

**Testimony for Human Services Committee
Department of Human Services
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) State Plan
September 11, 2018**

Chairman Hogan, members of the Human Services Committee, I am Krista Fremming, Deputy Director of the Medical Services Division for the Department of Human Services (DHS). North Dakota Century Code chapter 50-06-32.4 requires the Task Force to provide an annual report to the Governor and the Legislative Council regarding the status of the state plan. I appear to provide information regarding the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Task Force State Plan.

The ASD Task Force was established by 2009 Senate Bill 2174. The Task Force includes the state health officer, or the officer's designee; the director of the department of human services, or the director's designee; the superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee; the executive director of the protection and advocacy project, or the director's designee; and the following members appointed by the governor:

- A pediatrician with expertise in the area of ASD;
- A psychologist with expertise in the area of ASD;
- A college of education faculty member with expertise in the area of ASD;
- A behavioral specialist;
- A licensed teacher with expertise in the area of ASD;
- An occupational therapist;
- A representative of a health insurance company doing business in this state;
- A representative of a licensed residential care facility that provides care and services to individuals with ASD;

- A representative who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian tribe;
- An adult self-advocate with ASD;
- A parent of a child with ASD;
- A family member of an adult with ASD;
- A member of the legislative assembly.

The Task Force meets quarterly to discuss the following topics:

- early intervention services;
- family support services that would enable an individual with ASD to remain in the least restrictive home-based or community setting;
- programs transitioning an individual with ASD from a school-based setting to adult day programs and workforce development programs;
- the cost of providing services;
- the nature and extent of federal resources that can be directed to the provision of services for individuals with ASD.

DHS maintains a website to publish information on Task Force activities <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/taskforce.html>.

The site includes the Task Force meeting schedule, previous meeting minutes, reports and the ASD State Plan.

The ASD State Plan is developed and implemented by the Task Force. There are three workgroups (Children's, Adults and State Plan) made up of Task Force members as well as other stakeholders. The workgroups meet between Task Force meetings to review the State Plan, develop policy recommendations and fiscal estimates and plan for future

activities. During 2018, the Task Force has reviewed and made changes to the State Plan. The draft goals are:

Children: Birth Through Age 18

- Assure that individuals with suspected ASD receive an appropriate diagnosis as soon as possible.
- Review and provide recommendations on the current centralized location(s) for information on ASD.
- Establish a model identifying training and education opportunities currently available that address the needs of diverse stakeholders.

Adults: Age 18 and up (including transition age)

- Identify the needs and service gaps for adults with ASD.
- Strengthen supports for transitions from adolescent to adult services.
- Develop more opportunities for adults with ASD to be valued, contributing members of their communities based on their unique strengths, differences and challenges.

At the October 2018 Task Force meeting, members will vote to approve the updated State Plan. DHS will submit the updated plan to the Governor and Legislative Council by the end of 2018.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.