

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Task force encourages Devils Lake area residents to participate in survey about services for people with autism spectrum disorder

BISMARCK, N.D. – The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Task Force is encouraging residents of the Devils Lake region to participate in a survey on autism services and needs. The task force has received seven responses from the region and is seeking additional feedback on needs and any gaps in services and access issues.

Parents, individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, service providers, advocates and other stakeholders can take the short 10-minute online survey at https://ndhealth.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8rdV1hDVWqNRIIR. The survey ends March 31.

Task force chair Krista Fremming who is the deputy director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Medical Services Division said, "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, 711 (TTY) or emailing 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.

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