

Senate Health & Human Services

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HB22-1268 Medicaid Mental Health Reimbursement Rates Report

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Blair Skinner For Early Childhood Wellness Place	<p>Thank you, members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, I appreciate your time and attention,</p> <p>My name is Blair Skinner, LMFT, owner of Early Childhood Wellness Place in Broomfield where we work with children 0-12 with both private insurance and Medicaid. Currently we serve close to 150 children and have 100 more on our wait list. I am also the President of the Broomfield Early Childhood Council, and a member of COMBINE.</p> <p>Thank you for considering this important first step toward rate policies that will strengthen the workforce, thus providing resources for all of those in need of behavioral health in Colorado.</p> <p>I want to share my experience of getting credentialed to help clients with Medicaid. It took 6 months to get credentialed with Colorado Medicaid, a process so complex and opaque that I hired a credentialing specialist to help. Once this was complete, I then needed to get credentialed with CO Access and CCHA. This took 6 more months. During this nearly year-long process, I had no idea what I would be paid if credentialed. I had already invested significant time, energy, and financial resources into the process when we were informed of the terms of the RAE contract. These terms are non-negotiable, and as small providers we have no ability to appeal or negotiate with the large RAEs and their attorneys. They write into the contracts that they are free to change any terms at any time without any warning. This can result in decreased pay, unreasonable clawbacks, and increase in administrative work for small providers who are not paid for their administrative time.</p> <p>I could have walked away at this point, but please know that I am personally and professionally committed to working with children with Medicaid. I just ask to be treated fairly while doing so. I ask that while I serve those at highest need, the state will be looking out for providers like me because I want to be able to continue to do this job long term. This job is important.</p> <p>Please also know that most independent providers are highly trained, experienced, experts in their field. And these children and families deserve to be seen by trained and experienced providers. Parents have thanked us for working with Medicaid because they know Medicaid is not an easy bureaucracy to work with. They thank me because they feel confident bringing their young children to our clinic.</p> <p>Thank you again for your time today. Independent providers and our clients are counting on your vote.</p>