



GREAT PROVIDER SERIES

Acuity-Based Rates | Waiver Modernization | Power In Numbers

Great Providers Advocate: Acuity-Based Rates

In order to advocate, you have to stay informed. As DODD's Waiver Modernization work moves forward, it's important to understand key concepts, like acuity-based rates.

Acuity-based rates are payment structures that adjust based on an individual's assessed level of need or "acuity." Rather than paying the same amount for a service regardless of complexity, the system would pay higher rates for individuals with more significant needs and lower rates for those who need less support.

The goal is to better match funding with the true cost of care — but getting there requires a reliable, fair assessment tool, adequate base rates, and a thoughtful transition strategy. Done well, acuity-based rates can support provider sustainability and person-centered service delivery. Done poorly, they risk destabilizing services for people with high needs.

That's why OPRA is watching this work closely and advocating for transparency and fairness every step of the way.



Waiver Modernization: Assessments & Rates

If you've attended any recent Waiver Modernization Workgroup meetings or tuned into OPRA updates, you've likely heard about DODD's plan to replace both the *Developmental Disabilities Profile (DDP)* and the *Acuity Assessment Instrument (AAI)* with a new tool: the *interRAI*. This is more than just a swap of assessment forms — it's part of a larger shift toward *acuity-based rates* in Ohio's developmental disabilities system.

The *interRAI* is a standardized assessment tool used across many systems and states. DODD has already begun discussions with system partners on implementing this new tool, with a goal of integrating it statewide, eventually linking it to how provider rates are determined. The idea is that rates would reflect the assessed needs of the individual — not just the service being delivered. You can learn more about *interRAI* and their assessment tools [here](#).



Power In Numbers

We are in the midst of a moment of transition.

There's a leadership shift happening at the Department of Developmental Disabilities. In less than 18 months, Ohio will elect a new governor. Medicaid policy is evolving — both in Columbus and in Washington, D.C. And the developmental disabilities system we've known for years is undergoing serious examination.

In times like these, the most important thing we can do is stay connected. To one another. To our mission. To a community of great providers who are learning, growing, adapting, and advocating together.

That's what OPRA is — and that's why your membership matters. Our strength is in our members. In our collective voice. In our commitment to making this system better, not just for our organizations, but for the people we serve.

As the road ahead takes shape, one thing is certain: We will navigate it together,

Pete

Pete Moore, *President & CEO*

While the transition is still in development, it's clear this shift will have major implications for providers, individuals, and service planning. We encourage providers to stay informed and engaged. You can follow the workgroup's progress and view past meeting materials and presentations [here](#).

OPRA continues to be at the table, sharing your feedback, asking questions about the impact on people, services, and providers, and advocating for a transparent, equitable process as this work unfolds.

For questions or more information, contact [Teresa Kobelt](#), OPRA's Chief Innovation Officer.

Call for Speaker Proposals

OPRA is now accepting session proposals for our 2025 Annual Conference. The conference will be held in-person and hosted at Hilton Polaris, 8700 Lyra Drive, Columbus OH on **October 23-24, 2025**.

OPRA conference attendees are typically composed of employees of all levels at both non-profit and for-profit I/DD providers. All proposals must be submitted with a clear outline ensuring your sessions are practical, forward-thinking and offer concrete tools and strategies for driving excellence in I/DD services.

[Click here](#) to submit your proposal!

