INFORMATIONAL LETTER NO. 2706–MC–FFS

DATE: September 16, 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: November 2025 Competency-Based Training (CBT) Announcement - IMPORTANT

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.

Universal Language: It's All in How You Say It
November 10, 2025, | 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Attend in-person or virtually

- In-Person Registration[1]

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[1]
https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=TXssjVoIF0aFNjinbRmw2lRaV3_SxGFOoIVy3GK3mTRUM1M5QzZaM1FDWlkxMFVXOFFWOUU0ME1FOS4u&route=shorturl

- Location: Polk County River Place - Conference Room
- [Virtual Registration through Zoom](#)[2]

Presenters: Thomas Pomeranz, EdD, Universal LifeStiles, President and CEO
Dr. Thomas Pomeranz is a nationally recognized authority, trainer, clinician, and consultant in the field of services for people with disabilities. Over the last fifty years, Dr. Thomas Pomeranz has conducted thousands of seminars and programs throughout the United States and Canada. His audience praises his ability to combine information, humor, passion, and storytelling into an informative whole that does not just present the information but really communicates it in a memorable fashion.

Find out more about Dr. Thomas Pomeranz on his website:
https://www.universallifestiles.com[3]

Session Description: In this humorous and provocative training, Dr. Thomas Pomeranz discusses the importance of using Universal Language. Tom heightens the participant's sensitivities to the impact of language in promoting respectful relationships. The evolution of slang references that devalue people is discussed. Numerous examples of insensitive language are presented with the Universal Language alternative.

Tom emphasizes that the words and language that we use are a reflection of our belief system, and it is upon these beliefs that we base our actions. Thus, Tom helps the participants gain a new insight into their inner beliefs about people with disabilities by increasing their awareness of the words they use.

Throughout the session, Tom provides attendees with strategies to master Universal Language as well as sensitively supporting others who struggle with using words of respect. It is the outcome of this session, "that the words and language we use in talking about our friends - the words and language they use in talking about us", will serve as the standard in how we speak to and about people with disabilities – "It's all in how you say it."

Intended Audience: Anyone who works with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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[2] https://telligen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YbTGt1zcS_eMKS4zbo4hHQ#/registration
[3] https://www.universallifestiles.com

Objectives:
- Define Universal Language
- Define politically correct language
- Define people-first language
- Explain why utilizing Universal Language is difficult
- Provide examples of the language utilized in each of the four models of service delivery
- Explain the difference between a world's denotation, connotation, and slang.
- Demonstrate an appropriate strategy to support and encourage others in utilizing Universal Language
- Consistently utilize Universal Language in all verbal and written communication

Session Perks: Attendance to the training session will grant you:
- 1 year of free consultation with Dr. Tom Pomeranz (free, no fee!)
- Access to the slides, recording, and materials related to Universal Language

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 webpage[4] on the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website[5] and will be updated as training opportunities become available. Additionally, trainings are now being stored on the Learning Management System (LMS) powered by Trualta[6]. Should you have additional questions after viewing the website and announcement, please direct them to the CBT specialist at hcbstta@hhs.iowa.gov.

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[4] https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/welcome-iowa-medicaid/provider-services/provider-trainings/cbt
[5] https://hhs.iowa.gov/
[6] https://ltss-iowa-trualta.com/

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: iaproviderrelations@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