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Sept. 13, 2021

To: ODDS Staff and Stakeholders
From: Lilia Teninty, Director, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services
Subject: Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week

Thank you for your continued dedication, hard work and service during the unprecedented difficulties of the past 18 months. Throughout the pandemic, racial trauma, fires, political unrest, ice, drought, staffing shortage, personal challenges and heartbreaking losses, you have persevered and continue provide essential services to nearly 29,000 Oregonians with I/DD.

[Governor Brown proclaimed this week Direct Support Professional \(DSP\) Recognition Week](#) in Oregon. I share her gratitude for all of you, our DSPs. You are the heart and soul of ODDS and all we do.

Your work is critical, and it doesn't come without a cost. I recognize your personal sacrifices, the long hours you're working, and how you continue to do right by those you serve often when no one is looking. Times are overwhelming and you may feel unseen. Please know that I appreciate you and am grateful for all you do.

Amid these current challenges, Governor Brown has asked many of you to embrace yet another challenge: [getting vaccinated for COVID-19](#). We at ODDS understand that some DSPs feel strongly about this mandate. We know you care about those you serve. We don't want to lose you. Please, consider this vaccination as another way to show those you serve how much you care about them.

We need you and we appreciate you. I encourage you to [listen to and consider the positive experiences of your vaccinated peers](#) and to discuss

your hesitations with a trusted health care professional. Make use of [the state's vaccine resources](#).

Thank you again, DSPs! I am honored to be part of a community that shares such a passionate commitment to people with I/DD.

Persevere. Support one another. Stay well and be safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lilia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Lilia Teninty
Director
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

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