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**MINUTES**

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Funding and Insurance Subcommittee

Date and Time of Meeting: February 27, 2017

12:00 p.m.

Carson City: Aging and Disability Service Division

3427 Goni Rd. #102

Carson City, NV 89706

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Ms. Thorkildson called the meeting for the Funding and Insurance Subcommittee to order at 12:05 p.m.

Members Present: Diane Thorkildson, Gwynne Partos (12:10 to end), Brook Adie (12:00 to 12:20), Shirley Gaw, Danielle Stage

Members Absent: Eric Lloyd

Guests: Lori Follett, Steven Cohen, Stephanie Christensen

Staff Present: Carol Reitz

A quorum was declared.

II. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

There was no public comment.

III. Approval of the Minutes from the January 23, 2017 Meeting

Ms. Adie made a motion to approve the minutes as they were written. Dr. Stage seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IV. Review and Discuss Possible Recommendations on Objectives

Ms. Thorkildson recapped to the Subcommittee that they previously discussed piggybacking on letters supporting ongoing collaborations, working on self-funded plans, and paying attention to the legislative activities that are occurring that might impact funding and insurance activities. She reported that through her own research on the legislative Website, the BDR that is related to autism has not been moved over to an actual bill. Mr. Cohen told the Subcommittee that the Adult/Transition Subcommittee has a list of BDRs. Ms. Reitz informed the Subcommittee that it is posted under the meeting materials for that subcommittee.

Mr. Cohen told the Subcommittee that the bills that would impact the Autism Commission the most are the reimbursement rates, and minimum wage which can bankrupt providers and affect workforce development. The rates are so low and licensing requirements are difficult, they are unable to recruit quality providers to Nevada.

Ms. Thorkildson asked Ms. Adie if there were things that the Subcommittee needed to be pay specific attention to. Ms. Adie informed the Subcommittee that they have their budget hearing on March 10th. She added the Commission needs to decide whether they want to support rate increases. She suggested they reach out to self-funded insurance programs to expand their coverage to ABA be a covered service. There are a lot of kids that are underinsured. She suggested drafting a letter to send to those insurance companies. She can provide a list of the insurance companies.

Ms. Partos asked if the State is the largest self-funded plan. Ms. Adie responded that they have opted in. Ms. Thorkildson asked if they should have someone that is knowledgeable about self-funded insurance companies do a presentation. Ms. Adie told the Subcommittee that self-funded programs are not mandated by the state law so they have the ability to decide whether or not they want to cover ABA therapy and they are not subject to the Division of Insurance. They need to be convinced. She added that Mr. Unumb from Autism Speaks gave a presentation to legislation about the cost of ABA to insurance companies, which was cents per month. That can be included in the letter to legislation.

Ms. Thorkildson said she would commit to researching the testimony.

Ms. Thorkildson asked about the projects that the other subcommittees are working on. Ms. Reitz informed the Subcommittee that the other subcommittees are gathering data and making suggestions but have not completed any projects.

Ms. Thorkildson asked Ms. Follett if there was anything they need to be cognizant about concerning Medicaid. Ms. Follett said she was not aware of anything at the moment.

Ms. Partos said she thought the only other thing besides the self-funded plans was the reimbursement rates and how it all ties in. Ms. Gaw said there is an issue with the Health Plan of Nevada HMO. They have expanded their providers but there are long waitlists. There are families with insurance plans that are receiving $500 per month from ATAP but are only able to afford a limited amount of hours.

Ms. Partos said there were providers within the insurance networks that have waitlists. She asked if it was appropriate for them to ask insurance companies to honor out-of-network providers at in-network costs. Ms. Gaw said she agreed.

Ms. Thorkildson asked if there were even enough providers to go around. Mr. Cohen told the Subcommittee that during the last session they were able to raise the insurance cap to $72,000 per year. He added that under the military plan, it is now going to require a diagnosis be done every two years.

Ms. Thorkildson said she will look into finding the testimony from Mr. Unumb on the self-funded insurance plans and draft a recommendation letter. She said they can look into asking insurance companies to allow out-of-network providers at in-network prices.

Ms. Gaw asked if she was able to draft a letter to ATAP to allow them to pay more than the $500. Ms. Thorkildson asked if she wanted the letter to not implement the plan ending of people’s benefits. Ms. Gaw agreed. Ms. Partos said to include the language “until the provider is secured.” Ms. Partos asked if they need to include the fact that the prevalence rate of autism continues to rise but the funding remains the same. Mr. Thorkildson said she would draft the letters to be considered at the next meeting.

V. Confirm Dates for Future Meetings

The Subcommittee decided their next meeting would be on March 27, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Ms. Partos made a motion to accept the date and time of the next meeting. Ms. Gaw seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item)

Mr. Cohen told the Subcommittee that the chair of the Legislative Committee on Healthcare drafted a letter to the superintendent of public instruction and the director of the Department of Health and Human Services to allow providers to observe the kids in the school district environment.

VII. Adjournment

Ms. Thorkildson adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.