

November 20, 2009

Dear Autism Service Professional:

As you may know, a bill was recently passed that will require insurance companies to pay for behavior therapy services to individuals with autism beginning July 2010. The bill also acknowledges Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services will be funded by insurance plans. The new law provides for expansion of services for OT, PT and Speech as well, plus, the new law includes the roles for physicians, psychologists, pharmacists and family therapist. Membership in COCAP includes all providers! The passing of this bill should allow for greater access to services for individuals with autism from birth through adulthood. However, it is important that all providers for individuals with autism uphold a quality standard of care - including the coordination of care among providers. These standards would be adopted by insurance companies and will help ensure that insurance companies are compensating for appropriate treatment. Therefore, a *call to action* is requested to ensure that all autism service professionals can continue to provide effective treatment within the system of the insurance companies.

What is the Colorado Coalition of Autism Professionals? (COCAP)

COCAP is an organization that was created to help address the needs of autism service professionals while preparing to contract with insurance companies in Colorado. Some of the goals of COCAP are to:

- Establish a universal contract between insurance companies and the professionals who provide services to individuals with autism.
- Develop quality standards of care to be adopted by insurance companies.
- Assist with in-network provider agreements.
- Create agreement for billing procedures and codes.

What does this mean for service providers in Colorado?

The standards of care that would be adopted by insurance companies would dictate certain components of service delivery. This may include factors such as the type of assessments allowable, the number of hours allocated for assessment, the frequency of client visits, the coordination of the treatment team, and the type of goals addressed in a treatment plan. Creating service delivery models and standards of care created *by service professionals* would allow us to continue to uphold the quality of care necessary.

What can you do to help?

- Join COCAP today! – send your email contact information to Bridget Cessar at the Autism Society of Colorado so you will be added to the COCAP list serve and receive all COCAP information (bridget@autismcolorado.org).
- Forward this letter to other professionals and personally urge them to join or suggest names we can contact. Our negotiating power is the size of our group.
- Send your input with information related to service delivery models and standards of care to David Hatfield, PhD, BCBA (doctor.hatfield.dbh@gmail.com) or Julie Shepard, BCBA (Julie.shepard.dbh@gmail.com).
- It may be necessary to coordinate a lobbyist presence at the Capital. This could involve financial contributions and/or fund raising efforts. More information will follow. If you would like to assist with this process, please contact Dr. Hatfield (doctor.hatfield.dbh@gmail.com).
- Attend committee meetings! Our next committee meeting will be held on November 30th at the home of Betty Lehman in Denver from 6 – 8 pm. Please RSVP to Betty by Wednesday, November 25th if you wish to attend. (betty@autismcolorado.org)

The address is: 2750 East Bates Avenue, Denver, 80210

Directions:

Take I-25 to University Blvd. south. Bates Avenue intersects with University Blvd. between Hampden to the south and Evans to the North – more narrowly – between Dartmouth to the south and Yale to the North.

Take University Blvd to Bates Avenue – go east (you can only go east) – you come to a 4-way intersection at Clayton and Bates – keep going east for two houses – 2750 is on the south side of the street – red brick with this 1950's white iron work – can't miss the white ironwork.

For directions or more information on the committee meeting, contact Betty at 303.753.6855 or 303.898.7656.

There may be a call in option as well. Please check with Betty.

Thank you for your commitment to serving persons with Autism and their families in Colorado.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Hatfield, PhD, BCBA-D
Clinical Psychologist and CEO of
Developmental Behavioral Health, Inc.