

**May 21, 2024**

**Meeting Opens:** 5:46 p.m.

**Attendance:** AC, DMC, CC, PD (remote due to illness); AE (remote due to illness); RH; NP, MR, SC, AM, SRL.

**Quorum:** YES

**Approval of Minutes April Meeting:**

- Change to reflect that \$900K is for all communication access services
- Motion: MR; Seconded: CC – Y, A, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, A; Motion Passes 8 in favor with two abstentions

**Public Meeting Law Changes:**

- Justifications for Absences:
  - Medical/Illness
  - Childcare/Family care
  - Travel/commute related issues
  - Work scheduling conflicts
  - Weather
- **Motion to adopt list of justifications going forward: Moved: SC; Second: CC. Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y, Y – Motion passes unanimously**

**SB 353:**

- Discussion of concerns raised by member of the public regarding insurance coverage for applied behavior analysis that has faced opposition in the House
- Discussion of the opposition: research supporting ABA's efficacy is scant and only two studies available
- It took nearly 20 years of advocacy to get original approval for autism and there have been efforts to include this in other conditions but there are not
- Helpful treatment for people with brain injuries or developmental deficits because there is frequency and intensity – 30-40 hours per week
- Only applies to commercial insurance as opposed to self-insurance
- Should this bill pass, the next step would be to add it to the Medicaid state plan
- Caps out at age 21
- Not a perfect piece of legislation but it is a step in the right direction
- Solves a lot of problems indirectly: such as post-school childcare
- Frontloading these services has a significant benefit to positive long-term outcomes
- Most other states are covering this in their Medicaid plans
- Some of the issues raised relate to the issue of access to service because providers already struggle to keep up with demand
  - Observation that the population of individuals with Down Syndrome is much smaller than those with autism, so the demand should not be significant
- Question re who else could benefit from this: it could be more broad "Autism and related disorders" or "a developmental disability that includes a cognitive impairment"

- Over time the number of providers has decreased as the demand for the service has increased—adding these services to Medicaid has exacerbated this disparity due to lower rates of reimbursement.
- Wrinkle with Medicaid is that parents have to undergo certain training that makes it more difficult to access
- Out-of-pocket cost: 70-100K per year for this service
- The House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee voted 18-0 in favor of interim study and the report reads like it is meant to be a proper interim study to assess issues
- Question of why CCA and not Health and Human Services, likely because Commerce deals with insurance.
- The objective based upon this is to monitor and act to lend some support going forward

**Other Updates:**

- HB 1028: The Senate amended the bill and the House can choose to concur with the amendment or seek a committee of conference. The Senate's version creates a study commission, which would bring together stakeholders to discuss and assess the issues. The need to report out would occur on or before Nov. 1, 2024.
  - Voices of support for the Commission idea to tackle larger issues than what the base bill would have addressed
  - Discussion about some of the issues raised in the bill itself that led to the creation of study commission
  - Discussion of the importance for having a medical doctor on the Commission

**New Business:**

- None

**Public Comment:**

- None

**Next Meeting:** June 18, 2024, Department of Safety, 33 Hazen Drive, 5:30 p.m.

**Adjourn:** 6:37 p.m.