

**Financial Impact Subcommittee
of the
AL Autism Task Force**

Minutes of August 29, 2007

The Financial Impact Subcommittee of the AL Autism Task Force met on Wednesday, August 29, 2007 in Room 622 of the AL State House, immediately following the full AL Autism Task Force meeting of that same date. The Financial Impact Subcommittee was established July 14, 2007 by Rep. Cam Ward and is made up of the Chairs of the other subcommittees and is chaired by John Houston, Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

Members Present:

Tim Ferguson	Chair, Intervention
Bama Hager	Chair, Healthcare
John Houston	Chair, Financial Impact
Matthew Remick	Chair, Family Support
Rep. Cam Ward	Chair, AL Autism Task Force
Jim Wrye	Chair, Education and Training
Lee Yount	Chair, Systems of Care

Others Present:

Tracy Battaglia	Task Force Clerk
Jennifer Muller	Dir., Autism Soc. of Alabama
Tammi Trawick	Autism Soc. of Alabama
Alice Widgeon	Minutes, DMH/MR

Agenda items covered in this meeting were as follows:

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Remarks:

John Houston, Chair, called the first meeting of this subcommittee to order and participant introductions were made. Rep. Ward provided some opening observations as to the need for this subcommittee and foresees that in order to produce a better quality outcome, the work of the Task Force will need to extend beyond the time-lines for the preliminary subcommittee recommendations, as this is necessarily an evolving and dynamic process.

II. Discussion of the Work of the Financial Impact Subcommittee:

John Houston and Cam Ward engaged the group in further discussion of the work of this subcommittee in relation to the recommendations that will be forthcoming from the other subcommittees. This subcommittee will look at the recommendations coming from the

other subcommittees; review the subcommittee's identified costs, or--if necessary--create a cost association for the recommendations; determine potential funding sources for the recommendations; and create a plan of what tasks can be undertaken initially, and what is to be projected for future year implementation in terms of cost and scope of work to be accomplished. It was acknowledged that the state's undertaking of a plan for autism will involve time and work in order to plan and develop an infrastructure to accomplish task force recommendations that, ultimately, should tie directly back into an overall system of care.

John Houston pointed to *Alabama's Early Intervention System* and the *Multiple Needs Child* program—as successful strategic models of how multiple agencies, under similar circumstances, came together with a lead agency to address and systematically plan for issues that were bigger than any one state agency could take on by itself. As part of the infrastructure developed to implement these programs, the lead agencies utilize an Executive Council comprised of agency decision-makers. In the beginning, the Executive Council worked through sensitive financial arrangements and political and procedural issues needed to accommodate participating agencies needs, as well as the child and family needs for specific services. In the case of *Early Intervention*, it was decided that a *Joint Budget Resolution*, signed by the primary funding agencies, would be the agreed upon vehicle for program funding requests from the Alabama Legislature. Another similar successful endeavor is *ALL Kids*, the State Children's Health Insurance Plan under the lead of Alabama Department of Public Health.

This subcommittee will also need to analyze the various public (local, state, and federal), and private funding sources for ways in which dollars can be accessed, blended, put together, and enhanced to meet the objectives and goals of the AL Autism Task Force (e.g., State General Fund and Special Education Trust Fund, Medicaid--waivers, options, state plans, the Early, Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program--, State Children's Health Insurance Plan, private insurance, grants, research, etc.).

III. The Charge to the Financial Impact Subcommittee is as follows:

1. Review, critically analyze and refine [merged lists and unduplicated tasks] the proposals, associated cost projections, and potential sources of funding coming forth from each Subcommittee of the Autism Task Force.
2. Compile a list of potential revenue sources and services supported.
3. Produce a fiscal report containing future projections for a financially prudent implementation framework for the subcommittee proposals.

Deadlines:

Reports from Subcommittees:

September 14, 2007

October 14, 2007

Final Reports from Subcommittees
with any changes/additions

November 9, 2007

Report/Recommendations to Task Force

December 1, 2007

The Financial Impact Subcommittee will submit their final report to the full Task Force for inclusion into the official Task Force report for presentation to the legislature.

IV. Next Steps:

John Houston provided a worksheet as a template for the subcommittee chairs to report back to him and the subcommittee at large--(1.) the specific tasks of their respective subcommittee's recommendations that will require funding, (2.) the projected cost, if known, and (3.) the potential funding source(s) for the identified task.

V. Next Meeting: To be announced.

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