

**ASD Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
January 18, 2017**

Notes compiled by Sharon Flanagan-Hyde, Facilitator, and Lauren Prole, AHCCCS

Participants

- Rene Bartos, MD, MPH, FAAP, Medical Director, Mercy Care Plan
- Karla Birkholz, MD, Arizona Academy of Family Physicians, HonorHealth Medical Group
- Robin K. Blitz, MD, FAAP, Chief, Developmental Pediatrics, Barrow Neurological Institute at Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Aaron Blocher-Rubin, PhD, BCBA/LBA, Chief Executive Officer, Arizona Autism United
- Mark Carroll, MD, Physician Program Consultant, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- Monica Coury, Vice President of Legislative and Government Affairs, Centene
- Bryan Davey, PhD, BCBA-D, Chief Executive Officer, HOPE Group, LLC; President, Highland Behavioral
- Diedra Freedman, JD, Board Secretary/Treasurer, Arizona Autism Coalition
- Dennis Friedman, DO, Psychiatrist, Banner University Medical Center - Phoenix, University of Arizona
- Don J. Fowls, MD, Medical Strategies (formerly Chief Medical Officer), Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care (MMIC), RBHA
- Scharlie Gerard-Wolfe, Program Specialist – DDD Liaison, Program Development, Aaron Goldman, MD, Children's Medical Director, Health Choice Integrated Care, LLC, RBHA
- Joyce Millard Hoie, MPA, Executive Director, Raising Special Kids
- George Jacobson, Project Manager Payment Modernization, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- Joanna Kowalik, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities (DES/DDD)
- Lisa Kunz, Autism and Low Incidence Specialist, Professional Learning and Sustainability, Arizona Department of Education
- Laura Love, PhD, DES/DDD Assistant Director
- Cynthia Macluskie, Vice President, Board of Directors, Autism Society of Greater Phoenix
- Terry Matteo, PhD, Clinical Child Psychologist
- Jon Meyers, Executive Director, The Arc of Arizona
- Ann Monahan, Board President, Arizona Autism Coalition; Vice President, State and Governmental Affairs, H.O.P.E. Group, LLC
- Daniel Openden, PhD, BCBA-D, President and CEO, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)

- Leslie Paulus, MD, PhD, FACP, Medical Director, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
- Jared Perkins, MPA, Director of Operations, Children’s Clinics; Vice President, Autism Society of Southern Arizona
- Michael Recuber, DDS, Dental Director, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- Sydney Rice, MD, MSd, Board-certified Developmental Pediatrician; Associate Professor, Pediatrics, The University of Arizona College of Medicine in Tucson
- Sara Salek, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- Kim Skrentny, MSW, LCSW, Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities (DES/DDD)
- Christopher Smith, PhD, Vice President and Research Director, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)
- Eric Tack, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)
- Ginger Ward, MAEd, Chief Executive Officer, Southwest Human Development
- Sherri Wince, ALTCS Administrator, Arizona Department of Economic Security/Division of Developmental Disabilities (DES/DDD)

DSRIP Update—George Jacobson and Mark Carroll

The timing of the presidential administration transition meant that AHCCCS will not receive funding through the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program. However, CMS approved Arizona’s request to begin a Targeted Investments Program that will make almost \$300 million available over five years to Arizona providers who assist the State in promoting the integration of physical and behavioral health care, increasing efficiencies in care delivery, and improving health outcomes. The strategic areas of focus are integrated care for adults, adults transitioning from the justice system, and integrated care for children. One of the targets will be improving treatment for care of children with or at risk for ASD.

AHCCCS Updates

Telemedicine Policy—Mark Carroll

AHCCCS has reopened the Telemedicine and Telehealth policy for review (AHCCCS Medical Policy Manual 320-I). Meetings of an internal and external interdisciplinary policy workgroup started in December 2016 to put ideas and suggestions on the table. The workgroup composition was designed to balance input from urban, rural, and tribal areas. A Request for Information (RFI) will seek input from organizations with experience in the use of telemedicine and telehealth regarding opportunities to improve the policy. Information provided through the RFI will assist the workgroup in its efforts to consider potential changes to the policy that are informed by experience and available evidence. The workgroup’s recommendations will go to the Policy Committee. The goal is to complete the review process, including the public comment period, by April 2017.

System Pathways—Eric Tack

Eric Tack, who is focused on maternal/child health and EPSDT at AHCCCS, is working on flow charts that describe system pathways. As this Advisory Committee knows, there is an urgent need to make it easy for families to understand how an individual might be identified in the system, regardless of the way the individual comes into the system. Different funding streams and different systems providing services mean that the system is highly complex.

Diedra Freedman suggested that an HHS grant for community outreach might be used to make the pathways user-friendly for families. Robin Blitz offered to share a system map with Eric.

Comprehensive ABA—Sara Salek

Sara noted that for the acute population, comprehensive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a covered benefit when medically necessary. She wants to hear about any challenges people face in accessing ABA services. She is working with the RBHAs to be more transparent about how to access ABA. AHCCCS is updating comprehensive ABA codes and looking at the pros and cons of utilizing a statewide criteria (DDD and acute) for utilization of services, versus using the authorization criteria developed by each MCO (RBHA).

In response to a question about how the dosage of service is identified, Sara said that for acute plan members, a recommendation to the RBHA is based on an assessment done by the supervising Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). It is expected that there will be a prior authorization (PA) requirement for comprehensive ABA.

Other points raised by Committee members included:

- PA is a slow process and there are not enough providers qualified to review PA requests at the State or RHBA level. Outcomes data for comprehensive ABA is also tricky.
- Make sure taxpayer dollars are protected and AHCCCS is the payer of last resort for comprehensive ABA. Response: DDD is working on a plan to transition to HCPC CPT codes (Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System/Current Procedural Terminology), and looking at cost savings to encourage families not to drop children from their primary insurance plan.
- Concern about lack of capacity. We don't have capacity for the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) ABA now. How do we develop networks and continue to develop infrastructure? There is a lack of structure in the behavioral health system to do ABA. We may need a bundled rate system.
- As we move to an integrated care system, comprehensive ABA coverage and capacity should be considered as part of implementation. Issues include double billing with private insurance, and going to the RBHA after denial by DDD.
- Clarify whether billing codes will be assigned for BCBA's to charge for services provided by telehealth.
- Clarify how PCPs will be instructed regarding where to send a PA request for ABA.
- Clarify how can we support parents or day care providers to provide parent-mediated intervention to some children for certain behaviors and tasks.

DDD Update

Redetermination Process—Laura Love

DDD is retooling eligibility and centralizing the process in each district to streamline and reduce the time involved. Only eligibility specialists will determine eligibility. One goal is to make sure that families are notified promptly when additional information is needed.

In response to feedback that more children are being denied initial eligibility, Laura replied that they have relaxed the policy. If families were caught between policies, they should reapply. Families who are confused should call the customer service center. Committee members should contact Laura about any problems.

A suggestion was made to rewrite the redetermination letter to make it more straightforward and easier for families to read.

DDD Rollout Plans for Habilitation Consultation—Kim Skrentny

Kim reported that DDD has finalized the Provider Policy Manual, including the report requirements and schedule, and updated the service checklist. They have the HCPC codes and are working on the payment component. Other issues being addressed are:

- Updating the service delivery appendix with the codes that have been identified.
- Aligning service authorizations with those codes.
- Establishing urban and rural rates across the board. New rates will be published and have 30-day public comment period.
- Aligning five units at the Division.
- Looking at Article 9.

ASD Specialized Diagnosing Provider Policy—Joanna Kowalik

Joanna said that DDD's ASD Specialized Diagnosing Provider Policy applies to psychiatrists, licensed psychologists, development pediatricians, and child neurologists. [These are the types of providers recommended to provide ASD diagnosis in the 2016 ASD Advisory Committee Recommendations to the Governor's Office.]

Committee members expressed concern that many psychiatrists and child neurologists are not comfortable diagnosing ASD and additional education is needed. There was agreement that the Advisory Committee should discuss in greater depth the topic of expanding the number of providers who offer ASD diagnosis.

RBHA Update

Health Choice Integrated Care—Aaron Goldman

Aaron provided an update on Health Choice Integrated Care (HCIC) and ASD. He said that HCIC is committed to following the recommendations of the ASD Advisory Committee. Its goal is to complete a comprehensive diagnostic workup within 45 days of initial concern.

Flagstaff Medical Center and HCIC are co-sponsoring "Elevate Autism: Systems of Care for Arizona," a statewide autism conference on May 5, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care—Don Fowls

Don provided a written update on Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care (MMIC) via e-mail:

- Seven responses were received for MMIC’s ASD Center of Excellence (COE) Request for Information (RFI). The responses are in the process of being reviewed to help design the COE. MMIC is attending community support groups and advocacy groups to obtain additional feedback from the family perspective.
- MMIC Provider Training—A training series for families, the community, and providers on Children on the Autism Spectrum is scheduled on March 16, 23, and 30, 2017.

Evidence-Based Practices Tool Update—Terry Matteo

Terry explained that the ASD Advisory Committee’s 2016 report included a tool on evidence-based treatment modalities. The tool summarized four large systematic review studies of ASD treatments. The report recommended that the AHCCCS Chief Medical Officer (CMO) appoint a multidisciplinary committee of licensed professionals and a few family members to review and update the tool annually.

Although no new large review studies have been published in the past year, Terry and Robin will be adding high-quality studies to the tool. AHCCCS will schedule a meeting to begin the updating process; please let Terry or Sara know if you’d like to volunteer. The current tool (part of the report) is published online. The updated version will be pulled out and available as a separate link on the AHCCCS website.

Dental Providers Training—Michael Recuber

Michael reported that all dentists receive some level of training on how to treat children with special healthcare needs as part of their education in dental school. However, it’s up to the individual dentist’s comfort level to determine if he or she would like to tailor his or her practice towards the treatment of patients with ASD and special needs. AHCCCS is working to put a current and accurate list of dentists who treat individuals with ASD on the website. Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC) has very good information on their website about dental care: <https://www.autismcenter.org/dental-care-individuals-autism-level-1>.

A Committee member said it would be helpful to know which dentists use sedation. The use of ABA during a dental appointment was also mentioned.

Next Meeting

The next quarterly meeting of the ASD Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, April 5 from 3:00-5:00 pm in the Arizona Room of the AHCCCS 801 Building (801 E. Jefferson, Phoenix). The call-in number will be 877-820-7831, passcode 992862 at AHCCCS. The building, meeting room, and call-in number will be confirmed via e-mail prior to the meeting.

Please send suggested agenda items to Sharon Flanagan-Hyde: sharon@flanaghan-hyde.com.