

Alabama Autism Task Force

Healthcare Subcommittee

Meeting July 13, 2007

Present at Meeting

Bama Hager, parent and President Board of Directors, Autism Society of Alabama

Cindy Fulford, parent and Founder of the South Alabama Autism Society

Teela Caimack, Eligibility Director All Kids Insurance Alabama

Dennis Griffith, Vice President Behavioral Medicine, Decatur General West

Tony Fargason, parent and Medical Director, Children's Hospital Alabama

Ryan Donaldson, Alabama Department of Insurance

Steven Lafreniere, Director Children's Services, State Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Alabama

Cam Ward, parent and member Alabama House of Representatives

The sub committee deemed the recent Texas legislation regarding private health care coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders to be a good general starting point for addressing insurance coverage recommendations.

The sub committee made several recommendations regarding the legislation.

1. The sub committee saw the age range as a good starting point, but questioned whether future extension of the age range could be stated. For example, might it be stated that the range would start at 2 to 6 years old for some length of time and later be extended to 2 to 12 years and so on during the next several years.

2. The sub committee discussed inclusion criteria for the eligibility for benefits. For example, if the child has received a screening from a Pediatrician along with the Pediatrician's professional opinion regarding the presence of an ASD, the child would be eligible for some services. If the child has received a definitive diagnosis by a mental health care professional, then the child may be eligible for further services.
3. The sub committee suggested the exclusion of coverage for nutritional supplements because the other services listed are empirically based and nutritional supplementation has less outcome data.
4. The sub committee recommended the inclusion of coverage for diagnostics and screening for ASD.

These were the starting points of discussion by the Healthcare Sub Committee of the Alabama Autism Task Force as stated during the meeting July 13, 2007. Comprehensive minutes from this meeting are also available.

Prepared by
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Chair Healthcare Sub Committee
Alabama Autism Task Force