

## **Early Cerebral Palsy Detection and Intervention Proposed House Memorial**

International Clinical Practice Guidelines for Cerebral Palsy were recently published. A voluntary New Mexico interdisciplinary and interagency Task Force has been working for two years to increase their knowledge and understanding of the new evidence, available tools, and interventions critical for babies at risk for Cerebral Palsy. Their goal is that New Mexico families will receive supports and services early to address their infants' developmental needs resulting in the best possible outcomes for children and families.

- Cerebral Palsy (CP) is most common physical disability in childhood with prevalence of 2.1/1000 in the developed world
- “CP describes a group of permanent disorders of the development of movement and posture, causing activity limitation, that are attributed to non-progressive disturbances that occurred in the developing fetal or infant brain.
- The motor disorders of CP are often accompanied by disturbances of sensation, perception, cognition, communication, and behavior, by epilepsy, and by secondary musculoskeletal problems.”
- Typically diagnosed between 12-24 months of age based on a combination of clinical signs, neurologic symptoms, and motor activity limitations
- 86% of parents suspect their child has cerebral palsy before the clinical diagnosis is made
- About 50% of cases have discernable early high-risk indicators arising from their perinatal history: very premature birth, atypical intrauterine growth, altered brain function, genetic abnormalities, neonatal seizures
- Training and implementation on assessments and effective, research-based interventions are needed to reduce lifelong disability and its impact on society.
- A statewide standard of care for identifying children at risk for cerebral palsy in the first 6 months of life could potentially help reduce the economic impact on families, especially from rural areas, and increase future employment potential.
- The Task Force will devise a plan for children at risk for or diagnosed with CP to receive interventions outlined by the International Practice Guidelines.
- The Task Force will be requesting funding to provide training to physicians, other primary care providers, physical therapists, and occupational therapists throughout the state to implement the International Practice Guidelines.