

2023 IMPACT REPORT



California Disability
Services Association



www.Cal-DSA.org



Info@Cal-DSA.org



1107 9th St. Suite 1025,
Sacramento, CA 95814



Barry Jardini
Executive Director



Wendy Forkas
President,
Board of Directors

About CDSA

Through the Lanterman Act, Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are entitled to the services and supports they need to live the lives of their own choosing. **For more than 50 years, California Disability Services Association (CDSA) has been advocating for the community-based organizations who fulfill the promise of the Lanterman Act.**

We represent more than 115 organizations statewide, who support and empower more than 100,000 Californians with IDD and their families. CDSA is California's largest and most diverse voice supporting IDD service providers. Our members create choices and opportunities for people with disabilities.



Aligned to Empower.



Vision

Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities have full access and support to pursue individual goals for learning, working, socializing, and living.

Mission

California Disability Services Association champions options and access for the IDD community by connecting, representing, and empowering the providers who support them.

Values

DIGNITY

Hearing and respecting the needs and wishes of every person

DIVERSITY

Maintaining inclusive, accessible space for differing needs and ideas

COLLABORATION

Integrating the contributions of each for the benefit of all

INNOVATION

Creatively adapting to optimize the impact of uncertain resources

INTEGRITY

Operating in terms of mutual truth and wholeness

COURAGE

Keeping steadfast to our vision despite persistent obstacles

Moving rates & funding forward

A SMOOTHER TRANSITION INTO RATE REFORM

At the final stage of rate model implementation, total service rates will be composed of 90% “base rate” and 10% quality incentive. If eligible providers couldn’t achieve the incentive right away – or worse, there was no quality measure on which to earn an incentive – they would receive only the 90% base rate rather than their full rate model. If their rates were already above 90% of their rate model as of January 1, 2023 (the last rate adjustment before full implementation), they would have received a rate reduction.

The “90/10 issue” risked approximately

\$1 Billion

in funding for disability services across the state



CDSA worked with a variety of stakeholders and allies in the Legislature to develop an alternative proposal that maintains services throughout implementation but preserves the original intent of ensuring quality.

Passed in trailer bill language (TBL), our solution allows providers to initially qualify for the incentive payment through broad outcomes measures. Rates currently set above the 90% base rate are protected through June 2026, even if the provider does not qualify for an incentive payment. This gives providers more time to ensure they can earn their incentive without the prospect of a destabilizing rate cut. It also provides more time for the department to develop meaningful measures.

IMPROVED INDEPENDENT LIVING RATES

Since the first draft of the rate study in 2019, CDSA has been pushing the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to address fundamental flaws in the Independent Living Services (ILS) rate model. Wage assumptions didn't capture the daily functions and skills of ILS staff, and other inputs didn't properly reflect some service-specific expenses. These issues resulted in a woefully insufficient rate model for ILS. Once the Legislature passed rate model implementation, ILS providers would have been rapidly left behind in a process that was meant to increase access to quality services.

In 2023, DDS included funding to support modifying the ILS rate in their May Revision budget proposal, to the tune of \$15 million total fund (TF), \$8.5 million of which is from the state General Fund (GF). The revised rate and subsequent rate increases began in January 2024. Now that this commitment and funding are in statute, CDSA can work with DDS on the details of the ILS rate model.



PROGRESS IN CONTEXT

While extremely important for disability service providers, the policy modifications in our 2023-24 budget proposals could have been easy to ignore, especially following such sweeping rate reform. Instead, they were among several other policy changes that established or revised expectations for DDS and regional centers. The Legislature is making clear that they are still invested in and monitoring the regional center system. This is the culmination of decades of our advocacy.

Protecting service options

Since the pandemic, CDSA has been advocating to maintain flexibility in service delivery and options developed for Californians with disabilities. We worked closely with DDS on multi-year extension of policies that accomplish both.

Monthly billing for transportation

Sustain access to these critical services post-pandemic

Remote day, independent living, and behavioral therapy services

Maintain availability of options for individuals and families

NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The California Department of Aging (CDA) launched the Bridge to Recovery grant with state budget funding supported by CDSA and our partners. CDSA was also invited to advise CDA during development of the program.



With CDSA promotion and direct assistance, our members received more than

\$5.2 Million

in additional grant funding through the Bridge to Recovery program

Amplifying community voices

Our advocacy is stronger when we center the voices of individuals and families served. CDSA is always aiming to increase grassroots engagement from the disability community.

Our members are making it happen!



EVERYTHING CHANGED: A BRAND NEW LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS CONFERENCE

Self-advocates, family members, and DSPs made up nearly

15% of all advocates

representing CDSA in Legislative Affairs Conference meetings!

In 2023, CDSA reconvened the Legislative Affairs Conference in person after two years of virtual conferences during the pandemic. The Legislature just moved into the Capitol Swing Space, a brand new building that even the most seasoned of our advocates would now have to learn how to navigate.

Smaller offices presented a new logistical challenge, requiring a high level of coordination between CDSA members and legislative staff to ensure accessibility. Much of the Legislature itself had just changed following an election year, bringing staffing changes along too.



Empowering advocates

Members have been putting in the work to cultivate strong advocates in their own communities. CDSA enjoyed several opportunities to support and highlight those community advocates in 2023. It was wonderful watching advocates at Arc Fresno grow from advocating in meetings and hearings to presenting a session at our Annual Meeting!



Ishmael and Matt from Arc Fresno receive training from CDSA staff before a Budget Committee hearing

Ishmael and Marshall join CDSA staff and members to present an Annual Meeting plenary about advocacy

Highlighting our workforce

CDSA initiated a partnership with DDS in early 2023 to promote Direct Support Professional Recognition Week (DSPRW) at the state level. Through this partnership, we got the chance to honor California DSPs like never before!



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

September 10-16, 2023

Direct Support Professional Recognition Week

This Direct Support Professional Recognition Week, California honors the many Direct Support Professionals providing essential caregiving services to Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities. California is the only state that promises individuals with disabilities the services and supports they need to participate in their communities, coordinated by Regional Centers and fulfilled by service provider organizations. Direct Support Professionals deliver on this promise to more than 400,000 Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families every day.

Every Californian with disabilities deserves to be included as a valued member of the community. Working toward that reality is the fundamental role of a Direct Support Professional – which extends far beyond caregiving. Direct Support Professionals build close, respectful, and trusting relationships, becoming integral in the day-to-day lives of the people and families they serve. Whether it is working at a job, finding transportation, or accessing community life, Direct Support Professionals provide consistent support for Californians with disabilities to meet their goals and become more independent.

Direct Support Professionals are at the heart of disability services, and the Newsom Administration has advanced investments in recent years to support this foundational workforce. This includes \$127.8 million for training and development stipends, \$22.5 million to fund paid internships in the field, and \$11.9 million to establish a competency-based training and certification program to foster a more sustainable and professional workforce. With women and people of color at the forefront, the direct support workforce reflects the diversity of our state, making it possible to meet the unique needs of Californians with disabilities and their families in every community. Direct Support Professionals are creating a safer, more accessible California for all through their work.

As California celebrates Direct Support Professionals and their invaluable contributions to our state, we renew our commitment to strengthening the Direct Support Professional workforce and all direct caregiving jobs serving people of all ages and abilities in California.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM • STATE CAPITOL • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814 • (916) 445-2841

RECOGNITION FROM THE GOVERNOR

Governor Newsom penned a letter in honor of DSPRW and recognizing the important work of DSPs statewide

SOCIAL MEDIA WITH DDS

CDSA worked with DDS and members to collect DSP photos and stories that were highlighted on DDS social media

California Department of Developmental Services
September 15, 2023

#DSPRW2023 #HonoringDSPs #InclusionMatters



Direct Support Professional Recognition Week 2023

California Disability Services Association is with Toward Maximum Independence.
September 15, 2023

Serving people with disabilities is more than just a job to Marina. Their achievements are important to her, and she attends events like dance recitals and soccer games on the weekends. During #DSPRW2023, we celebrate Marina and all dedicated Direct Support Professionals.



DSPS HONORED AT ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting 2023 location was perfect for inviting local DSPs to be recognized with their own copy of the letter from Governor Newsom

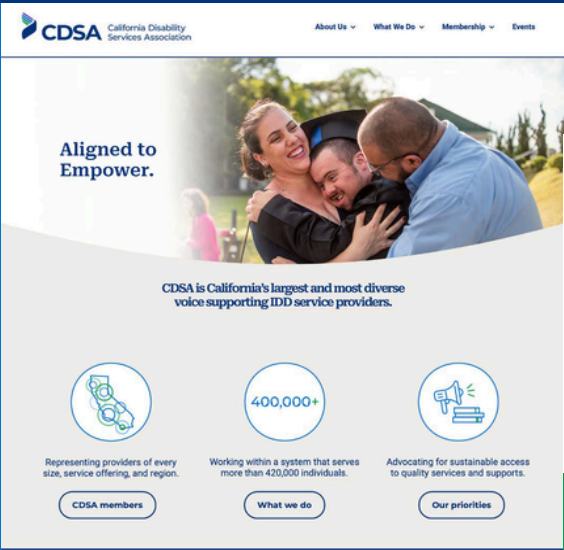
Growing our strength

Throughout 2023, something important was happening in the background of all the CDSA accomplishments, service to members, coordination with partners, and advocacy to policymakers. The “Strategic Growth Initiative,” our multiyear strategic plan, rebranding, and membership development project that started in late 2022, was progressing toward completion.


The Strategic Growth Initiative required our Board of Directors and staff to focus on the association itself and envision the future of CDSA. Members reported on what they liked most about CDSA, what they thought could improve, and their own vision for the system. That input influenced the entire process – from the concept of our new brand to each step of the strategic plan.

All that work in 2023 prepared us for a successful and exciting launch!

REDESIGNED WEBSITE



STRATEGIC PLAN



NEW BRAND