



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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Thank you for your interest in services for the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) within the State's Medicaid program, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). This is an issue of great importance to the State of Arizona. It is also an issue of personal importance to me. My younger sister has autism and I have seen first-hand the challenges that families experience living with ASD.

Today's health care sector is in an incredible state of flux. While this state of change can be anxiety-inducing, it does present a unique and positive opportunity related to services for the treatment of ASD. The primary issue with the health care system across the country is that it is not actually a system at all. It is a series of distinct silos. Part of the changing culture in health care is breaking down those silos. Arizona has been and will continue to be at the forefront of this effort with projects that: drive value based purchasing efforts that reward quality over quantity; bring together behavioral health and physical health; reduce burdens on families of children with special health care needs in the Children's Rehabilitative Services (CRS) program; coordinate care for people with behavioral health needs that interface with the justice system; align care for dual eligible members; and other projects. I believe that properly addressing services for the treatment of ASD requires this same type of system building effort.

To that end, I am forming the **ASD Advisory Committee**. The Advisory Committee will be charged with articulating a series of recommendations to the State for strengthening the health care system's ability to respond to the needs of AHCCCS members with ASD. Because ASD is in fact a spectrum, the members of the Advisory Committee must reflect the full continuum of that spectrum. We cannot be solely focused on our citizens with the highest needs requiring institutional levels of care. Rather, we must be prepared to provide early identification of ASD, develop care plans that are person-centered, and support those individuals who are able to live on their own. Additionally, we must have an Advisory Committee dedicated to fostering an environment that allows for individuals to freely express themselves without concern. This

dialogue must be had by people who understand these issues from a clinical and health care systems perspective.

Accordingly, I would be grateful if you would consider serving as a member of the ASD Advisory Committee. Most of the Advisory Committee invitees participated in the initial stakeholder meeting at the AHCCCS offices on March 2, 2015. I have added a few others who were not present at that meeting. The list of ASD Advisory Committee invitees is below:

- Dr. Sydney Rice, MD, MSc, University of Arizona
- Dr. Robin K. Blitz, MD, FAAP, Barrow Neurological Institute at Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Dr. Danny Kessler, MD, FAAP, Medical Director, Southwest Human Development
- Ginger Ward, CEO, Southwest Human Development
- Jared Perkins, MPA, Sinfonia Health care and Autism Society of Southern Arizona
- Brian van Meerten, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA, Behavioral Consultation Services of Northern Arizona, LLC (BCSNA)
- Joyce Milliard-Hoie, MPA, Raising Special Kids
- Cynthia Macluskie, Autism Society of Greater Phoenix
- Diedra Freedman, Arizona Autism Coalition
- Bryan Dave, PhD, BCBS, HOPE Group
- Terrence Matteo, PhD, Clinical Child Psychologist
- Daniel Openden, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)
- Ann Monahan, Arizona Autism Coalition
- Jon Meyers, The Arc of Arizona
- Dr. Renee Bartos, Mercy Care Plan
- RBHAs
- Arizona Academy of Pediatrics
- Family Member
- Education representative
- AHCCCS
- DBHS
- ALTCS DDD

Due to my schedule, Dr. Sara Salek, AHCCCS Chief Medical Officer and child psychiatrist, will serve as the point of contact for this effort. Please reply to her at sara.salek@azahcccs.gov if you are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee. Her clinical background, as well as her past experience within the Division of Behavioral Health Services, makes her uniquely qualified to lead this effort.

Once Dr. Salek has received responses from everyone, we will move ahead with setting the first meeting date where we will address next steps. Among those next steps is clearly a need to

establish workgroups around specific areas. Technical expertise is needed to best articulate recommendations. The Advisory Committee can discuss how best to staff the workgroups, again with the goal of being inclusive. Some of these workgroups will include:

1. Early Identification of ASD and Referrals for Diagnosis
2. Building Network Capacity
3. Evidence Based Treatment
4. Using Proper Codes for ASD Services
5. Connecting to Other Systems from AzEIPs to Education
6. Family and Provider Education: How to Navigate the System

Finally, I am in the process of identifying a third party consultant that can assist the Advisory Committee and workgroups with facilitation of the meetings, capturing meeting notes, and drafting the final recommendations.

Please reply to Dr. Salek with your interest in serving in this important committee. If you have additional topics that may not fit within one of the above identified areas, we can discuss that at our first meeting.

I look forward to working with all of you and thank you kindly for considering this important service to the State.

Thank you for all the work that you do on behalf of the ASD community,



Christina Corieri
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