

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck ND 58505**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 22, 2018**

Media contacts: Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933 or LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892

## **Parents and others invited to comment as state renews its Medicaid autism spectrum disorder waiver**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Medical Services Division is seeking federal approval to renew the state's Medicaid autism spectrum disorder waiver for five years. Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder and other interested individuals can review the draft renewal application and can provide their comments on proposed changes to the waiver until July 18, 2018.

The Medicaid autism spectrum disorder waiver covers specific services to qualifying children younger than age 12 diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. The goal is to provide services that help families care and support their children at home instead of placing them in a facility to receive needed services. Participation is limited to 96 children.

In response to previous comments from parents and other stakeholders, the department is proposing some changes. For example, the department currently accepts a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder from psychiatrists and psychologists. The agency is proposing to expand the types of professionals it will accept diagnoses from to include other physicians, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, licensed independent clinical social workers and licensed professional clinical counselors.

The agency is also proposing to base the amount of respite hours a child can receive on the child's individual needs that are reviewed quarterly with parents when they meet with their service manager. Currently, respite hours are determined by a single annual assessment. Service managers will also be required to make home visits to participating children twice a year.

In other changes, service management hours are also being standardized, and assistive technology service purchasing will be handled by the Medical Services Division staff instead of a contracted third-party fiscal agent.

The entire draft waiver renewal is available online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/docs/renewal-application-asd-waiver-thru-age-11.pdf](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/docs/renewal-application-asd-waiver-thru-age-11.pdf). Copies are also available upon request.

Individuals can comment on the proposed waiver renewal until 5 p.m. Central Time on July 18, 2018. Comments can be submitted by emailing [dhsautism@nd.gov](mailto:dhsautism@nd.gov), calling 701-328-8912 or 800-755-2604 or faxing 701-328-1544. Comments can also be sent to the North Dakota Department of Human Services Medical Services Division, Attn: Autism, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325, Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0250.

###