



The Mississippi Autism Advisory Committee (MAAC) was created by House Bill 1125 (2011 Regular Session) as the Legislature recognized an urgent need for strategies on identification, treatment, education, accommodation, and employment of Mississippi's autistic community and resources for their families. This Committee is tasked with producing an annual report.

Actions Needed:

The MAAC recommends to the Mississippi State Legislature the singular recommendation to pass legislation to increase Medicaid Reimbursement Rates specific to Autism CPT Codes #97153, #97155, and #97156 with competitive rates to incentivize more providers to offer services covered by Medicaid and for the professional retention of Mississippi's Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCBA) and Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT).

Did you know?

- *Approximately 53% of Mississippi Medicaid recipients are children and **1 in 44** children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder every year.*
- *The Mississippi Department of Education identified **5,666** children, ages 3-21 with the ruling of Autism Spectrum Disorder as of November 1, 2020.*
- *Left untreated, the cost of autism per capita = **\$3.2 million**.*
- *Currently, Mississippi's Medicaid providers have hundreds of children on waitlists to receive the needed therapy and treatments to thrive. These children often wait years.*
- *Due to below national average Medicaid reimbursement rates, Mississippi is not providing adequate access to effective treatment by enrolling sufficient providers or enrolling new autistic clients. In fact, many providers are dismissing and discontinuing care due to low staffing.*
- *Mississippi currently only has **six** Medicaid providers and three of those are 501c3 non-profit organizations.*
- *Due to low reimbursement rates, Mississippi is losing our locally trained ABA therapists and RBTs to our neighboring states who can offer competitive rates.*

The growing number of Mississippians diagnosed with Autism and their family's needs for support throughout their lifespan suggest increasing Medicaid rates specific to Autism therapy will help these children make emotional and developmental strides, as well as encourage professional retention of our highly trained therapists and technicians.