

Testimony
Human Services Committee
Representative Hogan, Chairman
October 25, 2017

Chairman Hogan and members of the Human Services Committee, I am Maggie Anderson, Director of Medical Services, for the Department of Human Services (Department). In accordance with NDCC 50-06-32, I am providing an update on the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) voucher program pilot project. In addition, due to recent changes, I am also providing an update on the Medicaid program incorporating applied behavior analysis (ABA) as a benefit and an update on the Medicaid autism waiver.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Voucher Program

The autism spectrum disorder voucher program was implemented July 1, 2014. A parent, custodian, or legal guardian may apply to participate in the voucher program for a child with an ASD diagnosis, whose age is from three years through seventeen years, and whose family has an income below two hundred percent of the federal poverty level. The child may not be served under a Medicaid waiver.

Once eligibility has been determined, there will be an agreement with the parent, custodian, or legal guardian of the eligible child. The voucher may be approved for a one-time purchase or for multiple purchases. Any funds that are unspent return to the voucher program and the funds may be distributed to another applicant. Each voucher may not exceed \$12,500 for the fiscal year.

Since the beginning of the voucher program there have been 126 children who have participated. Within State Fiscal Year 2017, 50 children were served with an average expenditure of \$4397.91 per child. Items that have been purchased for eligible children include stress relieving items such as chewy wristbands and necklaces, iPads, swimming lessons, memberships for physical activity centers, respite, tutoring, and safety items.

As of July 1, 2017, the Department was able to add the ten slots that were not filled as part of the allotment. With the addition of the 10 slots, there are 53 slots available. At this time, the Department has received 63 applications. Of the applications received, 49 were determined to be eligible; 4 were denied for being over income and 10 are currently being reviewed for income eligibility.

The Administrative Code is currently being amended. The amendments focus on clarifying the code for easier understanding. The Department expects the hearing on the proposed rule changes to be in late November or early December and the rules to be effective in April 2018.

Medicaid Autism Spectrum Disorder Waiver

The Medicaid Autism Spectrum Disorder waiver amendment was approved on July 31, 2017, which increased the waiver capacity by twelve and allowed the two services of Skills Training and Program Design and Monitoring to be removed from the waiver and be incorporated into the Medicaid State Plan.

Upon the approval of the additional twelve slots, the Department immediately issued the second amendment to add the waiver slots that

were previously not added due to the allotment. Once the amendment is approved (estimated to be December 6, 2017), the total number of slots available will be 96, and the age of the waiver will be birth through age eleven.

Medicaid State Plan Applied Behavior Analysis Services

Based on guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Skills Training and Program Design and Monitoring had to be removed from the Autism Waiver and moved to the State Plan. These two services make up the new Autism Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Service. This coverage began August 1, 2017, allowing Medicaid eligible individuals under the age of 21 with an ASD diagnosis, to receive ABA therapy.

This concludes my testimony and I am available for questions.