



## Pay Fair for *My Care* Talking Points

### Who Are Direct Support Workers?

- Direct Support Workers (DSPs) are a lifeline for people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- DSPs are some of the most underpaid, undervalued professionals in our state. On average, DSPs make a little more than \$11 an hour nationwide—wages bound by state and federal funding.
- The annual turnover rate has reached a crisis level of over 50% and the workforce has diminished.

### Why Are They Important?

- DSPs fulfill many critical roles. They build relationships and oftentimes provide around-the-clock care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Without the availability of DSPs and services, individuals cannot be included in their communities and may have to seek more costly institutional care to survive.
- DSPs not only give individuals a seat at the table but help them to survive and thrive.

### What Do We Recommend?

- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families are asking lawmakers to Pay Fair for *My Care*!
- FDDC supports increasing DSP rates for iBudget services. Wages for the DSP workforce should be increased to levels commensurate with a livable wage.
- Florida should continue investing in smaller community settings to provide services and supports. Investing dollars to support non-institutional care in smaller settings minimizes turnover as compared to larger settings.
- Florida should continue investing in the sustainability of Medicaid-funded home and community-based services. This investment should address efforts to include workforce shortages and retention challenges.