**Important Steps, Inc.**

## Early Childhood Program

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May 07, 2009

### Monthly News Letter

Dear EI Service Providers:

As we are approaching Mothers and Fathers Day, Important Steps, Inc. would like to wish you and your families’ happy holidays! We also would like to thank you for your great work and ongoing dedication to the children in need. We realize how challenging it is to provide services during the winter period in NYC: during snow conditions, poor heated homes, parking difficulties, etc. Unfortunately, our job as home-based therapists includes these struggles, but the idea of helping these wonderful children achieve their full developmental potential keeps us moving forward.

**Administrative**

***National Provider Identifier (NPI)***

As we have notified you in October of 2008, the Director of the Bureau of Early Intervention required us to request ALL Early Intervention providers who have a license to practice certain health related professions including, but not limited to, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, social work, audiology, nutrition, and psychology (PhD only) MUST obtain a National Provider Identifier (**NPI**). The NPI will be used to identify each provider on early intervention billing claim forms. Most of you have done a great job about obtaining a NPI; however we are still missing NPIs for some of you.

Recently, we were required to submit a report to NYSDOH a report with all active providers’ names and NPIs. Unfortunately, we were not able to include some of you due to missing NPI.

***It is crucial that you obtain the NPI before June 1st*, as you will not be able to continue providing EI services for Important Steps or any other NYCEIP approved agency as we will simply not be able to bill any kids under your license without the NPI.**

\*\*\*As a reminder**, 1)** Providers who are **NOT licensed** (e.g. special educators, TSHHs, service coordinators, and vision therapists) are **not required** to obtain an NPI. 2) Additionally, those of you who may have your **own agency/corporation that subcontracts** with Important Steps, you will also be required to obtain a NPI for your corporation.\*\*\*

***Progress Reports***

*During our internal Quality Assurance Audit/Review it has come to our attention that the Progress Reports are being submitted late.* ***Please note that as per NYCEIP rules and regulations the reports must be submitted to Regional Office no later than 4 weeks prior to 6 and 12 months IFSP due dates****.* Therefore, we have been requesting reports from you 8 weeks prior to the respective IFSP due date to allow time for a review by Important Steps, Inc.’ Clinical Director and submission of the report to the child’s Service Coordinator.

Accordingly, at this time we are asking for your prompt attention in this matter as it is extremely crucial for Important Steps, Inc. to submit the reports on time to avoid the delay in scheduling the IFSP which causes interruption of services and citations for Important Steps, Inc.

Please **make a note of due dates for Progress Reports from the “Assignment of Services**” you receive upon accepting the case. Our Monitoring Coordinator, Janet Rivera, has been following up with reminders **8 weeks** prior to its due date; however, the reports are still late. If reports are not received at least **4 weeks** prior to the IFSP due date, Important Steps, Inc. must notify the NYCEIP of a reason of delay, including therapist’s nameand credentials*.* Although we at Important Steps, Inc. can accept valid reasons for late submission; however, the NYCEIP finds it unacceptable. **Again, *Progress Reports must be submitted to Important Steps, Inc. 8 weeks prior to the due date*.**

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**We also wanted to address a growing issue w/progress reports for Family Training EI services**. As we strongly believe that Family as Partners Approach (FAP) makes a significant difference in how fast the children under EIP are progressing, please take special care of these services and Progress Reports.

* We realize that the first page of the 3, 6, 9 and Annual FT Reports will most likely be identical to the regular discipline Progress Reports (OT, ST, SI, etc); however, the second page MUST differentiate in its context, especially the 1st Part of the 2nd Progress Report Page.
* Please note that for FT reports you do not need to list child’s current level of functioning. The 1st part of the report MUST describe the progress family has made towards learning how to work on child’s outcomes.
* Please do not copy the Regular discipline Progress Report 2nd page for same discipline FT report as it has been rejected by the EIODs on many occasions.
* Section 4 on Page 2 of the Progress Report must include the recommendations specifically related to FT services stating if you are recommending to continue with specific freq/duration (ex. FT for OT is recommended to continue w/same frequency 1\*30 to work on the following goals…. OR …due to parents not being available for FT services it was agreed w/Ms. X that FT for OT be terminated. Please see rationale for termination.)

***Initiation of Services***

Another issue that has been raised during out internal QA Audit is the **delay in initiation of services**. We would like to remind you that as **per NYCEIP rules and regulations the service must be initiated *within 2* *weeks* from the authorized for Important Steps, Inc. Start date** (available on “Assignment of Services” and Authorization IFSP Worksheets). Therefore, the following steps must be taken:

1. Contact Parents within first **48 hours** of receiving verbal assignment to arrange the schedule.
2. Conduct 1st session no later than within **2 weeks** from the authorized date.
3. Fax the “***Assignment of Services***” with your **signature and Start Date** to our Staffing Coordinator, Zenaida Ortiz (ext. 105) to confirm the initiation of services.
4. Submit the “***Interruption in Services/Delay in Start***” Form if service is not initiated within 2 weeks.
5. **Billing Department will not process any billing invoices for the first time without assuring the “Assignment of Services” or “Interruption of Services” Forms are on file**.

***Vacations/Interruptions in Services:*** In the event the child on your case load missed more than three consecutive sessions due to your or child’s family vacation over this summer, *“Reason for Interruption*” Form needs to be placed in child’s file. Therefore, please submit this form (available on website www.importantsteps.com) for each child whose EI services were interrupted with your April billing on or before May 11th, 2009.

Please keep in mind that as per NYCEIP rules and regulations Important Steps is required to notify the child’s service coordinator **in writing** about any interruptions of three or more consecutive sessions **within 48 hours from the third missed session**. Consequently, please help us maintain our reputation and notify our Monitoring Coordinator, Angelica Olmega, of any interruptions within this time frame.

When submitting the *“Reason for Interruption*” form, indicate 1) period of the interruption, 2) reason for interruption, and 3) whether or not parents were notified of your vacation in advance and if they had requested a substitute therapist. Also, indicate if you have started to provide make ups sessions.

**As the summer is approaching and you are planning your *vacations,* please notify our Human Resources Coordinator, Yana Miller, of any upcoming vacations in writing at least 2 weeks prior of the date of your departure.**

***CPSE and EI Facility Services***

***Therapists who are interested*** in providing Related Therapeutic CPSE and EI services (i.e. OT, PT, ST, TSHH, SW, and School Psychologist), evaluations or Special Education Itinerant Services (“SEIT”) for children 3 to 5 years old, please fax the proof of fingerprinting to our office, att: Alexia Volynsky (ext. 133), immediately. ***Please note that Related Services can be provided in our facility in order to be able to schedule sessions back-to-back according to your availability and convenience.***

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Note: If you are employed by the NYC Department of Education, due to the conflict of interest you are not permitted to provide CPSE services though contracted agencies, such as Important Steps, Inc.

***Transitioning Out of EIP***

As a therapist working with a child with special needs you are responsible for assuring the smooth transition out of EIP into the Special Education or Non-Special Education System at least 120 days prior to the child’s 3rd Birthday. In order to properly assist families in such a crucial time, please explain to them about different paths they can undertake as well as to relay to them your recommendations about the need for continuation of services.

To remind you:

* Children whose 3rd Birthday is between January 1-August 31 will be aging out of the EIP on 08/31/2009
* Children whose 3rd birthday is between September 1st –December 31st will be able to continue their EI services beyond their 3rd B-Day until December 31, 2009 only in the event if found eligible for CPSE services.

**It is a very important issue, as the seats for CPSE programs are almost full at this point. Please explain this to parents. If you or parents on your case load require any additional information or assistance with CPSE evaluations or services please contact our CPSE Managing Director, Alexia Volynsky (ext. 133) and she will be happy to assist you.**

***Continuing Education***:

Enclosed with this letter you will also find In-Services and Workshops available for you to take in order to obtain required by NYSED and NYSDOH continued education credits. As you are aware all providers are required to attend 4 workshops/in-services related to early childhood special education per year. If you have taken any of those w/another provider or institution please fax a certificate of completion to our HR department, Attn: Yana Miller at 718-882-2166.

***IMPORTANT!!!!***

We are enclosing the updated information on the **Swine Flu** and some precautions that should be taken provided to us by Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Please share this information with parents on your case load.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at the above number. It is always a pleasure working with you. We appreciate you continued dedication!

Sincerely,

Janet Reznik

Program Director