

Dear Autism Commission,

I have an adult son with autism and I am concerned about the work force which provides essential supports for adults over 21 who are significantly impacted by autism and are seeking to live in their community in Nevada.

In order to be integrated in the greater community, some adults with autism will require the services of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst to develop habilitative treatment plans and behavior plans. Adults with autism that responded favorably to behavioral interventions as children are likely to respond to similar interventions as adults allowing them to engage and live in their community. Neither private health insurance nor Medicaid fund consultations with a BCBA when the client is 22 years old or older. However, these adults may receive services through the Home and Community Based Waiver and the HCBW does allow for BCBA consultations.

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 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 are going to require the expertise of a BCBA and the supports of specially trained staff.

The providers of Home and Community Based Waiver 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 for a workforce with other similar businesses that have a higher rate and can offer employees a less stressful environment and better pay.

Please support raising the current rate of \$19.33/hr to a 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 greater community.

Respectfully,
Korri Ward
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