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Contact: Brandon Cwalina, ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov

In Delaware County, Shapiro Administration Highlights Governor's Proposal for Major Investments in Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Services, Workforce



Morton, PA – Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh today visited Children and Adult Disability & Educational Services (CADES), a provider serving Pennsylvanians with intellectual disabilities and autism (ID/A) in Delaware County, and discussed the need for historic investments in Governor Josh Shapiro's 2024-25 proposed budget, which would increase the number of Pennsylvanians who can access ID/A services, and support the professionals who care for Pennsylvanians with ID/A.

"DHS works to make sure that our neighbors, friends, and loved ones with ID/A have the services and supports they need to thrive in the community of their choosing. But we know that, too often, we are falling short in helping them meet this goal," said **Secretary Arkoosh**. "Governor Shapiro's budget proposal affirms the dignity of all Pennsylvanians with ID/A by eliminating the waiting list for services while investing in the value and importance of ID/A service providers and direct support professionals."

Governor Shapiro's budget proposal, which has received bipartisan support, would invest **\$483 million** in federal and state funding to provide more resources for home and community-based service providers so they have the ability to increase the average starting wage from approximately \$15/hour to \$17/hour; an increase in wages would both attract and retain the qualified staff who provide these essential services. Governor Shapiro announced late last year that DHS would re-examine rates earlier than required to better support home and community-based service providers and the direct support professionals who dedicate their careers to

helping Pennsylvanians with ID/A. In addition, service providers also received a one-time supplemental payment in June to assist with workforce recruitment and retention.

Earlier this year, Governor Shapiro directed DHS to immediately release additional program capacity to counties, which will allow an additional 1,650 Pennsylvanians to receive services this year. The 2024-25 proposed budget seeks to build on this by investing **\$78 million** in federal and state funds to serve an additional 1,500 Pennsylvanians in the next fiscal year.

If passed, **Governor Shapiro's** budget would increase the number of Pennsylvanians with ID/A who are able to receive home and community-based services, kicking off a multi-year growth strategy to make Pennsylvania a national leader and end its adult emergency waiting list. To support this growth, the budget would increase rates for providers, which will support higher wages for the direct support professionals who care for Pennsylvanians with ID/A.

Secretary Arkoosh visited one of CADES' licensed Community Living Arrangement (CLA) homes, a setting where individuals with ID/A can live more independently through the provision of a variety of services that promote community living, employment, communication, self-direction, choice and control. CADES operates CLAs in Delaware, Chester, and Bucks counties where adults living with ID/A have made life-long bonds with their community.

CADES was incorporated in 1951 as the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Delaware County, opening their doors to school-age students who did not have any other formal education opportunity. As those students grew into adults there was a need to create meaningful work and social activities, and so CADES created day programming options where adults could flourish. At the heart of CADES are 450 mission-driven staff who put the human in human service. Their goal every year is to support more than 700 children and adults, their families, and each other in learning, socializing, working and living an everyday life.

"If passed, Governor Shapiro's budget will be a game changer for agencies like CADES, providing critical resources to support a living wage for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who provide 24-hour care in community settings. The work of a DSP is all-encompassing, they are all at once a nurse and therapist, teacher and cook, caregiver and surrogate parent. They are also predominantly women, working mothers, and represent varied racial and ethnic backgrounds – diverse and consistently marginalized. Governor Shapiro's budget will provide a meaningful impact to the pay for these mission-critical employees, demonstrating that we, as a community, value them and their contribution," said **Julie Alleman, CADES CEO**. "Wages are not the only positive result that will stem from the approval of Governor Shapiro's budget. Providing quality support to the ID/A community, the type of quality we would want for our beloved family members, is a result of key investments in training to advance clinical skills for the DSP workforce, and in infrastructure, including modifications to homes and vehicles to ensure quality care and safety for both the individuals receiving services and the staff who support them. The impact to the ID/A community will be significant. It will build hope and transform lives."

Read the Governor's full [budget](#) proposal.

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