



## **Advocacy Matters Newsletter Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire February 18, 2022**

### **Legislative Update-Teresa Rosenberger, Lobbyist, Bernstein Shur**

**The House and Senate met this week in full session. The Senate was predictable.**

They unanimously voted to advance SB 422, which establishes an adult dental benefit under the state Medicaid program. The bill will now be considered by the Senate Finance Committee. The bill will help NH's low-income, frail, elderly, and adults with disabilities enrolled in Medicaid gain access to dental care, a benefit currently only offered to children on Medicaid in NH.

Also, SB 385 which allows a financial institution to place a hold on disbursing funds if they believe there is activity exploiting vulnerable adults passed the Senate unanimously.

One of the first of the multiple special education bills has passed the Senate, SB 381 which creates the office of advocate for special education and funds it.

Another win in the Senate as SB 394 which modifies the definition of "child with a disability" to include persons to 21 years of age and for the school year during which they turn 21.

The omnibus Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) technical bill, SB 430, passed the Senate. Among other things, it establishes a pilot program for individuals with developmental disabilities; expands the state Medicaid plan to include preventative health care benefits; directs the DHHS to submit a Medicaid state plan amendment to allow certain family caregivers or legally responsible persons of Medicaid recipients to serve as personal care attendants and makes an appropriation; and revises (decreases the time) the "look back" period for Medicaid eligibility for long term care.

**The House met for two days this week to vote on Committee bills and it was quite a wild ride. The Democrats overturned several Committee recommendations. Finally, the Committee chairs began asking the body to Table bills so they could not be overturned.**

The House votes on bills that we have an interest in are:

HB 1480-FN, which sought to add a specific diagnosis, familial dysautonomia, to those currently listed in RSA 171-A:2 V as part of the definition of "developmental disability" was

killed. The Committee believed that adding familial dysautonomia would open the door to adding hundreds of other rare diagnosis, making the law unwieldy.

HB 1659, which removes the specification that the department of Safety do criminal history background checks for the employment of health care workers passed. Currently, criminal background checks for employment in licensed health care facilities, including residential care facilities, are having to be done through the NH Department of Safety. This bill will allow facilities to use third-party criminal background check services or the Department of Safety, whomever they choose, to expedite the response in providing the background check which is required as a condition of employment. It also allows a licensed nursing assistant to begin working on a conditional basis under the direct on-site supervision of a licensed staff person if he or she has passed a background check in the past 12 months as part of the education program and attest that no disqualifying criminal history exists. This bill will allow the filling of vacant positions in health care facilities in a timelier fashion and ensure that the delivery of quality services in the licensed health care and residential care facilities is sustained.

Have a nice holiday weekend.

## **Brain Injury Public Policy Committee Meeting - February 8, 2022**

The next Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire Public Policy Committee ZOOM Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 4:30pm.**

All are welcome. The ZOOM link to attend the meeting is:

### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83739812715?pwd=Rk83RnZfVHlPZkJKYU1SGIvZ1VUQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 3981 2715

Passcode: 113797

## **Brain Injury Legislative Status Report**

Attached find the most recent Brain Injury Legislative Status Report for your review.

Take care-

***Ellen***

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