



**Georgia Families 360°  
Monitoring & Oversight Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

November 14, 2019

**I. Call to order**

Lori Abramson-DCH – Georgia Families 360° called to order the meeting of the Georgia Families 360° Program’s Monitoring and Oversight Committee meeting at 2:05 p.m. on November 14, 2019 at 2 Peachtree St, SW, Atlanta, GA 30303, in the 36<sup>th</sup> floor Managed Care Boardroom.

**II. Welcome and Introductions**

The following Committee Members were present:

- Delegate Paula Brown, DPH
- Delegate Racquel Watson, DJJ
- Delegate Shemkia Harris, DFCS
- Delegate James Kizer, DFCS
- Catherine Ivy, DCH, Deputy Executive Director. Service Delivery & Administration Office
- Lori Abramson, DCH, Medicaid; Georgia Families 360°

**III. Opening Remarks- DCH/Lori Abramson**

Lori Abramson welcomed the Committee Members and public attendees. The Committee Members introduced themselves.

**IV. Department of Community Health Updates/ DCH, Catherine Ivy**

- Three Key partnerships have contributed to the build out of Autism Services. These include DCH for funding, DBHDD’s crisis system, and DPH’s development of screening tools and evaluations.

- We began this process in 2017 and are now up and running two years later with 500-600 providers. These include full credentialed providers as well as those providers that practice under a supervisory provider.
- Manuals for the Autism services, and all Medicaid services, can be found at [www.mmis.ga.gov](http://www.mmis.ga.gov). Information includes, participating providers, covered services, rates, etc.

#### **V. Autism Services and Utilization in the GF 360° Population/ AGP, Bhavini Solanki-Vasan**

- Coverage for autism services in Georgia under Medicaid began a year and a half ago which gave a condensed time period to build out a provider network. Currently there are 199 Providers that are CVO credentialed for this service in over 27 counties. Rural areas will take a little longer to fully build. Provider coverage currently exists for children and youth ages 2-14.
- We have put together a panel of representatives from the Department of Education, DFCS, DPH, and Amerigroup to review the services available in multiple settings for children with a verified diagnosis of autism.

#### **VI. DOE overview of school age services/DOE, Debra Reagin**

- The school system provides comprehensive assessments to determine eligibility for autism school-based services. The children are observed in multiple settings. Testing areas include cognitive testing, academic testing, a comprehensive language assessment, adaptive behavior assessment at home and school, and social emotional skills. There are also some autism specific assessments and only a psychologist and do and those that PT/OT providers can do. These lead to an IEP plan and discussions happen regarding what kind of accommodations/modifications and supports the child will need to be successful. There may be discussion of school settings or alternative placement based on the needs of the child. The overriding goal is to work to have the children in settings with peers who can role model social behavior that they can learn from.

#### **VII. DPH overview of Babies Can't Wait and other pre-school programs Lisa Pennington and Synita Griswell**

- The Autism initiative includes early identification, screening, diagnosis and intervention.
- Babies Can't Wait (BCW). DPH has 18 public health districts. Partnerships include interdisciplinary providers including PhDs, PT/OT/Speech, and behavior intervention to improve the long-term trajectory of children that are treated when young. They work closely with the Emory Autism Center and are still building their BCBA network.
- The model includes delivering services in the child's natural environment.

- It is a primary service provider model, which includes a great deal of parent education
- DPH is federally mandated to provide the service.
- Telehealth is being increasingly utilized to reach the rural areas of the state. Eventually the hope is to have behavior analysts and PhDs in all 18 districts

### **VIII. DFCS/EPAC Team/ Tonya Malone**

- The EPAC team works with children ages 5-17 in foster care to ensure that their educational needs are met. The goal is always to assist children and youth in having stability and a “typical” educational experience despite the foster care placement. There are 14 educational support monitors who work closely with the school system to ensure that all stakeholders are collaborating
- Children and youth have educational testing when they enter care to identify grade level, need for tutoring, credit recovery, and to ensure that their educational plans and history go with the child and does not fall through the cracks.
- In cases where a child needs an IEP, alternative setting, or is involved in disciplinary activity, the EPAC support monitor advocates for them
- There is also assistance with GED prep, and participation in the GaRise/Chaffee program when warranted.

### **IX. Amerigroup Overview of the ASD Benefit. Dr. Osoba and Bhavini Solanki-Vasan**

- Dr. Osoba reviewed the DSM V Autism Diagnosis in detail as well as the differential diagnoses. Early detection and early intervention are key to improving core deficits, with speech therapy being the key. The School system does these initial diagnostics and he is looking for that testing when he receives authorization requests for treatment.
- Dr. Osoba also talked at length about the treatment modalities and made the point that if ABA therapy, the gold standard in Autism treatment, is ineffective; then there was most likely a problem with the initial diagnosis.
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### **X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Lori Abramson at 3:30 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2020 from 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at 2 Peachtree St., SW, Atlanta, GA 30303 – 36<sup>th</sup> floor Managed Care Boardroom. Invitations will be sent to Committee Members.

Minutes submitted by: Lori Abramson, DCH, Georgia Families 360°

Minutes approved by: Woody Dahmer