



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Katie Bentley

H.B. 8

128th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Celeste and Garland, Okey, Harris, Dyer, Foley, Lundy, Harwood, Koziura, Stebelton, Hagan, Skindell, Stewart, Heard, Mallory, DeBose, Patten, Pryor, Yuko, Pillich, Newcomb, Murray, Phillips, Winburn, Letson, Bolon, Luckie, B. Williams, Slesnick

BILL SUMMARY

- Prohibits health insurers from excluding coverage for specified autism services for individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.
- Creates the Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders to investigate and recommend additional treatments or therapies for autism spectrum disorders to be covered by health insurers.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Coverage for autism services

(R.C. 1739.05, 1751.68, and 3923.84)

The bill prohibits policies, contracts, agreements, and plans of health insuring corporations, sickness and accident insurers, public employee benefit plans, and multiple employer welfare arrangements from excluding coverage for any of the following services for individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder: habilitative or rehabilitative care, pharmacy care, psychological care, therapeutic care, and counseling services. Additionally, at the recommendation of the Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders (see "**The Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders**" below), the Director of Health may adopt rules to include other treatments or therapies for autism spectrum disorders that policies, contracts, agreements, and plans would be required to cover.

The above services, however, must be medically necessary and prescribed, provided, or ordered by a health care professional licensed or certified in Ohio to prescribe, provide, or order those services. Under the bill, "medically necessary" means

the service is based upon evidence; is prescribed, provided, or ordered by a health care professional licensed or certified under the laws of this state to prescribe, provide, or order autism-related services in accordance with accepted standards of practice; and will or is reasonably expected to do any of the following: (a) Prevent the onset of an illness, condition, injury, or disability; (b) Reduce or ameliorate the physical, mental or developmental effects of an illness, condition, injury, or disability; (c) Assist in achieving or maintaining maximum functional capacity for performing daily activities, taking into account both the functional capacity of the individual and the appropriate functional capacities of individuals of the same age.

The bill specifies that its coverage requirements may not be construed as limiting benefits otherwise available under an individual's policy, contract, agreement, or plan and may not be subject to limits on the number or duration of visits that an individual makes to an autism service provider. However, the bill's requirements may be subject to any copayment, deductible, and coinsurance provisions of the policy, contract, agreement, or plan to the extent that other medical services covered by the policy, contract, agreement, or plan are subject to those requirements.

Under the bill, an insurer may request a review of any treatment provided under the bill's requirements except inpatient services not more than once every 12 months unless the insured's licensed physician or licensed psychologist agrees that more frequent review is necessary. The insurer must pay for any review it requests.

Exception for supplemental policies

(R.C. 1751.68(A) and 3923.84(G))

The bill's requirement for coverage of autism services does not apply to health insuring corporation policies, contracts, or agreements that do not cover basic health care services¹ (ie. supplemental policies) or to any policy of sickness and accident

¹ Under section 1751.01 of the Revised Code, "basic health care services" means the following services when medically necessary: (1) physician's services, except when such services are supplemental, (2) inpatient hospital services, (3) outpatient medical services, (4) emergency health services, (5) urgent care services, (6) diagnostic laboratory services and diagnostic and therapeutic radiologic services,

insurance that provides coverage for specific diseases or accidents only, or to any hospital indemnity, medicare supplement, medicare, tricare, long-term care, disability income, one-time limited duration policy of not longer than six months, or other policy that offers only supplemental benefits.

Effect on existing programs

(R.C. 1751.68(F) and 3923.84(F))

The bill specifies that its requirements should not be construed as affecting any obligation to provide services to an individual under any of the following: (1) an Individualized Family Service Plan developed under federal law (20 U.S.C. 1436) including Ohio's Help Me Grow program, (2) an individualized service plan established by a county Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities for adults for the prevention, correction, or discontinuance of abuse or neglect or of a condition resulting from abuse or neglect for any adult who has been determined to need the services and consents to receive them (R.C. 5126.31, not in the bill), (3) the duty of a public school to provide a child with a disability with a free appropriate public education under Ohio law (R.C. Chapter 3323.) and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*).

Exemption from review by the Superintendent of Insurance

(R.C. 1751.68(A) and 3923.84(A))

The coverage required under this bill may be considered mandated health benefits. Under section 3901.71 of the Revised Code, no mandated health benefits² legislation enacted by the General Assembly may be applied to any policy, contract, plan, or other arrangement providing sickness and accident or other health benefits until the Superintendent of Insurance determines, pursuant to a hearing conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (R.C. Chapter 119.), that the provision can be applied fully and equally in all respects to (1) employee benefit plans subject to regulation by the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974

(7) diagnostic and treatment services, other than prescription drug services, for biologically based mental illnesses, (8) preventive health care services, including, but not limited to, voluntary family planning services, infertility services, periodic physical examinations, prenatal obstetrical care, and well child care, (9) routine patient care for patients enrolled in an eligible cancer clinical trial.

² Section 3901.71 of the Revised Code defines "mandated health benefits" as any required coverage, or required offering of coverage, for the expenses of specified services, treatments, or diseases under any policy, contract, plan, or other arrangement providing sickness and accident or other health benefits to policyholders, subscribers, or members.

(ERISA)³ and (2) employee benefit plans established or modified by the state or any political subdivision of the state, or by any agency or instrumentality of the state or any political subdivision of the state. The bill includes a provision that exempts its requirements from this restriction.

The Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

(R.C. 3923.84(H))

The bill creates the Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders as an independent commission in the Department of Health. The Commission must investigate and recommend treatments or therapies for autism spectrum disorders that the Commission believes should be included in the services that health insuring corporations, sickness and accident insurers, and public employee benefit plans, and multiple employer welfare arrangements are required to cover under the bill.

The bill requires that the ten members of the Commission appointed by the Director of Health include at least one licensed physician, licensed psychologist, and parent of an individual diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. Under the bill, the Commission serves at the pleasure of the Director.

Definitions

(R.C. 1751.68(G) and 3923.84(I))

The bill defines the following terms:

(1) "Autism services provider" means any person that provides treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

(2) "Autism spectrum disorder" means any of the pervasive developmental disorders as defined by the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association, or if that manual is no longer published, a similar diagnostic manual. Autism spectrum disorders includes, but is not limited to, autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder, Rett's disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder.

(3) "Diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders" means medically necessary assessments, evaluations, or tests, including but not limited to genetic and

³ ERISA is a comprehensive federal statute that governs the administration of employee benefit plans. ERISA generally precludes direct state regulation of benefits offered by private employers but allows state regulation of the business of insurance. Therefore, ERISA preempts the state's ability to require private self-insuring employers to offer to cover certain services.

psychological tests to determine whether an individual has an autism spectrum disorder.

(4) "Habilitative or rehabilitative care" means professional, counseling, and guidance services and treatment programs, including applied behavior analysis, that are necessary to develop, maintain, or restore the functioning of an individual to the maximum extent practicable.

(5) "Applied behavior analysis" means the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications using behavioral stimuli and consequences to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior, including, but not limited to, the use of direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relationship between environment and behavior.

(6) "Pharmacy care" means prescribed medications and any medically necessary health-related services used to determine the need or effectiveness of the medications.

(7) "Psychiatric care" means direct or consultative services provided by a psychiatrist licensed in the state in which the psychiatrist practices psychiatry.

(8) "Psychological care" means direct or consultative services provided by a psychologist licensed in the state in which the psychologist practices psychology.

(9) "Therapeutic care" means services or communication devices provided by a licensed speech-language pathologist, licensed occupational therapist, or licensed physical therapist.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	2-17-09

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