



Network Notification

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To: Ohio Primary Care Providers

From: CareSource

Subject: Update on Autism in Ohio

With autism affecting about 1 in every 68 children in the United States, it's very likely you will encounter children and/or families in your practice who are experiencing this challenge. A complex neurological disorder, autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the US, and more common in children than Down syndrome, cancer, diabetes, and AIDS combined. Autism can cause significant social, communication, behavioral, and sensory challenges. In all its forms, it impacts every aspect of an individual's life, and because the effects differ in nature and degree across people, we refer to this as an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The earlier the autism diagnosis, the better. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that all children receive autism screening at 18 and 24 months of age. One of the AAP's recommended screening tools, the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT™) was revised in December 2013 and is now the M-CHAT-Revised (M-CHAT-R™). The M-CHAT-R is a scientifically validated tool for screening children between 16 and 30 months of age that assesses risk for ASD.

Physicians may lack the confidence, knowledge and/or experience to recognize developmental red flags that are not significantly obvious. This is understandable as you do not see a child on a daily or frequent enough basis to identify patterns. Refer concerned parents to [M-CHAT-R](#).

Autism diagnosis is best made by a medical professional in conjunction with a medical team of therapists. The 5th edition of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V) describes the characteristics of ASD and the combination required to qualify for a diagnosis. Click here [How Do Doctors Make an Autism Diagnosis?](#)

The state of Ohio requires Medicaid to cover autism services for Medicaid recipients. Recently the governor of Ohio announced that many health insurance plans in the state will cover autism

services, beginning with the state employee plan. It is likely we will see more policy changes resulting in more types of health insurance offering autism coverage.

For Medicaid enrollees, autism treatment is covered as a Community Psychiatric Supportive Treatment (CPST) service, delivered by community-based, mobile individuals or multidisciplinary teams of professionals. CPST services are focused on the individual's ability to succeed in the community, to identify and access needed services, and to show improvement in school, work, family integration and contributions within the community. Objective scientific studies have confirmed the benefits of two methods of comprehensive behavioral early intervention. They are the Lovaas Model based on [Applied Behavior Analysis \(ABA\)](#) and the [Early Start Denver Model](#). A variety of intervention therapies are available, however, and parents and therapists report degrees of success with other approaches.

More information

Autism Research Institute Toll Free Hotline: 866-366-3361 (Support in English)

Ohio's Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA) Click [here](#)

Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) Click [here](#)

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