



**February, 2012**

Dear Stakeholder:

Advances in technology have enabled the enhanced delivery of social services. New and innovative tools are being used to store information, provide data tracking, simplify cumbersome paper processes and increase transparency and accountability.

To the extent possible and affordable, the Department is utilizing technology in ways that support our programs and mission. Some projects are being piloted, others are rolling out now, and some are still in planning stages. We're excited by the possibilities each holds.

For example, with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) HI TECH funding, high volume Medicaid providers are being given [incentive grants](#) ranging from \$64,000 to \$6 million for the implementation of Electronic Health Records, enabling health care facilities and physicians to better coordinate and integrate services for the more than 1.3 million residents served by the entitlement program. Over the next 5 years, an estimated \$500 million will be given for this purpose to New Jersey's Medicaid providers.

Also with federal funds, DHS' Division of Family Development launched [e-Child Care](#), a state of the art, computer-based platform that will replace outdated, burdensome paperwork and provide current, useful attendance and payment information. While we've experienced some growing pains in transition, the system promises to foster efficiency for the more than 4,000 providers and 70,000 children served annually.

In July, our Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired will pilot a program with some high school students receiving [educational services](#), by utilizing iPads to enable downloading and easier reading of large print textbooks, rather than the bulky and unwieldy print volumes that are currently distributed. The average textbook can cost CBVI about \$600 to be reproduced in large print. When a student has 4 to 6 textbooks, the cost rises significantly. If the pilot is successful and expanded, it could ultimately eliminate the need for the Commission to provide over eight hundred large print school textbooks to visually impaired students.

With funding from DHS' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the New Jersey State Library Talking Books and Braille Center operates an [Assistive Listening Device Loan Program](#), enabling people with hearing loss to borrow devices on a trial basis. Two types of systems are available: Personal FM Systems for use up to 150 feet, and Wide Area FM Systems for use in

larger spaces. Both are portable and readily connect to all types of hearing aids and cochlear implants.

And, as mentioned in last month's message, DHS' Office of Public Affairs is increasing its outreach to stakeholders and consumers through [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). Public service announcements, training sessions and consumer forums are available to watch and share. We'll be using these mediums regularly to promote our programs and services. We're hopeful you'll find the information useful and distribute it among your constituencies, as well.

Regards,

*Jennifer Velez*

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