



**New Mexico Family Infant Toddler  
Interagency Coordinating Council**

September 26, 2014

Dear Governor Martinez:

The New Mexico Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Program is consistently ranked among the best in the nation. The FIT Program provides comprehensive early intervention services to more than 13,000 infants and toddlers. These services are available to all eligible children in New Mexico through 34 contracted FIT provider agencies.

In 2002, the Department of Health contracted with SOLUTIONS Consulting Group, LLC to perform a complete prospective rate study. The results of the rate study were released in 2003. At that time the rates were deemed inadequate. Today, only one of the recommended rates from 2003 has been implemented. In the intervening years, costs associated with the delivery of FIT services have steadily risen. Both Federal and state requirements in the provision of services have increased.

The New Mexico Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) just completed its annual planning retreat. A recent survey of FIT provider agencies confirms reports of increasing financial struggles. The continual flat funding has forced some agencies to discontinue providing these much needed services. The ICC is extremely grateful for the private advocacy efforts that resulted in \$500,000 being appropriated by the 2014 Legislature for rate increases for the FIT Program. The ICC Finance and Funding Committee worked closely with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division to apply those funds to increase selected rates. But, even with those increases, the current rates do not equal the rates recommended in the 2003 rate study. One of the five basic rates in the 2003 rate study is currently being paid at the recommended rate.

Without adequate funding, FIT provider agencies have been unable to increase wages. The lack of competitive pay and the reduction of benefits have led to an unprecedented level of staff turnover. As costs and regulations have continued to increase, the gap between costs and reimbursements has continually widened. Agencies have exhausted their financial reserves. Solid programs are experiencing operating losses. Without immediate intervention, we fear more FIT provider agencies will discontinue these services to the most fragile, vulnerable population.

FIT provider agencies have done everything asked of them. They have provided exceptional services and established the New Mexico FIT Program as one of the best in the nation. To avoid a potential tragic disruption of services to New Mexico families, the ICC recommends the State of New Mexico implement the recommendations of the 2002/2003 SOLUTIONS Consulting Group, LLC rate study.

We thank you for your attention to this critical matter,

*Karen Lucero*

Karen Lucero  
ICC Co-Chair

*Lisa Chavez*

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ICC Co-Chair

Cc: Retta Ward, DOH Secretary; Cathy Stevenson, DDS Director

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