
Douglas System of Care



SYSTEM OF CARE
DOUGLAS

September 26, 2022

To: Governor Kate Brown, Sen. Knopp, Sen. Gelser-Blouin, and Dir. Lilia Teninty
500 Summer St. NE, E-02
Salem, OR 97301

From: Douglas System of Care
Re: Paid Parent Caregivers Permanent Policy

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregon children with significant medical, behavioral, and mental health needs were temporarily able to have their parents as their paid in-home caregivers through Oregon Developmental Disabilities Services. The benefits were immediate and dramatic. Families reported their kids were healthier than they had been, their homes stabilized, and there was a reduction in hospital admissions. This successful program must be made permanent and expanded to all children receiving in-home caregiver support.

Children are assessed for their needs annually with determinations made about the number of support hours needed above and beyond typically expected parenting duties that they require in order to be safe, happy, and healthy. The existence of an in-home caregiver program is only reaching its goals of supporting disabled children if the services are able to be used. Families report labor shortages and system complexity as barriers that prevent access to allotted attendant care hours. In addition, many families are not able to bring outside support workers into their homes due to the severity and complexity of their child's behavioral and/or medical support needs.

Oregon's in-home caregiver program seeks to assist developmentally disabled children with their support needs, but it falls short of this goal when the service it offers cannot be accessed by the children who need it. A paid parent caregiver program enables more children to access this necessary support. The paid parent caregiver program has been shown to meet Oregon's ethical, strategic, and legal obligations to ensure person-centered care. It provides stability and needed support for our state's disabled children, reduces hospitalizations, improves outcomes, and affords these children the ability to live and thrive in their own homes, in their own communities.

We support this paid parent-caregiver option for children in Oregon and ask you to please join us. Support legislation for a permanent paid parent-caregiver program that includes all children receiving in-home caregiver supports in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Douglas System of Care Executive Council

Robin Hill-Dunbar, The Ford Family Foundation

Dr. Greg Brigham, Adapt

Sarah Wickersham, Douglas C.A.R.E.S

Bryan Hinson, Douglas ESD

Desta Walsh, DHS

Carol Eck, Mercy

Dr. Douglas Carr, Umpqua Health Alliance