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**"UniteOurVoices" Newsletter # 144**

**URGENT NEED FOR INPUT From Families & Self-Advocates !  
July 21, 2015**

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Dearest Advocates:

The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) has scheduled a LIVE question and answer session about the new proposed residential and respite rate structures (which include group/host homes, community living support and respite services) geared specifically toward individuals receiving services and their family members under the COMP disability waivers in Georgia. This will also impact the NOW waiver as well.

If you currently receiving services under the NOW/COMP waiver at this time, please take the time to be a part of this LIVE teleconference and/or submit your comments and questions by MONDAY, JULY 27, 2015.

One opportunity for improvement in Georgia, is having more families and self-advocates participate in the waiver renewal process. This is our time to get involved with this first phase of the rate study now (other services will be evaluated as well in the future).

**This LIVE teleconference for families will be on Thursday, July 23, 2015 10:00 AM- 12:30 PM EST.** (I realize this is short notice but please try to participate and/or submit comments)

Step 1: **Register** for the event by <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2074964627056430850> (Name and E-mail address only needed)

Step 2: **PREPARE:** Before this session, please take time to listen to the COMP Waiver Individual & Family pre-recorded webinar message <https://vimeo.com/134100164> and to see answers to frequently asked questions for self-advocates and families: <http://dbhdd.georgia.gov/questions-and-answers-individuals-and-families>

If you want even more detailed information, then review the proposed rate structures go to: <http://dbhdd.georgia.gov/residential-and-respite-cost-study>

Step 3: **Please submit your comments and questions to DBHDD**<http://dbhdd.georgia.gov/webform/residential-cost-study-feedback> **by Monday, July 27, 2015!**

Please take the time to listen to the recorded message and review the on-line resource material before the Live Question / Answer teleconference.

Here are some potential "**highlighted**" changes that you may want to consider (both positive and negative) that may impact your family that should be considered when submitting your comments and questions to DBHDD:

**Group/Host Homes:** Rates vary based on a members level of need / home size (currently, there is only a single published rate). Four rate categories are being proposed based on level of need. Annual 344 day billing limit (current limit is 27 days/month)

**Community Living Support (CLS):** The daily rate to be eliminated and 15 min limits revised. They are also looking to eliminate the "personal assistance retainer" due to not being utilized. This maybe an issue for those that are in the hospital for long periods of time and need to retain their staff. I think more education needs to be done on this area in order for it to be utilized effectively. Also- increasing the annual limit from \$46,909 to \$51,660 (10.1% increase)

In addition, it is being proposed that there be a monthly cap for CLS services of \$4,800/month. This maybe an issue for school age children that need more services in the summer time or for those families that schedule vacations and need more services only during certain times of the year.

**Respite:** Increase rate of 14% and allow for billing up to 8 hours / day.

**Overall,** there are proposed changes to the current exceptional rate process. Please refer to webinar for additional information.

**NOTE:** The above information was obtained from Burns & Associates, Inc. - GDBHDD, Residential & Respite Cost Study, Overview of Proposed Rate Models & Changes to Services Requirements" presentation dated 7/14/15. This was just a few of items that may be considered as families & self-

advocates during this input process. To see the full presentation, please go to <https://vimeo.com/134100164>.

I hope you find this information helpful and take the time to get involved now to comment and ask questions as families and self-advocates of Georgia!

***"United - We Will Make A Difference"***

Sincerely,  
***Heidi J. Moore***

**Parent Advocate for Children & Adults with Disabilities and Cancer**

For more information and to see previous newsletters and disability information, please go to [www.UniteOurVoices.com](http://www.UniteOurVoices.com).

Join Heidi on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/UniteOurVoices](http://www.twitter.com/UniteOurVoices) and Facebook Group at [https://www.facebook.com/groups/43510109921721/?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/groups/43510109921721/?ref=br_tf)

To follow Jacob's Journey with Leukemia, please go to: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/prayforjacobmoore> or [www.teamjacob.org](http://www.teamjacob.org) . To watch Jacob's Journey with Cancer video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GjPfmIZ76g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GjPfmIZ76g)

***"Help The Children Now, So They Can Help Themselves Later!"***

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