

Dear Dr. Gaspar de la Alba,

Nevadans with autism over the age of 21 are significantly impacted by the lack of an ample work force trained to provide the essential supports which enable them to live productive lives in their community or with their families.

In order to be integrated in the greater community, some adults with autism will require the services of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) to develop habilitative treatment plans and Positive Behavior Support Plans (PBSPs). Adults with autism that responded favorably to behavioral interventions as children are likely to respond to similar interventions as adults. Neither private health insurance nor Medicaid fund consultations with a BCBA when the client is 22 years old or older. These adults may receive services through the Home and Community Based Waiver. Although the HCBW does allow for BCBA consultations, this service is not readily available in part because the billable rate for adults is significantly less than the billing rate for children. Furthermore, the costs of HCBW staff participating in consultations with a BCBA are not covered. The costs of training the HCBW staff to successfully implement behavioral interventions and habilitative treatment plans recommended by the BCBA are also not covered.

The HCBW staff are responsible for promoting the adult's safety during perilous situations, implementing habilitative treatment plans, assisting during medical appointments, providing supports for employment, and engaging in community life outside of the supervision of the parent. To successfully engage in these activities some adults with severe autism require the expertise of a BCBA and the supports of specially trained staff.

The providers of HCBW services are challenged with maintaining a workforce that is skilled and capable of implementing behavioral and habilitative plans for full grown adults severely impacted by autism. They are competing with other similar businesses that offer a higher rate and provide employees a less stressful environment with better pay.

Please support raising the current rate of \$19.33 to a Medicaid rate that allows providers to provide quality services by a skilled workforce for adults significantly impacted by autism, so that they may successfully integrate into the community and make meaningful contributions.

Please support BCBA's being funded at a rate that is comparable with the BCBA Medicaid Rate for children. Please support HCBW staff being paid to attend their client's BCBA trainings and consultations, so that they may better provide community-based services to these individuals.

Respectfully,
Korri Ward
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