

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER RECOMMENDATIONS

This memorandum provides a summary of the recommendations submitted for consideration by the Human Services Committee regarding its study of the autism spectrum disorder.

Rank	Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force (Appendix A)	Autism Society of North Dakota (Appendix B)	Ms. Vicki Peterson (Appendix C)
1	State autism coordinator and assistant - Add two new full-time equivalent (FTE) positions responsible for implementing a "one-stop shop" for information and services for individuals with an autism spectrum disorder, developing a state outreach plan, holding regional meetings, holding an annual conference, and developing a protocol for use after screening. The estimated biennial cost is \$494,135, consisting of \$242,122 for the coordinator's salary, benefits, and other office costs such as information technology fees; \$132,769 for the assistant's salary, benefits, and other office costs; and \$119,244 for operating expenses for travel and annual conference expenses.	Autism spectrum disorder registry - Develop and maintain an autism spectrum disorder registry within the State Department of Health. The estimated biennial cost is \$148,132, including one FTE position, for a simple registry and \$605,298, including three FTE positions, for a more comprehensive registry. Information regarding the cost estimates is attached as Appendix D .	Access and awareness - Access to services for children, youth, and adults who have an autism spectrum disorder is limited in North Dakota compared to many other states. The state's Medicaid program and private insurance carriers need to support families in accessing services, including diagnosis, therapies, respite, and general health care.
2	Comprehensive training funds - Implement a statewide training effort, including physician training, regional training, and parent training, led by the state autism coordinator in coordination with key agencies. The estimated biennial cost is \$158,032, consisting of \$4,800 for physician training, \$98,832 for regional training, \$6,400 for parent training, and \$48,000 for a statewide training fund.	Voucher system for services and support - Establish a voucher system to be used for autism spectrum disorder programs and services. The estimated biennial cost for 150 individuals is \$4.5 million.	Delivery methods of therapies and services - Examine different ways to deliver therapies and services, including emphasis on medical homes and telehealth practices
3	Autism spectrum disorder Medicaid waiver - Expand the Department of Human Services' autism spectrum disorder Medicaid waiver to cover individuals from age 3 through end of life and to provide services, such as evidence-based practices, intervention coordination, in-home support, equipment and supplies, home monitoring, residential supports and services, extended vocational supports, and behavioral consultation. The estimated biennial cost would be dependent upon the number of individuals served. The department's current developmental disabilities traditional waiver is budgeted on each person's services and support, costing an average of \$27,239 per year for waiver services.	Educational training and support - Provide training and support to classroom teachers and other staff to implement best practices for educating and providing services to students with an autism spectrum disorder. The estimated biennial cost is \$198,000.	Training and cross-training - Develop a more standard definition of a diagnosis of autism, establish a more central location for resources in the state, and provide more training and cross-training in the educational system
4	Behavioral analysts - Increase the number of professionals delivering behavioral analyst services by providing funding support for 16 individuals (two in each region) to complete the St. Paul online board-certified behavioral analyst program to include the required supervision up to the point of taking the certification. The estimated biennial cost is \$198,864, consisting of \$12,429 for coursework, internship, textbooks, examination, and license costs for 16 individuals.		Looking ahead - Develop programs, including assistance for children transitioning into adulthood

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5	<p>Dedicated diagnostic, evaluation, and service planning teams - Provide funding for evaluation, diagnostic, and service planning teams comprised of a physician, occupational therapist, physical therapist, certified behavioral analyst, and family support member. The teams must interact with regional coalitions, state agencies, and the Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force and provide timely referral and outcome reports. Evaluations and screenings currently range from \$1,725 to \$5,045 per child. The estimated cost of screening eight children in each of the eight regions would range from \$110,400 to \$322,880. The estimated cost of screening 16 children in each of the eight regions would range from \$220,800 to \$645,760.</p>		
6	<p>Health insurance mandate - Eliminate the exclusions for autism care and treatment in health insurance policies. Senate Bill No. 2268 (2011) as introduced provided for this recommendation. The fiscal note submitted for this bill estimated a cost of approximately \$5.8 million for state government for the 2011-13 biennium.</p>		
7	<p>Autism spectrum disorder registry - Develop and implement an autism spectrum disorder registry. The estimated biennial cost is \$200,648, consisting of \$164,247 for personnel costs, \$20,057 for operating expenses such as travel and supplies, and \$16,344 for indirect costs.</p>		

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