



Department
of Health

Provider Workforce Capacity Task Force Update

June 13, 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

Task Force 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 Workforce Capacity Task Force is committed to supporting the NYS Bureau of Early Intervention (Bureau) in its goal of building the Early Intervention workforce.
 - Recommended reducing the number of clock hours required to become an approved provider from 1600 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 Bureau's Telehealth Guidance Document.
 - Informed the development of a webpage regarding the Competency Areas.

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.

Examining Requirements of Interdisciplinary Professional Development

- As part of the development of the competencies, structural issues were identified affecting the development and growth of the Early Intervention workforce, including:
 - Standard curricula requirements 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 student licensure or certification requirements.

Examining Requirements of Interdisciplinary Professional Development

- To examine and act upon the structural issues identified, the task force partnered with the NYC Early Childhood Research Network to engage a funder to support a research project to review requirements and make recommendations.
 - Draft report submitted to the task force on 2/2024
 - Task force sent feedback to research team on 2/2024
 - Final report received on 3/1/2024
 - Committee Chairs submitted Report to the Bureau on 3/6/2024
 - Final report submitted to the City University of NY Research Network, to Bureau, and to the Task Force along with a presentation to the State Early Intervention Council on 3/14/2024
 - Presentations to stakeholders are ongoing

Summary of Recommendations

	Early Childhood Special Education (Students With Disabilities; Birth through 2 nd grade ECSE (SWD-EC, B-2 ND))	Allied Health Disciplines (OT, PT, SLP)
Proposed EI Amendments to NYSED Regulations and Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include “<i>Birth to 3 years</i>” specific language with general and specific SWD-EC regulations. 2. Incorporate the <i>NYSDOH Five Competencies for Early Interventionists within SWD-EC 13 subcategories</i>. 3. Require “<i>Birth to 3 Years</i>” fieldwork and/or student-teaching experiences – in EI and with infants/toddlers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include “<i>Birth to 3 years</i>” specific language. 2. Incorporate the <i>NYSDOH Five Competencies for Early Interventionists</i>. 3. Require “<i>Birth to 3 years</i>” fieldwork experiences 4. Proposed memoranda – require “<i>Birth to 3 years</i>” above the entry requirements. 5. Continuing education regulations – provide EI-specific content.
Cross-Disciplinary Pathways to obtain skills/knowledge in EI competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NYSDOH EI Memoranda - “Dear Colleague” – Clarification of Existing Policy 2. Interdisciplinary Extension in Early Intervention 3. Annotation for Teaching- Supporting Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities in Early Intervention 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NYSDOH EI Memoranda - “Dear Colleague” - Clarification of Existing EI Policy 2. Interdisciplinary Extension in Early Intervention 3. Annotation for Teaching-Supporting Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities in Early Intervention
Individual Pathways to Obtain skills/knowledge in EI competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Credit-bearing college EI/ECSE courses/programs 2. Continuing Education courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-credential courses • Continuing Education Units (CEUs) • Continuing Education Teacher and Leader Units (CE/CTLEs) 3. Modules/Trainings from NYSDOH EI 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Credit-bearing college EI/ECSE courses/programs 2. Continuing Education Courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-credential courses • Continuing Education Units (CEUs) • Continuing Education Teacher and Leader Units (CTLEs) 3. Modules/Trainings from NYSDOH EI



Current Project: Recommendations to Support Workforce Development

- Based on the findings of the Research Network Academic Team, the task force developed the following recommendations that would allow the Bureau to support Early Intervention workforce development and institutions of higher education in including the Early Intervention competencies Early Intervention and infant and toddler clinical experiences in the graduate curricula:
- The recommendations and the graduate program approval process was reviewed by nine (9) graduate academic programs across four (4) disciplines throughout New York State for review.
 - Substantive feedback was received 12/1/2023
 - Feedback integrated and sent for final task force review 2/20/24
 - Final task force feedback received 3/7/2024
 - Final documents were updated and submitted to the Bureau 5/1/2024



Recommendation 1: Graduate Program Approval

- For the Bureau to implement a Graduate Program Approval process to further expedite qualified personnel becoming approved providers by **counting the number of hours of Early Intervention-focused coursework and the number of hours of clinical fieldwork with infants and toddlers** that students complete towards their requirement of 1,000 hours
 - Application for Graduate Programs
 - Rubric for determination of competency areas integration into the graduate curricula by each program
 - Draft Approval letter for Graduate Programs
 - FAQs about the process (developed based on graduate program review)

Graduate Program Approval: Criteria

- Graduate programs that may apply:
 - Have a program in a discipline identified as qualified personnel in the NYS Early Intervention regulations
 - Approved by NYS Education Department or the NYS Education Department Office of the Professions
 - School, department or program is accredited
 - Can submit verification of the number of hours per credit for their courses
 - Offers one or more courses that integrate the Bureau Competency Areas into their graduate curriculum
 - Provides and coordinates clinical fieldwork placements for students in birth to five settings

Additional Recommendations

- Post approved graduate programs that integrate the competency areas into their curricula on the NYS Competency Areas webpage.
- Issuing a letter to NYS Early Intervention approved providers that clinical supervisors may fulfil their Early Intervention Provider Agreement requirements for professional development through clinical supervision, with a letter from the partnering academic institution.

Additional Recommendations

- Make the NYS Early Intervention application for Graduate Programs available on the Bureau's Competencies webpage
- Consider mechanisms for clinical supervisors to obtain Continuing Education Units/ Continuing Teacher and Leader Education for providing clinical supervision to graduate students.

Additional Recommendations

- Develop a model consent to use with families to support fieldwork placements in the home, community and group settings
- Expedite the review of provider approvals for individuals associated with approved graduate programs
- Expanding the approval process to post-graduate professional development programs and continuing education contact hours related to the competency areas

Additional Recommendations

- Explore funding opportunities to provide incentives for:
 - The integration of competency areas into Institute of Higher Education curricula
 - Support fieldwork opportunities by providing funding to providers to support clinical supervision in Early Intervention birth to three settings
 - Provide student scholarships from a range of neighborhoods in the approved graduate programs to support building a culturally and linguistically diverse licensed or certified Early Intervention workforce

Next Steps

- Review graduate approval and other recommendation with the Bureau to determine next steps
- Review and discuss the City University of NY Research Team Recommendations
- Analyze Speech Language Pathology Assistant structures and expectations in other State Early Intervention Programs.
- 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 analysis of Telehealth Surveys by parents and providers disseminated by the Bureau on 3/4/2024.

Questions

