

# Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

February 20, 2007

## Mental Health and Developmental Services Autism Pilot Program

In the 2005 Legislative Session, decision units under Items for Special Consideration would have phased in services to about 150 individuals at the three Developmental Services regional centers.

Though unfunded, MHDS used some budget growth and TANF funds in the DS regions to develop a pilot program in FY 06 using similar approaches. This pilot is referred to as “the self-directed autism program.”

- There are currently 52 families in the self-directed autism (pilot program) across all three regions.
- To access this program the families must be at or below 500% of the federal poverty level. Currently 500% FPL for a family of four is \$103,250. (500% of FPL attached for families of 1 to 8)
- This program targets services to the highest risk children with autism during their critical developmental period (2 - 10 years). The aim of the intervention is to allow families most severely affected by autism to access additional therapies, interventions and supports.
- Research shows that early intervention occurring during the developmental years has the most impact on future skill and language acquisition and in decreasing the need for life long behavior intervention. Lifelong support needs for this group of children can be significantly reduced by applying the most intervention at the earliest possible age.
- The average payment rate is about \$1,100 per month. Children ages 2 to 5 receive up to \$1,296 per month, children ages 6 to 8 receive up to \$864 and children ages 9 to 10 receive up to \$648 per month. In addition, \$38 per month, per child is paid to the fiscal intermediary (currently Acumen) for fiscal management services.
- Since this is a self-directed model, families select the services they want for their child. Services include:
  - Supervision,
  - Behavioral training, including Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), as well as social, recreational and daily living skills,
  - Special therapeutic services, including speech, occupational and physical therapies, and
  - Respite.
- Over half of the money is spent on behavioral training, 21% on respite and 14% on specialized therapies.

- Two goals for the program are:
  - Assist families to remain intact (at this point, all families being served have remained intact), and
  - Enable these children to function as adults without the service system or without requiring care in an institutional setting.
- Families in the program report a high degree of satisfaction, reduced stress in the family and progress of their children.
- The waiting list for this program is approximately 24 statewide as of February 2007.

**FY 2006 7/05 to 6/06**

	<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>6-8 years</b>	<b>9-10 years</b>	<b>COST</b>
Desert Regional Center	12	5	1	\$96,584
Sierra Regional Center	9	3	0	\$87,697
Rural Regional Center	4	3	0	\$37,485
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total: \$221,766</b>

**FY 2007 7/06 to 12/06**

	<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>6-8 years</b>	<b>9-10 years</b>	<b>COST</b>
Desert Regional Center	15	8	1	\$191,394
Sierra Regional Center	9	9	0	\$81,795
Rural Regional Center	6	4	0	\$ 37,699
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total: \$310,888</b>

Currently, there are three decision units under Items for Special Consideration that would phase-in services at an average cost of \$2,000 per month. If funded and added to current cases, the average payment could be brought up to about \$1,500 per month—a number closer to what many families spend. Service could reach the 150 individuals targeted in the 2005 proposal. (These budget decision units are attached.)