

INFORMATIONAL LETTER NO. 2701-MC-FFS

DATE: August 15, 2025

TO: Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers, Habilitation Services, Integrated Health Homes (IHH), Money Follows the Person (MFP), Case Managers, Targeted Case Managers, Community-Based Case Managers, Community-Based Neurobehavioral Rehabilitation Services (CNRS), Home Health Agencies (HHA), Behavioral Health Services, Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), Division of Aging and Disability Services

APPLIES TO: Managed Care (MC) and Fee-for-Service (FFS)

FROM: Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Iowa Medicaid

RE: September 2025 Competency-Based Training (CBT) Announcement

EFFECTIVE: Upon Receipt

This informational letter (IL) announces upcoming competency-based training (CBT) opportunities for Iowa Long-Term Support Services (LTSS) providers of all types. CBT ensures providers and direct support professionals acquire skills that can be applied to member care. Training is provided at no cost to agencies or direct support professionals.

How to Talk to Porcupines: Crossing the Communication Divide
September 10, 2025, | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | Attend in-person or virtually

- [In-Person Registration](#)¹

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https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=TXssjVolF0aFNjinbRmw2IRaV3_SxGFOoIVy3GK3mTRUNIIHMUpQUE9aV0I4VE1HNVY0MUZJU42Uy4u&route=shorturl

- Location: Carroll Library
- [Virtual Registration through Zoom²](#)

Presenters: Allegra (Allie) Birdseye-Hannula, How to Talk to Porcupines Owner

Session Description: People who work with young people often encounter prickly personalities (porcupines) and difficult situations. Communication breakdowns such as differing perspectives, assumptions, or heightened emotions are often at the heart of these challenges. Unless you learn to quickly defuse and de-escalate these situations, your program or classroom outcomes may be at risk.

Effectively redirecting a young person can help both of you cross communication divides. Learning how to break down communication barriers will help you better engage with the young people and clients you serve. This training will give you a clear understanding of porcupines. You'll explore principles of effective communication strategies, including active listening, strategic questioning, body language, and non-verbal skills to positively engage with porcupines.

Through a mix of lecture and online interaction, you'll broaden your communication know-how to skillfully handle porcupines and prickly situations. You'll gain confidence by learning to implement your own action plan for de-escalating and redirecting porcupines. Come ready to learn, laugh, and engage! You'll leave with a new appreciation for porcupines.

Intended Audience: Anyone who works with children and those who are interested in learning more about communication techniques and working with young people with prickly personalities and difficult situations.

Objectives:

- Learn how to identify porcupines
- Broaden your communication know-how to skillfully handle prickly people and situations
- Implement your own action plan for de-escalating and redirecting porcupines

These sessions will be recorded and stored in our training archive. The monthly training schedule and archive are on the [Competency-Based Training and Technical Assistance webpage³](#) on the [Iowa Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\) website⁴](#) and will be updated as training opportunities become available. Additionally, trainings are

² https://telligent.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VdmivO9mTfOgovf_hX8fnQ

³ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/welcome-iowa-medicaid/provider-services/provider-trainings/cbt>

⁴ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/>

now being stored on the [Learning Management System \(LMS\) powered by Trualta](#)⁵. Should you have additional questions after viewing the website and announcement, please direct them to the CBT specialist at hcbstta@hhs.iowa.gov.

If you have questions, please contact Iowa Medicaid Provider Services or the appropriate MCO:

Iowa Medicaid Provider Services:

- Phone: 1-800-338-7909
- Email: imeproviderservices@hhs.iowa.gov

Managed Care Organizations (MCOs):

Iowa Total Care:

- Phone: 1-833-404-1061
- Email: providerrelations@iowatotalcare.com
- Website: <https://www.iowatotalcare.com>

Molina Healthcare of Iowa:

- Phone: 1-844-236-1464
- Email: aproviderrelations@molinahealthcare.com
- Website: <https://www.molinahealthcare.com/providers/ia/medicaid/home.aspx>
- Provider Portal: <https://www.availity.com/molinahealthcare>

Wellpoint Iowa, Inc. (formerly Amerigroup Iowa, Inc.):

- Phone: 1-833-731-2143
- Email: ProviderSolutionsIA@wellpoint.com
- Website: <https://www.provider.wellpoint.com/iowa-provider/home>

⁵ <https://ltss-iowa-trualta.com/>