

# **EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE: APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

**What are we trying to do?** Oregon Senate Bill 365 was passed in 2013. This bill directs the Health Evidence Review Commission (HERC) to evaluate the evidence related to applied behavioral analysis (ABA) for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children that receive services as determined by the Prioritized List of Health Services under the Oregon Health Plan (OHP).

## **The history of coverage of treatment for ASD by OHP**

- 1) This issue was last examined in 2008 by the Oregon Health Resources Commission. Currently treatment for behavioral symptoms have only limited coverage by OHP. Long-term behavioral therapy has generally not been covered. Children may be receiving services in a school-based setting outside of OHP.
- 2) ASD often exists with other conditions, and these conditions have their own considerations for treatment, most of which are covered. Short-term rehabilitation and certain medicines are also covered.

## **What has been done so far?**

- 1) HERC met August 8, 2012, discussed the process for completion of this evaluation of evidence, and referred the issue to the Evidence-Based Guidelines Subcommittee (EBGS) for further discussion.

## **What are the initial conclusions based on the evidence?**

- 1) The evaluation will not be final for many months, but in the initial review of the evidence, staff determined that new evidence indicates there may be some benefit for certain types of ABA in children between the ages of 2-12.
- 2) The subcommittee may accept the staff recommendation, request additional research, or choose to draw a different conclusion.

## **What happens now?**

- 1) HERC will have one or more experts in ASD and Pediatrics appointed to assist in subcommittee discussions.
- 2) HERC staff and staff for the Center for Evidence-Based Policy are reviewing the existing evidence and will be providing their analysis of this evidence to EbGS.
- 3) EBGS will meet September 12, 2013 to consider initial staff recommendations and hear public comment from patients, doctors, families, and any other interested members of the public.

- 4) EbGS members will discuss the evidence and the testimony they hear. They may choose to accept the staff conclusions as written or make changes to them. This may happen at the September meeting or a meeting later in the year.
- 5) This version of the evidence evaluation and conclusions will then be posted on the HERC website at [www.oregon.gov/OHA/OHPR/Pages/HERC](http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/OHPR/Pages/HERC) for a 30-day written public comment period.
- 6) Once finalized after considering the written public comment, the EbGS evaluation and conclusions will then go to the Value-Based Benefits Subcommittee (VbBS). VbBS will use the EbGS conclusions to determine what changes may be needed to the Prioritized List of Health Services and if there are any issues that would be involved in implementing these changes in OHP.
- 7) The evidence evaluation and any changes to the Prioritized List will eventually need final approval by the full HERC, which has members from many areas of health care (doctors, nurses, chiropractic, patients, health plan administrators, and more).
- 8) Any changes to the Prioritized List affecting OHP coverage of ABA would go into effect sometime between October 1, 2014 and April 1, 2015.

#### **How can you participate?**

- 1) You can subscribe to the HERC website at [www.oregon.gov/OHA/OHPR/Pages/HERC/](http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/OHPR/Pages/HERC/) to receive notifications of future meetings, look at materials being discussed or find out when the 30-day written public comment period begins and ends.
- 2) You can submit written comment of 1000 words or less (not including citations or journal articles) to [HERC.Info@state.or.us](mailto:HERC.Info@state.or.us) once EbGS releases the evidence evaluation for the 30-day public comment period.
- 3) You can attend the meetings, which are open to the public, and provide verbal testimony during time set aside for public comment.