it is, particularly to the families receiving services that we continue to advocate for policy that will increase service availability for Early Intervention in New York State. NYSACHO has already engaged in strategic planning discussions with our contracted lobbyist about regrouping and reinforcing this priority for next year. We plan to reach out to you in late summer or early fall of 2019 for direction on how to best engage all of you in this discussion. In the meantime, we hope that you will consider remaining an active provider for the Early Intervention program. Your leadership and involvement in the program is absolutely paramount to our collective ability to protect and serve families in need and we are grateful for your involvement.

While the rate increase for targeted providers is a step in the right direction, we are not giving up hope on future achievements to address the service needs of the EI population, including expansion of an increase for all providers. NYSACHO and providers across the state realize that the best plan of care is a plan that is coordinated and team-oriented, with multiple disciplines

working collaboratively to ensure comprehensive care. It is for this reason that we stand in support of Early Intervention providers receiving a rate increase.

If you have any questions about this correspondence, please contact Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director at NYSACHO, 518-456-7905 x108 or [sarah@nysacho.org](mailto:sarah@nysacho.org). Thank you again for your commitment to the Early Intervention program and we look forward to future policy and budget changes which will strengthen the program statewide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Pettit". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "P" and a cursive "A".

Paul A. Pettit, MSL  
Public Health Director  
Genesee and Orleans Counties  
President, NYSACHO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah M. Ravenhall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Ravenhall, MHA, CHES  
Executive Director, NYSACHO