



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES  
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**MINUTES**

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Date and Time of Meeting: June 2, 2017  
3:30 p.m.

Location: Nevada Early Intervention Services  
1161 S Valley View Blvd.  
Las Vegas, NV 89102

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Dr. Mario Gaspar de Alba called the meeting for the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders to order at 3:32 p.m.

Members Present: Mario Gaspar de Alba, Gwynne Partos and Julie Ostrovsky

Staff Present: Tiffany Ellis, Brook Adie, Samantha Jayme, Jenna Brackin

Guests: Steven Cohen, Amber Ingram, Stephanie Christensen, Cori More, Sarah Summers, Jay Summers, Veronica Smith, Lenise Kryk, Ella Philander, Shannon Crozier, Catalina Moreno, Olivia Espinoza, Betzaida Hill, Michelle Canning

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)

III. Approval of the Minutes from the May 25, 2017 Meeting

Ms. Partos made a motion to accept the minutes as they were written.  
Ms. Ostrovsky seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### IV. ATAP Medicaid and Budget Update

Ms. Brook Adie provided information to post to the website. It provides a summary of information of what the Commission asked for last time:

##### Medicaid

- 15 ABA Providers
- 9 ABA Providers that accept MCO
- 14 ABA Providers utilizing a wait list

##### Non-Medicaid

- 7 ABA Providers
- 0 ABA Providers that accept MCO
- 1 ABA Provider utilizing a wait list

##### Grand totals from July 2016 – June 2017

- \$4,824,924.39 paid to Providers
- \$358,265.47 billed to Medicaid
- \$202,941.98 revenue received
- (\$4,621,982.41) difference between what ATAP paid Providers and Medicaid reimbursed

#### V. Update on Legislative Bill (SB 286)

Ms. Ostrovsky advised that the Commission sent a joint letter to Senator Gansert and members of the Assembly Health and Human Services. It was rushed out to get there by Friday at 1pm for the hearing that was scheduled on Monday. The hearing was delayed until Wednesday, which was a good thing because they considered all of our recommendations and concerns from the Providers who wrote letters. The Amendments were presented by Senator Gansert, which made everyone feel more comfortable. Ms. Ostrovsky did a follow up with the Providers and things will be fixed in regulation as it moves forward. She thinks that 99% of the primary concerns were addressed. Now we are just waiting on final votes, passages and signatures.

#### VI. Subcommittee Chairs to report

Denise Robinson, Community Education

Diane Thorkildson, Insurance and Funding

Jan Marson, Resource Development

Scott Harrington, Adult Services and Resources

Shannon Crozier, Workforce Development

- Review and Make Recommendations on the Statewide Autism Website (**For Possible Action**)

Ms. Denise Robinson with Community Education was absent, but provided an update letter which was posted to the website. There no progress since the meeting in March. The subcommittee is planning on meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.

Ms. Diane Thorkildson with Insurance and Funding was absent, but Ms. Partos advised that Ms. Thorkildson shared with her a complaint from Dr. Tedoff. He's been running into some billing problems with Medicaid and spent many hours

trying to work with them, but was still denied for his billing. He still has not received his complete reimbursement. So his request is to see billing problems resolved.

Ms. Jan Marson with Resource Development was absent, but Ms. Partos advised that the subcommittee has not recently met, but plan on meeting the last week in June.

Mr. Scott Harrington with Adult Services and Resources was absent

Ms. Shannon Crozier with Workforce Development advised that they have not met recently, but submitted an update to the website.

The proposed website would be a central hub for listings of all ABA providers operating in Nevada. Listings on the site would be created in one of two ways. First, the website developer, Monkey Logic, would use the previously published sources to create an initial list of providers. These listings could then be owned and verified by the providers, which would then allow for updating and ongoing management. Second, new providers would be able to create their own profile directly on the site.

The website would be a searchable database and the information in each provider profile would include information such as:

- Contact details
- Licensed staff
- Areas served
- Services, programs, and specialties
- Insurances accepted
- Waitlist information, such as might be available
- Other information the provider feels is relevant

Monkey Logic, a Nevada-based software development company, has offered to assist with this objective at no charge. Monkey Logic has offered to develop, design, host, and manage a website for the Commission which lists providers of applied behavior analysis therapy for individuals with autism spectrum disorders in the state of Nevada. Overall, this platform will operate similar to the way that Yelp operates for other business reviews and information.

The Workforce Development Subcommittee recommends to the Autism Commission that the Commission approve and support this concept and approve the offer of Monkey Logic.

Ms. Partos made a motion to approve the development of the Statewide Autism Website. Ms. Ostrovsky seconded the motion. The motion passed

## VII. Community Report

Ms. Kryk brought up some concerns with recent ATAP changes. Lovaas has been involved with ATAP from the very beginning and are so happy that our state has a funding source for families. Ms. Kryk advised that there were concerns on how things were implemented. She is very supportive on RBT and certification to

increase their standards and quality of services kids are getting. She knows that Nevada is still a growing workforce when it comes to the field, but is just very concerned of the implementation of the RBT requirement. January 2016, it was brought up by ATAP. Then in July 2016 it was stated that it wasn't going to be a requirement at that time due to some concerns. In January 2017 it was clear that there would be allowances but no indications of implementation of the 6 month requirement. Then all of a sudden with about 10 days' notice, it was required as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. This put 130+ people in the field out of work and over 85 families without service or significantly reduced hours. Not receiving the 1 to 1 service has a significant impact on many kids. From May 1<sup>st</sup> to now only about 14 people have completed their certification, which is not that many. She is noticing people leaving the field to find full-time jobs. Ms, Kryk suggested that as a community we need to come together and discuss why people are not completing their RBT Certification and why the sudden implementation.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba asked if we know any reasons why people are not completing their RBT certification.

Ms. Kryk answered that she thinks it's the cost. They have to pay for it on their own. It's about \$150.00, requires 40 hours unpaid and to be completed outside of their work hours. She thinks there are many competitive jobs out there that people in the field are going to just so they can have a steady job.

Ms. Ostrovsky suggested maybe reaching out to non-profits and asking for sponsors for the RBT Certifications and/or a possible 90 day extension to help bring back the workers in the field.

Dr. Gaspar de Alba thinks it will be a good idea to bring it up to our Administrator, Dr. Edward Ableser.

Ms. Ostrovsky also asked about the Spanish speaking and Rural communities. She wants to make sure that no one feels left behind because of their language or where they live.

Ms. Michelle Canning with Crossroads Behavior in Elko answered that the Rural staff has incredibly higher costs for taking the test. Staff have to travel to either Reno, Boise or Salt Lake City, \$150.00 in fees, hotel cost and 1 to 2 days of missed work. It's costing staff over \$500.00 to take their test. Ms. Canning advised that they have reached out to the BACB regarding this, but it seems to be out of their control. The RBT Certification cost is really affecting recruitment in their staff.

Ms. Adie advised that ATAP provides a language supplement for the Spanish speaking. This helps with having a translator present when the BCBA's are meeting with the families. ATAP also tries to hire bi-lingual RBT's to do the 1 on 1 hours.

Ms. Olivia Espinoza stated that she is a parent representing 150 families with Azul Blue. She advised that they have been seeing progress in their children with ABA, more hours and better results. She believes ATAP is managing their

program very good according to the children's needs. Ms. Espinoza asked to please give families enough notice before quitting services. The last week of April, many families called Ms. Espinoza desperate, thinking that ATAP was going to cancel their benefits. She believes that we all need to work together as a team for the children.

Ms. Espinoza also stated that she does not believe the communication is equal with the parents. A lot of parents are not aware of the benefits and information of ATAP.

#### VIII. Confirm Dates for Future Meetings

The Commission decided to meet on June 23rd at 3:30 p.m. Ms. Ostrovsky made a motion to accept that day and time for their next meeting. Ms. Partos seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### VII. 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)

Ms. Betzaida Hill stated that she has two kids on the spectrum and wanted to express her case with ATAP. ATAP denied her services for her kids and she feels like it was a punishment because she didn't agree with the BCBA. This has caused a lot of frustration for her and her kids. She is currently without services.

#### VIII. Adjournment

Dr. Gaspar de Alba adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.