

## Michigan Autism Council Meeting Minutes

### February 28, 2025

Attendance	COUNCIL MEMBERS	ORGANIZATION, REPRESENTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Amy Matthews, LP, BCBA Chair	Grand Valley State University, State-funded Initiatives
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Jacob Daar, BCBA Vice-Chair	Northern Michigan University, State Universities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Jenny Piatt, MA Secretary	Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Employment Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Colleen Allen, Ph.D.	Autism Alliance of Michigan, a Non-Profit Organization serving those with ASD
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Krista Boe, M.A., BCBA	Acorn Health, Certified Behavior Analysts
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Brian Debano, MPA	Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Emily DeLaGarza	Michigan Department of Insurance & Financial Services
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Shannon Hinman	Michigan Department of Education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dana Lasenby, MBA	Oakland Community Health Network, Pre-Paid Inpatient Health Plans/Community Mental Health Service Programs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Patricia Neitman, MS, LLP	Bureau of Children's Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Raymie Postema	Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Recipient Rights
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Jeanette Scheid	MDHHS Children's Services Administration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual	Dr. Neelkamal Soares	Health Care Providers

<input type="checkbox"/> Absent		
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Steven Tunnickliff, Ph.D.	Genesee ISD, Intermediate School Districts and Local Schools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Frank Vaca	Self-Advocate, ASD Community
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Rachelle Vartanian	Self-Advocate, ASD Community
	<b>MDHHS STAFF</b>	<b>MDHHS REPRESENTATION</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Erika Dianis, PsyD, LP	Bureau of Children’s Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Heather Glidden, LBSW, QIDP, MS	Bureau of Children’s Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent	Sara Keyes	Bureau of Children’s Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Dr. Mary Luchies, Ph.D., LP, BCBA, LBA	Bureau of Children’s Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports
<input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Absent	Marina Wyrzykowski	Legislative Affairs

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Autism Council meeting was called to order by Amy Matthews at 9:05 am. A quorum was present for the meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

A roll call of Council members and MDHHS staff was completed.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Jacob Daar called for a **MOTION** to approve the December minutes. Jenny Piatt **SECONDED** the motion. Jeanette Scheid called for a **MOTION** to approve the October minutes. Colleen Allen **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTIONS** carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ariel Cascio: speaking on behalf of herself, she brought up concerns related to recent DEI attacks and how it’s impacting her colleagues, grants and research. She is asking the council to make a commitment and stand up for DEI efforts. She invited those interested to attend the Stand Up for Science rally put on by MSU at the capital on Friday March 7 from 1-4pm.

Colleen Allen: discussed her concern about how BCBSM is putting limits on the number of hours for ABA and declining what has been recommended. Concerns this may violate parity.

## **STATE AGENCY UPDATES**

### **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) UPDATES**

Budget - No update

Legislative - Marina Wyrzykowski provided updates on several bills. The 2025-2026 session has begun, with a divided government in the legislature, the House has a republican majority, the Senate has a democratic majority, and Michigan is led by a democratic Governor. These fundamental differences will impact how bills move this year requiring more compromise and negotiations.

#### **Signed into law**

- [HB 4224 \(Rogers\)](#) - *Repeals workforce engagement requirements for Healthy Michigan Plan Medicaid* - DHHS Lead - Signed into law on 1/21/25 as PA 253 of 202
- [HB 5549 \(Breen\)](#) - *Requires schools to create behavioral threat assessment and management teams* - MDE/DHHS Co-Lead - Signed into law 1/22/25 as PA 272 of 2024
- [HB 5695 \(McFall\)](#) - *Requires participation in the ground emergency transport reimbursement program* - DHHS Lead - 1/22/25 Signed into law 1/22/25 as PA 275 of 2024

#### **New**

- [HB 4032 \(Linting\)](#) - *Removes interstate medical licensure compact sunset* - LARA Lead - Referred to House Health Policy Committee, received testimony hearing on 2/26
- [HB 4037, 4038 \(Rogers, VanderWall\)](#) - *Establishes certain requirements to operate a health data utility* - DHHS Lead - Referred to House Health Policy Committee
- [HB 4095 \(Arbit\)](#) - *Requires insurance providers to panel a mental health provider within a certain time period of application process* - DIFS Lead - Referred to House Insurance Committee
- [SB 3 - 5 \(Camilleri, Klinefelt, Shink\)](#) - *Creates prescription drug cost and affordability review act, and requires compliance* - DIFS/DHHS/LEGAL Co-Leads - Referred to Senate Finance, Insurance, and Consumer Protection Committee
- [SB 18 \(Irwin\)](#) - *Provides conditions on the use of certain federal benefits, including disability benefits, for a child in foster care* - DHHS/LEGAL Co-Leads - Received a hearing in Senate Housing & Human Services Committee on 2/25
- [SB 55 \(Anthony\)](#) - *Provides supplemental appropriations* - SBO Lead - Placed on third reading in the Senate, awaiting a vote
- [SB 60 \(Wojno\)](#) - *Removes interstate medical licensure compact sunset* - LARA Lead -

Referred to Senate Health Policy

- [SB 94 \(Singh\)](#) - *Prohibits drug manufacturers from engaging in certain conduct with pharmacies participating with a 340B program* - DHHS/LARA/LEGAL Co-Leads - Referred to Senate Oversight Committee
- [SB 95 \(Lindsey\)](#) - *Prohibits collection of debts if hospital is not in compliance with price transparency laws* - DHHS/AG/LEGAL Co-Leads - Referred to Senate Oversight Committee

#### Questions

- Request for update on SB 114, regarding multidisciplinary teams for vulnerable adults, was not available but will be provided during the next council meeting
- Was HB 6126-6127, regarding autism insurance coverage, reintroduced? Answer: will be reintroduced within the next two weeks and update provided at next council meeting
- Request for update on SB 60, HB 4032, a LARA bill, so MDHHS is not doing an analysis of it but is available for questions

#### Bureau of Children's Service Coordinated Health Policy & Supports: IDD and ASD Section:

- The Medicaid Provider Manual is being updated with regard to BHT services.
  - Planning to remove requirement that individual is seen by a PCP before being referred for a comprehensive evaluation to improve timely access to treatment
  - Providing clarification on re-evaluation requirement by removing every-three year requirement to as-needed which is consistent with the current law
  - Aligning language with standards from the ABA coding coalition regarding eligibility and discharge planning
- The Guidelines for ABA in Schools is still being reviewed by Comms
- The IDD/ASD section will be meeting with the PIHPs/autism leads for a full day workshop in April to collaboratively develop administrative guidelines and fulfill a boilerplate requirement
- Effective January 2025, the Specialized Placement Division has shifted to BCCHPS from Children Services Administration and is a new division that consists of the residential and community placement section and placement oversight and coordination unit. The purpose is to align child welfare functions with behavioral health needs to shorten length of stays and keep children in the community

#### **DIFS UPDATE**

- See discussion topic under new business

#### **LEO/MRS UPDATE**

- Michigan Career Technical Institute: Spring Graduation (March 13)
  - Reach out if interested in attending-open to the public
  - New division director overseeing program
- 2025 Opportunity in the Classroom Conference (MI GEARUP / KCP programs) (March 16-18)

- Announcing the recipients of the State Apprenticeship Expansion 25 RFP (March 26)
- State of the State:  
<https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/news/press-releases/2025/02/26/whitmer-deliver-2025-state-of-the-state>
- Provided a workplace success story: Joe's journey
- Discussions are occurring at the federal level that vocational rehab may be moved to the U.S. Department of Labor

### **MDE UPDATE**

- No updates
- MAASE (Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education) who is not MDE but closely affiliated, will provide updates at the next council meeting

### **OLD BUSINESS**


- Action item follow up:
  - Foster care info: number of children with ASD - Patty will provide update at next meeting
  - HB 802: follow up on MiCAL - Patty will provide update at next meeting
  - Who is providing ASD stickers? Answer: we don't know
    - Individuals can choose to have a designation placed on their Secretary of State record to notify law enforcement of a speech impediment- see HB 4364
  - First responder training: occurring across the state since 2012. AAOM involves peers in the presentation which provides professional content. Stepped back after Covid to review funding sources and create new content. The training is behavioral based and removes the obligation of the first responder to diagnose autism to be able to identify and respond appropriately to the behavior displayed. Training broken into six components: behavior basics, expanding knowledge of autism, identifying behavioral characteristics, tips on interacting, learning risk of wandering/elopement, key questions to ask a person with autism in an emergency
  - Parity discussion: see below
  - Autism Self-advocacy group: see below
  - ABA in school: presentation for April meeting

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Impact of federal changes
  - Statement from MiA3: discussed fears about recent executive orders, especially the one issued on Feb 13 targeting the autistic community among others. This order would create a commission to reduce the autistic population. Fears around what this means-does it mean less accessibility or something more extreme based on our U.S. history. Full Spectrum Agency does have its own lawyer who

reassures them that an EO cannot just go through but words like “we are a dire threat to society” are scaring many. Also wondering how to get timely and accessible information out to the autistic community who want to understand what is changing (i.e. losing access to services, benefits, or Medicaid). We would like to have a clearinghouse of fact-checked information (i.e. plain language action roundup) to disseminate information weekly or biweekly but who could provide this?

- Open discussion
  - Important to separate what is happening at the federal level from state level operations and what Michigan laws exist (i.e., Medicare telehealth will end April 1 but Michigan Medicaid has a statute that allows in-home telehealth which did not sunset when covid ended).
  - Organizational sources are providing general information (i.e., American Academy of Pediatrics, Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association)
  - How to have discussions about DEI and how to support minorities within the academic setting.
  - As part of the 5 year plan: sort out federal vs state statutes and policies and what to do when they conflict with each other. Also how they might affect state funding and ancillary/augmented services
  - People need to come forward and voice concerns with legislators and congressional representatives how you are directly impacted by the changes. MiA3 is seeking guidance on how and when to speak on a bill or general concerns that would be the most impactful.
  - Stick to routines when there is uncertainty and stay the course until it's time to react
- Parity-DIFS powerpoint
  - DIFS oversees compliance with applicable laws and standards and works to provide consumers with information on health insurance and includes responding to consumer inquiry, consumer complaints, and submitted appeals
  - Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA): DIFS's role includes reviewing and approving insurance company rates and form filings as well as providing consumer protections
  - Office of Insurance Rates for Forms
    - Michigan Insurance Code MCL 500.3406s: requires certain coverage for ASD services

- Order No. 13-003-M and No. 14-017-M: states benefits for ASD services are covered as Essential Health Benefits, including ABA and prohibits annual and lifetime dollar limits and visit limits
    - 45 CFR 156.125: Essential Health Benefits Design must not discriminate
    - PA 41 of 2004, MCL 500.3406hh: codifies MHPAEA provisions into MI Insurance Code
  - Office of Consumer Services
    - Responsible for providing consumer information and reviewing consumer complaints
    - Goal is to educate and protect consumers, while ensuring DIFS' licensees are compliant with state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations
  - How to File a Complaint process explained
    - Insured members or an authorized representative can submit a complaint ([michigan.gov/DIFScomplaints](http://michigan.gov/DIFScomplaints)) in writing but DIFS does not accept complaints from providers
      - Complaints: [DIFScomplaints@michigan.gov](mailto:DIFScomplaints@michigan.gov)
      - Health Appeals: [DIFS-HealthAppeal@michigan.gov](mailto:DIFS-HealthAppeal@michigan.gov)
      - Health Insurance Questions: [DIFS-HICAP@michigan.gov](mailto:DIFS-HICAP@michigan.gov)
- Michigan Special Education Experience survey-AAoM powerpoint
  -  2025.0228 Special Education Experience Survey\_\_findings (Autism Council...)
- ASD State Plan Survey results provided
  - Respondents=428 across the state, mostly from suburban area, by mothers, average age 9 years old
  - 40% of family members were satisfied or very satisfied with IEP, IFSP or 504 plan
  - 70% of family members indicated current school program was very or somewhat effective
  - Most important priority continues to be access to clinical and healthcare providers trained in autism
  - Lowest priority: education/training for clinical and healthcare providers
  - Discussion
    - More funding is needed but also how its targeted
    - Redesign the special education funding formula is needed-moving it to a weighted, targeted funding formula like what is used in TN or OH (see AAoM website under "education" tab for initiatives underway)

## **MEMBER UPDATES**

- Colleen: Navigating Autism Today Conference, March 7, 2025, Novi, MI
- Jacob: Michigan Autism Conference has been discontinued, LARA released its Red Tape report which is worth examining

Michigan Autistic Adult Advocacy Committee: will be completing a needs assessment in Michigan of autistic adults ages 13 and above. There are 275K autistic people in Michigan and the goal is to hear back from 2K respondents. MiA3 is asking for help getting the survey out once it's completed. They are providing an informational session on March 26 from 6-10pm on Zoom.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Jacob Daar MOTION to adjourn, and Frank Vaca **SECONDED** it.

ACTION ITEMS			
Who	What	When	Status
Marina	Update on SB 114, HB 6126-6127	4/25/25	Open
MASSE	Update will be provided next council meeting	4/25/25	Open
Patty	Will provide data on number of children with ASD in foster care	4/25/25	Open
Patty	HB 802, follow up on MiCAL	4/25/25	Open
Colleen	Provide information on HB 4364		Closed
Colleen	Provide information on parent conference March 7		Closed
Amy	ABA in schools presentation at next meeting	4/25/25	Open
Amy	Plain language action roundup-attach to participant guide		Closed
Amy	Executive order Make America Healthy Again-attach to participant guide		Closed
Amy	April meeting: continue discussion about executive orders, its impacts on organizations, individuals, and actions being taken to address it	4/25/25	Open
DIFS	Provide link for Clean Claims submissions		Open
Jacob	Provide recommendation for process improvement (i.e., articulate pervasive non-quantitative limitation) for DIFS		Open

	complaint process		
Planning group	Impact of federal changes-bring to state planning group		Open
Jacob	Was discontinuation of MAC due to funding issue	4/25/25	Open