

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 14, 2019**

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

**Task Force invites North Dakotans to participate in survey about services for people with autism spectrum disorder**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Task Force wants to know whether North Dakotans are aware of programs and services for individuals with autism spectrum disorder, if individuals' needs are being met, or if gaps in services and access issues may exist.

The task force is encouraging parents, individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, service providers, advocates and other stakeholders to take a short 10-minute online survey about services at [https://ndhealth.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV\\_8rdV1hD\WqNRIIR](https://ndhealth.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_8rdV1hD\WqNRIIR).

“We are seeking feedback about services, training, access and needs,” said task force chair Krista Fremming who is the deputy director of the Department of Human Services' Medical Services Division. “State services tend to focus on young children and their families because of the benefits of early identification and intervention. We also want to understand the needs of older youths and adults diagnosed with ASD.”

The department administers an autism voucher program, a Medicaid autism spectrum disorder waiver, and Medicaid autism applied behavioral analysis services.

The voucher program helps pay for respite care for family caregivers, assistive technology such as sensory or safety equipment, caregiver training and other support services like tutoring. The voucher program is intended to enhance the quality of life of qualifying children and to meet the unique needs of their families. It also fills a gap by providing resources for non-therapy services for families.

The Medicaid waiver covers service management, respite care for family caregivers and assistive technology for 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 a child in a facility to receive needed care.

Details about these and other services are available online at <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/index.html> or by contacting the autism services coordinator at 701-328-4630, toll-free 800-755-2604 or emailing [dhsautism@nd.gov](mailto:dhsautism@nd.gov).

Created by the legislature in 2009, the task force reviews and monitors services that enable individuals with autism spectrum disorder to live at home and in community settings. It is also responsible for reviewing, amending and updating the ASD state plan to better meet the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Task force information is online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/taskforce.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/autism/taskforce.html).

###