

**A HANDBOOK
FOR PARENTS
OF CHILDREN WITH
AUTISM SPECTRUM
DISORDERS IN
CARBON, MONROE,
AND PIKE COUNTIES**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE(S)</u>
Getting Started	2-4
Medical Assistance	4-9
BHRS/Wraparound Services	9-12
Interagency Services Planning Team (ISPT)	12
Authorization of Services	13
Denial of Services	14-23
Appendix A: DSM-IV TR Diagnostic Criteria for Autism Spectrum Disorders	24
Appendix B: DSM-IV TR Diagnostic Criteria for Asperger's Disorder	25
Appendix C: DSM-IV TR Diagnostic Criteria for Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified	26
Appendix D: Glossary of Terms	27-29
Appendix E: Available Resources	30-56
Appendix F: BHRS Providers	57
Appendix G: Other Available Services	58-59
Appendix H: A Parent's Guide to the Denial and Appeal Process	60-62
Appendix I: Complaint Process	63-66

INTRODUCTION

Developmental delays can take on many different forms. Autism and the various autism spectrum disorders are forms of developmental delay. Autism is a neurobiological disorder. Children who have autism show impairment in social skills, communication skills, and play, as well as evidence of restricted, repetitive, stereotypical behaviors. These impairments can range from mild to severe, which is why they are often referred to as autism spectrum disorders.

Determining whether a child may have special needs can be difficult and overwhelming. This handbook was developed to help parents and caregivers navigate the Pennsylvania mental health system and answer many of the questions that often arise when children receive initial evaluations or begin receiving services. It was written from a parent's perspective and was designed to provide parents with a guide that provides basic information about behavioral health services available to their child and how to access these services.

While there is a great deal of information included in this handbook, parents or caregivers should feel comfortable in using the guide in any way that they choose. We hope that this guidebook will make it easier for parents and caregivers to understand both the nature of the services available and the processes involved in accessing these services.

“Autism itself is not the enemy... the barriers to development that are included with autism are the enemy. The retardation that springs from a lack of development is the enemy. The sensory problems that are often themselves the barriers are the enemy. These things are not part of who the child is... they are barriers to who the child is meant to be, according to the developmental blueprint. Work with the child's strengths to overcome the weaknesses, and work within the autism, not against it, to overcome the developmental barriers. “

—A person with autism



Many kids with autism spectrum disorders are making enormous strides and some are now indistinguishable from their peers.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Autism is no longer seen as a rare condition. The disorder currently affects over 400,000 people in the United States.

I think my infant or toddler may have delays. How do I know?

The following red flags may indicate that your child is at risk for developmental problems and is in need of a developmental evaluation. A child exhibiting any of these “red flags” should be screened to ensure that he or she is on the right developmental path.

Social and Communication Red Flags

If your baby or toddler is showing any of the following signs, ask your pediatrician or family practitioner for an immediate evaluation:

- No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by six months or thereafter
- No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions by nine months or thereafter
- No babbling by 12 months
- No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving by 12 months
- No words by 16 months
- No two-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating) by 24 months
- Any loss of speech or babbling or social skills at any age

The primary care physician or pediatrician can provide a developmental screening in order to determine whether the child has a developmental delay. **See Appendix A** for the full diagnostic criteria for autism and related disorders.

The Academy of Pediatrics recommends a developmental screening during each visit. There is a specific screen designed to detect the early signs of autism.

What should I do first? Where do I start?

If your child is between the ages of birth and five, you may want to first contact Early Intervention Services. Early Intervention Services will assess your child and screen for the signs of autism to determine whether a referral for an evaluation by developmental specialists is indicated.

If you would like to have your child evaluated to determine whether he or she qualifies for early intervention services, you can contact the Intermediate Unit in your county. If you reside in Monroe or Pike county, you can call the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 at 610-252-5550. Residents of Carbon County can call the Carbon Intermediate Unit 21 at 610-769-4111 or 1-800-223-4821.

If your child qualifies for Early Intervention Services, he or she may receive in-home services, or services in the community based in a specialized preschool setting.

Note: The services mentioned above are county-based services. You can call your local Community Care member services representative at 1-866-473-5862 for assistance with listings.



Autism occurs in 1 in every 150 births and at a rate of 5 boys to every girl.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



“Push to make your autistic child the best, most successful autistic he or she can be, and you may just be surprised by the results.”

—A person with autism

What other evaluation options are available for my child?

Psychoeducational Evaluation

If your child is school-aged, you can request that your child’s school psychologist conduct a psychoeducational evaluation to diagnose your child and to create an IEP that notes specific accommodations and/or modifications that must be made in order for your child to have appropriate education. The cost of this evaluation is covered by the school district; it is of no cost to you.

Outpatient Provider Evaluation

A diagnosis can be obtained through a Community Mental Health Provider or a private psychiatrist, psychologist, or neuropsychologist. A licensed psychologist and/or psychiatrist will meet with your child and complete a psychological or psychiatric assessment that includes a diagnosis and recommendations for services.

Private Physician or Pediatrician

Further assessment can be obtained through your private or developmental pediatrician, neurologist, or other qualified licensed physician. This cost is often covered through commercial insurance (the private insurance that you or your spouse may receive from your employer). There may be some instances where private pay is required. It is recommended that you talk with your physician regarding your concerns.

I have heard that I can get other types of services. How do I get these services? How do I pay for them?

There are various types of behavioral health services available to children with autism. Medical Assistance (MA) often covers these services. MA is funding that is available through the state if your child has a disabling diagnosis. Autism, pervasive developmental disorder NOS, and asperger’s (as well as numerous other diagnoses) are considered “disabilities.”

I have heard of Medical Assistance (MA). What is it?

Pennsylvania has a unique system in which parents of a disabled child can qualify for Medical Assistance regardless of the parents’ income. In other words, services traditionally provided only to individuals who fall below a certain income level are available to children diagnosed with a disability regardless of the family’s income. Medical Assistance pays for many of the services commonly provided to children with autism.

How can my child qualify for Medical Assistance?

In order to be eligible for Medical Assistance, your child must have an assessment and be diagnosed with a disability that qualifies him or her for this benefit. The list of qualifying diagnoses can be found on the Web at <http://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook>. Such diagnoses include but aren't limited to autism, pervasive developmental disorder, and asperger's disorder. The most common ways of obtaining a diagnosis are mentioned above.

How do I obtain Medical Assistance for my disabled child?

In order to apply for Medical Assistance you must complete the application form, PA 600. The quickest way to obtain an application form is to call your local County Assistance Office. You can also apply online using the COMPASS application. Families, however, are not encouraged to use the online version when applying because there have been difficulties using the online form.

What other information might help me complete the application form?

It helps to write "MA for the disabled child" at the top of the first page. Even though only your child is being reviewed, all persons in the household should be listed, including their birth dates. The Social Security numbers of the parents and the child should be included.

Parental income is not taken into account. However, your child's income, if any, is taken into account when reviewing eligibility. Verification of your child's income should be included. This includes any resources that generate income, such as interest on bank accounts in your child's name. Effective September 1, 2000, court-ordered child support and Social Security Survivor's benefits for the child are not considered.

Even though parental income is not considered, the implementation of Act 7A/2002 requires that the custodial parent or legally responsible adult provide this information in the application. Medical Assistance (MA) will be denied if the information is not provided. This income information is used to determine whether a parent must apply for Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability income (SSI/SSD) for the child through the Social Security Office.



Autism is the third most common developmental disability following mental retardation and cerebral palsy—it is more common than multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, or childhood cancer.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Behavioral therapies and medical interventions are some of the treatments effectively being used for individuals with autism.

What other information might help me complete the application form? (continued)

If the child is covered under any medical insurance, this should be noted on the application. A copy of the front and back of insurance cards should be sent. Medical documentation of the child's disability should be attached to the application, including diagnosis, severity, duration of disability, impact on child's functioning, and current treatment plan. This information is required by the Medical Review Team (MRT) who will determine the disability in the event SSI/SSDI benefits are rejected based on parental resources. This documentation must be signed by a medical doctor (MD), psychiatrist, or psychologist. (See note below.)

What criteria must my child meet to qualify as disabled child?

To qualify as disabled child, your child must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be receiving Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits.
- Be certified disabled based on SSDI/SSI criteria. This is done by the MRT in Harrisburg. No disability decision is made at the county level. A medical evaluation is authorized if all verifications are received and eligibility is established in all areas except medical determination. The MRT reviews the child's case using the same criteria as the Social Security Administration (SSA). MRT sends certification or rejection of child's disability to the County Assistance Office. If rejected, the County Assistance Office must send a notice to close.
- Child received SSD/SSI and was certified disabled. SSA terminated for reasons other than disability – no need to recertify if disability certificate is still valid.

NOTE: The County Assistance Office is not requiring that parents go to the Social Security Office to receive a denial letter unless their monthly income is under \$3,000 per month. This is a change—previously parents were required to obtain the letter from SSA before authorization. In some cases, clients may be required to apply for SSI if income is between \$3,000-\$5,000. The County Assistance Office will make a referral to Social Security and a representative will contact the parents.

How does the verification process work?

An interview is not required and everything can be done by phone or mail. If verifications are incomplete or missing, the caseworker will contact the parents.

Cases are reviewed once a year by mail and/or phone. The parents will be sent a form to update their child's case and must complete and return the form, along with any requested verifications.

Are MA benefits retroactive?

The effective date of eligibility is the date the application is received and date-stamped in the County Assistance Office. If a parent is requesting retroactive medical coverage for a previous medical expense in the three months prior to the effective date, they must submit medical documentation that the disability existed during that period.

The retroactive period cannot be approved until the MRT certifies that the child has met SSA disability criteria. Ongoing medical coverage can be authorized with the MRT certification pending but not retroactive coverage.

Will my child be enrolled in an HMO?

Children receiving MA will be enrolled in an HMO, a Medicaid Fee-for-Service program, or a HIPP. These HMOs and Fee-for-Service programs provide benefits for the physical health of your child. Community Care manages all behavioral health services.

Will I need to reapply once my child is receiving MA?

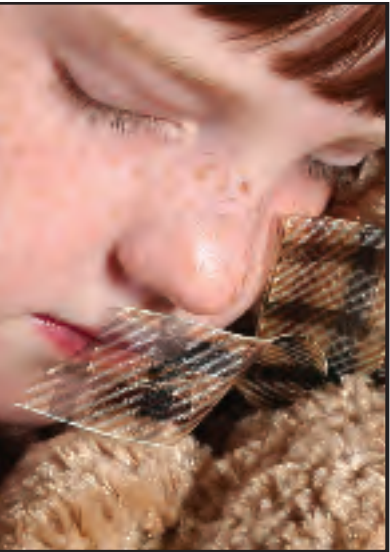
Eligibility for a child receiving MA must be reviewed at yearly intervals. The new PA600-CH-L is used along with a letter from the caseworker explaining the review process. Parental income must be reported at reapplication, along with other information required by Act 7A.



“Autism is happy and sad. I like autism. Autism makes me different from my friends. That’s OK.”

—A person with autism

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Specialist education and structured support can really make a difference to the life of a person with autism, helping to maximize skills and achieve full potential.

What information is needed to meet the Act 7A requirement?

For the Department of Public Welfare to submit an annual report to the General Assembly as part of the requirements of Act 7A, the following information is needed from families applying for “MA for the Disabled Child”:

- Family size (parent’s statement).
- Household income (parent’s statement). Parents must verify their income.
- County of residence (parent’s statement).
- Length of residence in PA (parent’s statement).
- Third-party insurance information (insurance card needed).
- Diagnosis.

Who is responsible for the documentation?

When applying for Medical Assistance under the disabled child provision, it is the parent or guardian’s responsibility to assemble documentation of the child’s disability or condition. It is not enough for a child to have a disability, a specific diagnosis, or an IEP in order to qualify for Medical Assistance under the disabled child provision. The child’s disability must meet the Social Security childhood disability standards. The disability verification is sent to the Medical Review Team (MRT) to review for a disability determination.

It is necessary for the parents to provide documentation of the nature, severity, frequency, and duration of the limitations in addition to the medical or psychiatric condition that causes the limitations (diagnosis). Important sources of documentation include the child’s doctors, therapists, teachers, guidance counselors, and school records. IEPs are not enough because they focus on educational issues.

Psychologists certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or licensed can provide the necessary documentation for a disability determination for a child applying for Medical Assistance under the disabled child provision.

What does Medical Assistance cover for my child?

Medical Assistance covers various behavioral health services not covered under commercial insurance, including Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS) and Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS) services.

What are BHRS services?

BHRS or “wraparound services” are the most commonly recommended services for children with Autism and other Pervasive Developmental Disorders and include a range of individualized behavior management, treatment, and rehabilitation services provided in community settings. Settings may include the child’s home or school, as well as other settings such as camps, recreational venues, or commercial establishments.

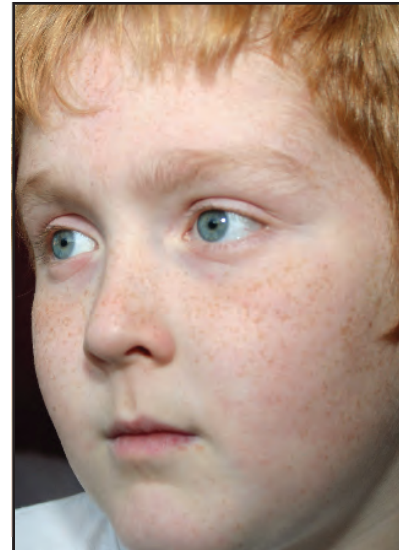
Which types of professionals deliver BHRS services?

BHRS are most widely utilized in the treatment of children with autism spectrum disorders. BHRS treatment consists of services delivered as medically necessary by one or more of the professionals listed below.

Behavior Specialist Consultants (BSC)—Master’s or Doctoral level staff who assess and analyze behavioral data, develop child-specific treatment plans, and consult with the treatment team concerning the implementation of the treatment and behavioral plans.

Mobile Therapists (MT)—Master’s or Doctoral level staff who provide intensive individual or family therapy services to children with autism spectrum disorders and their families in settings other than a provider agency or office, including the child’s home, school, church, community center, a neighbor’s or extended family member’s home, and other community settings. They provide child-centered, family-focused individual and family psychotherapy, as defined in the treatment plan and agreed upon by the therapist and family using formats that may vary according to the individualized needs of the child.

Psychotherapy in the home or community setting may include sessions with the child individually, the entire nuclear family, the family and a community resource (such as a minister, Scoutmaster, community leader, mentor), the family and teacher, guidance counselor, principal, or subsystems of any of the above, such as sibling groups, as clinically indicated, agreed upon, and identified in the treatment plan.



Autism has nothing whatsoever to do with the way parents bring up their children.

There isn’t one specific cause of autism. Research has focused on whether chemical imbalances, differences in the brain, genetics, or problems with the immune system play a role in causing the disorder.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



A person with autism can be educated. With the right structured support within and outside of school, individuals with autism can be helped to reach their full potential.

Which types of professionals deliver BHRS services? (continued)

Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS)—TSS provides direct services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders under the supervision of a Master’s level clinician (typically the BSC or MT). These staff members are educated at the Bachelor’s degree level and have at least one year of applicable experience in human service fields as providers of care. TSS workers implement interventions as defined in the treatment plan. Their role is to teach the interventions, skills, and techniques in the treatment plan to the adults in the child’s life so that at some point these natural supports will have the skills to manage the child’s behavioral needs. The other role of the TSS is to collect data to document the child’s progress on the treatment plan.

How do I get BHRS or wraparound services?

In order to obtain BHRS, you can have your child evaluated at one of the mental health providers in the county (**See Appendix F**). An evaluation will be offered within seven days of the initial phone call.

What will happen at an evaluation for BHRS?

Before the evaluation, a Master’s level clinician will ask you questions about your child’s developmental history and current and past behaviors, including definitions of the behaviors, the frequency and intensity of the behaviors, past medical history review of strengths, current school or preschool placement if relevant, drug and alcohol history if relevant, family psychiatric history, past treatment, and medical history. You should bring as much information as possible to this appointment.

The clinician will make a level of care determination for BHRS and/or another level of care that will address your child’s needs.

What happens next if BHRS is recommended?

A psychologist, psychiatrist, or other qualified individual will conduct an evaluation, which may include questions about your child's behavior, developmental and medical and psychiatric histories, past treatment history, current school placement and/or preschool placement if relevant, behavior in school, and drug and alcohol history if relevant.

Your child will be observed and may be tested using specific noninvasive diagnostic tools. Parents are interviewed and may be asked to fill out various forms and checklists and bring other assessments and/or additional information such as preschool reports and physician reports. Your child's teacher may also be asked to complete some forms.

The evaluator will summarize this information and make recommendations.

What will the recommendations be?

The recommendations for children with autism spectrum disorders can vary. It is common for a child to be prescribed BHRS. Other recommendations, such as a specialized classroom, additional testing, medication, or adjunctive therapies such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and/or speech therapy may be recommended.

The evaluator may also recommend other services **(See Appendix G)**.



People with autism are often keen to make friends but, due to their disability, find this difficult.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



People with autism who have an extraordinary talent are referred to as “autistic savants.” Savants are rare. Savant ability is more frequently associated with those having some form of autism rather than with other disabilities. Current thinking holds that at most 1 or 2 in 200 individuals with an autistic spectrum disorder might have a genuine savant talent.

What does a recommendation for BHRHS look like and what does it mean?

Following the evaluation, the evaluator will summarize his or her findings and make specific recommendations that include a prescription for services. These services are requested in “hours per week.” For example, a prescription might state “recommend 3 BSC hours per week and 10 TSS hours per week in the home to address John’s off-task behavior and self-stimulatory behaviors.” This means that the evaluator is requesting 3 Behavioral Specialist Consultant hours per week and 10 Therapeutic Staff Support hours per week.

These services will be provided over a period of time. Four months is the typical amount of time covered in a prescription period. However, evaluators are also able to recommend up to a 1-year period for these services depending on your child’s circumstances. These hours are provided per week and cannot be carried over from week to week if not utilized.

What happens following the evaluation?

The facility that did the evaluation will hold a treatment team meeting with you (commonly known as the interagency service planning team, or ISPT). The children’s intake staff at the agency will begin to identify a provider to accept the child’s case if it is authorized.

What is an ISPT?

An ISPT (interagency service planning team) meeting usually consists of the service providers, family members, school personnel, a Community Care Behavioral Health care manager, and/or others invited to participate. During this meeting, the child’s needs are discussed, along with the impact of services, need for changes in services, and/or other recommendations. The team may discuss the evaluator’s recommendations. If the team members are not in agreement, they can request that the evaluator change his or her original recommendations.

What happens after the meeting?

Following the evaluation and ISPT meeting, the evaluation, treatment plan, and related meeting documents will be sent to Community Care for review for authorization. Community Care (a managed care organization) manages behavioral health services.

Who determines if my child will receive the services recommended?

Community Care reviews the information presented when a request is made for behavioral health services. If the person reviewing the case (known as a “care manager”) feels that the information presented in the packet meets “medical necessity” criteria for the services requested, the packet will then be authorized. The service provider will be contacted and given an authorization number.

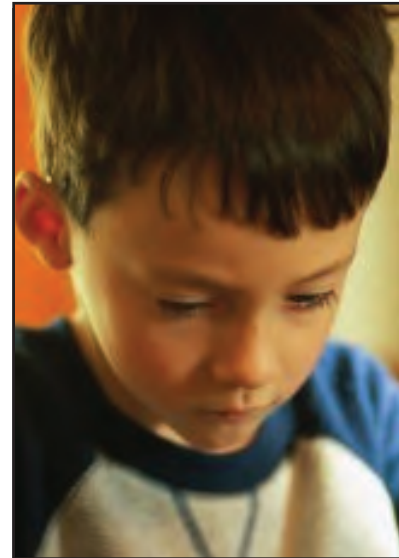
If Community Care’s care manager is uncertain about whether the packet meets medical necessity criteria or is missing required information necessary to make a decision, the evaluation will be further reviewed. In this case, Community Care may request in a letter more information from the provider or from the person who did the evaluation. The parents are not required to do anything further at this point. This letter in no way indicates that the services will not be approved. It is simply a way to gather more information to better understand your child’s specific symptoms and behaviors. The provider will have 5 business days to submit the requested information. After receiving the additional information, Community Care will make a decision within two days.

What happens next if recommended services are approved?

If Community Care approves services and a provider has been identified, the provider will then begin to provide services. Providers agree to initiate a member’s treatment if they have the staff and appropriate expertise. The provider then contacts the family and notifies them of a start date. The family can choose their provider but may have to wait longer depending on the provider’s availability. The provider will go to the identified setting and begin working with the child. These services should be provided over the length of the authorization period **(See Attachment F)**.

How do I keep getting these services?

Toward the end of the authorized period, the agency that is providing services will request that your child be re-evaluated to determine the impact of services, any changes in behavior, and the continued needs of your child. Another evaluation will be completed along with another ISPT meeting with all relevant team members. This process continues throughout the entire time that your child receives services.



“I believe that every one of us, regardless of our talents, skills, temperament, past experiences, or level of function, is intrinsically worthy of support to reach our fullest potential. I take as my guide for action this vision: that we are, each of us, precious and beautiful.”

—A person with autism

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



“It is okay, even beautiful, to be autistic.”

—A person with autism

What can I do if some or all of the recommended services are denied by Community Care Behavioral Health? What is a grievance?

You can file a grievance. A grievance is what you file when you do not agree with Community Care’s decision that a service that you or your provider asked for is not medically necessary.

You can file a grievance if Community Care does any one of these things:

- Denies a covered service.
- Approves less than what was asked for.
- Approves a different service from the one that was asked for.

How do I file a grievance?

You will receive a letter from Community Care if services are not completely approved for you. The letter will tell you how to file a grievance. *You have 45 days from the date you receive this letter to file a First Level grievance.*

To file a grievance, call your local Community Care customer services representative at 1-866-473-5862 and tell us your grievance. Or, write down your grievance and send it to:

Community Care Behavioral Health Organization
The Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466

Your provider can file a grievance for you if you give him or her your consent in writing to do so.

NOTE: You cannot file a separate grievance on your own if your provider files a grievance for you.

What happens after I file a First Level grievance?

Community Care will send you a letter to let you know your grievance was received. The letter will tell you about the First Level grievance process.

You may ask Community Care to see any information about your grievance. You may also send information that may help with your grievance to:

Community Care Behavioral Health Organization
The Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466
Attention: Complaints and Grievances Department

You may also ask for assistance with your grievance by calling the your local Customer Service representative at 1-866-473-5862.

If you want to be included in the First Level grievance review, you must call Community Care within 10 days of the date on the letter sent confirming receipt of your grievance. You can come to your local Community Care office or be included by phone. You are not required to attend this meeting. If you do not attend, it will not affect the decision.

A committee of one or more Community Care staff, including a doctor or licensed psychologist who has not been involved in the issue you filed your grievance about, will make a decision about your First Level grievance. Your grievance will be decided no more than 30 days after it is received. A letter will be mailed to you no more than 5 business days after Community Care makes its decision. This letter will tell you the reason for the decision(s). It will also tell you how to file a Second Level grievance if you don't like the decision.

How do I keep getting these services?

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped, and you file a grievance that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the letter (notice) telling you that the services you have been receiving are being reduced, changed, or stopped, the services will continue until a decision is made.

What if I do not like Community Care's First Level grievance decision?

If you are not happy with Community Care's First Level grievance decision, you may file a Second Level grievance with Community Care.



"Sometimes it makes me mad to be different, but mostly I like who I am. It doesn't matter that I have a disability. One day I'm going to be a film director. I'm making this documentary to help parents of kids with autism, and to show other people that kids with autism can do a lot of things."

—A person with autism

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



“Autism is a world so difficult to explain to someone who is not autistic, someone who can easily turn off the peculiar movements and actions that take over our bodies.”

—A person with autism

When should I file a Second Level grievance?

You must file your Second Level grievance within 45 days of the date you get the First Level grievance decision letter. Use the same address or phone number you used to file your First Level grievance.

What happens after I file a Second Level grievance?

Community Care will send you a letter to let you know we received your grievance. The letter will tell you about the Second Level grievance process.

You may ask Community Care to see any information we have about your grievance. You may also send information that may help with your grievance to Community Care. You may also ask for help by calling your local Community Care Customer Services representative at 1-866-473-5862.

You can come to a meeting of the Second Level grievance committee or be included by phone. Community Care will contact you to ask if you want to come to the meeting. You are not required to attend this meeting if you do not want to. If you do not attend, it will not affect the decision.

The Second Level grievance review committee will have three or more people on it. The members of the committee will not have been involved in the issue you filed your grievance about. The committee will make a decision no more than 30 days from the date Community Care received your Second Level grievance.

A letter will be mailed to you within five business days after the committee makes its decision. This letter will tell you the reason for the decision. It will also tell you how to ask for an external grievance review if you don't like the decision.

How do I keep getting these services?

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped, and you file a Second Level grievance that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the First Level grievance decision letter, the services will continue until a decision is made.

What if I still don't like the decision?

If you are not happy with the Second Level grievance decision, you can ask for an External grievance review.

You must call or send a letter to Community Care asking for an External grievance review within 15 days of the date you received the Second Level grievance decision letter. Use the same address and phone number you used to file your First Level grievance. Community Care will then send your request to the Department of Health.

The Department of Health will notify you of the External grievance reviewer's name, address, and phone number. You will also be given information about the external review process.

Community Care will send your grievance file to the reviewer. You may provide additional information that may help with the external review of your grievance, to the reviewer, within 15 days of filing the request for an External grievance review.

You will receive a decision letter within 60 days of the date you asked for an External grievance review. This letter will tell you the reason(s) for the decision and what you can do if you don't like the decision.

How do I keep getting these services?

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped and you request an External grievance review that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the Second Level grievance decision letter, the services will continue until a decision is made.



People with autism have a normal life span.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Autism occurs in all countries and within all socioeconomic classes.

There are various treatment options to ameliorate the symptoms.

Who can I call if my health is at immediate risk?

If your doctor or psychologist believes that the usual time frame for deciding your complaint or grievance will harm your health, you, your doctor, or your psychologist can call your local Community Care Customer Services representative at 1-866-473-5862 and ask that your complaint or grievance be decided faster.

You will need to have a letter from your doctor or psychologist faxed to your local Community Care office at 1-866-562-2405 explaining how the usual time frame of 30 days for deciding your complaint or grievance will harm your health. If your doctor or psychologist does not fax Community Care this letter, your complaint or grievance will be decided within the usual 30-day time frame.

A committee of three or more people, including a doctor or psychologist, will review your expedited complaint or grievance. No one on the committee will have been involved in the issue you filed your complaint or grievance about.

The committee will make a decision about your complaint or grievance and inform you of their decision within 48 hours of receiving your doctor or psychologist's letter explaining how the usual time frame of 30 days for deciding your complaint or grievance will harm your health, or three business days from receiving your request for an expedited complaint or grievance, whichever is shorter. You will also receive a letter telling you the reason(s) for the decision. It will tell you how to ask for an expedited External complaint or grievance review if you don't like the decision.

How do I file an expedited External complaint or grievance?

If you want to ask for an expedited External complaint (by the Department of Health) or grievance review (by a doctor who does not work for Community Care), you must contact Community Care within two business days from the date you get the expedited complaint or grievance decision letter. A decision will be issued within five business days from when we receive your request.

How can Community Care help with the complaint and grievance processes?

If you need help filing your complaint or grievance, a staff member of Community Care will help you. This person can also assist you during the complaint or grievance process. You do not have to pay for the help of a staff member. This staff member will not have been involved in any decision about your complaint or grievance.

Can I have someone else help me with the complaint and grievance processes?

You may also have a family member, friend, lawyer or other person help you file your complaint or grievance. This person can also help you if you decide you want to appear at the complaint or grievance review. At any time during the complaint or grievance process, you can have someone you know represent you or act on your behalf. If you decide to have someone represent or act for you, tell Community Care, in writing, the name of that person and how we can reach him or her. The address for Community Care is:

Community Care Behavioral Health Organization
The Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466

You or the person you choose to represent you may ask Community Care to see any information we have about your complaint or grievance.

For legal assistance, you can contact the legal aid office at 1-800-322-7572, or call the Pennsylvania Health Law Project at 1-800-274-3258.

Can I get help if my primary language is not English?

If you ask for language interpreter services, Community Care will provide the services at no cost to you.

Si Ud. necesita la versión en Español de este manual, por favor solicite una a este teléfono 1-866-622-4228.

What help is available for me if I have a disability?

Community Care will provide persons with disabilities with the following help in presenting complaints or grievances, at no cost, if needed.

- Providing sign language interpreters
- Providing information submitted by Community Care at the complaint or grievance review in an alternative format — the alternative format version will be given to you before the review
- Providing someone to help copy and present information

NOTE: For some issues, you can request a Fair Hearing from the Department of Public Welfare in addition to, or instead of filing a complaint or grievance with Community Care. In some cases, you can request a Fair Hearing at any time.



“See me beautiful, look for the best in me. It’s what I really am, and all I want to be. It may take some time, it may be hard to find, but see me beautiful. See me beautiful, each and every day. Could you take a chance? Could you find a way to see me shining through in everything I do and see me beautiful?”

—Red Grammer,
Singer

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



Common characteristics of autism include:

Difficulty mixing and relating with other people

Inappropriate laughing and giggling

No fear of real dangers

Apparent insensitivity to pain

Inappropriate attachment to objects

Extreme emotional distress for no discernible reason

What is a Fair Hearing?

In some cases you or your representative can ask the Department of Public Welfare to hold a hearing because you are unhappy about, or do not agree with, something Community Care did or did not do. These hearings are called Fair Hearings. You can ask for a Fair Hearing at the same time you file a complaint or grievance, or you can ask for a Fair Hearing after Community Care decides your First or Second Level complaint or grievance.

What kinds of things can I request a Fair Hearing for, and when do I have to ask for a Fair Hearing?

If you are unhappy because ...	And you ask for a Fair Hearing, you must do so ...
Community Care decided to deny a service because it is not a covered service	within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you of this decision OR within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you its decision after you filed a complaint about this issue.
Community Care decided not to pay a provider for a service you received AND the provider can bill you for the service	within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you of this decision OR within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you its decision after you filed a complaint about this issue.
Community Care did not decide your First Level complaint or grievance within 30 days of when you filed it	within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you that we did not decide your complaint or grievance within the time frame we were supposed to follow.
Community Care decided to deny, decrease or approve a service different than the service your provider requested because it was not medically necessary	within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you of this decision OR within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you its decision after you filed a grievance about this issue.
Community Care's provider did not give you a service by the time you should have received it	within 30 days from the date you should have received the service OR within 30 days of getting a letter from Community Care telling you its decision after you filed a complaint about this issue.

How do I ask for a Fair Hearing?

You must ask for a Fair Hearing in writing. Send your request to:

Department of Public Welfare
Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Division of Grievances and Appeals
Beechmont Building #32
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675

What information should I include in my request for a Fair Hearing?

Your request for a Fair Hearing should include all of the following:

- Member's name
- Member's Social Security number and date of birth
- A telephone number where you can be reached during the day
- An indication if you want to have the Fair Hearing in person or by telephone
- Any letter you may have received about the issue you are requesting your Fair Hearing for (provide that information)

What happens after I ask for a Fair Hearing?

You will get a letter from the Department of Public Welfare's Bureau of Hearings and Appeals telling you where the hearing will be held and the date and time for the hearing. You will receive this letter at least 10 days before the date of the hearing.

You may come to where the Fair Hearing is held or be included by phone. A family member, friend, lawyer or other person may help you during the Fair Hearing.

Community Care will also go to your Fair Hearing to explain why we made the decision or explain what happened. If you ask, Community Care will help you file for a Fair Hearing. Community Care will give you (at no cost to you) any records, reports, and other information we have that is relevant to your Fair Hearing.



Common characteristics of autism include:

Disturbances in communicating with others

Repetitive or ritualistic behavior

Extreme sensitivity (hypersensitivity) in one of the senses (e.g., sound, touch, taste, sight) or extremely non-responsive (hyposensitive) to one of the senses

Selective hearing and may act as deaf

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS



When will the Fair Hearing be decided?

A decision will be made between 60 and 90 days from when the Department of Public Welfare receives your request. A letter will be sent to you after the decision is made. This letter will tell you the reasons for the decision. It will tell you what to do if you don't like the decision.

Whom can I call if my health is at immediate risk?

If your doctor or psychologist believes that using the usual time frames to decide your Fair Hearing will harm your health, you or your doctor or psychologist can call the Department of Public Welfare at 1-877-356-5355 and ask that your Fair Hearing be decided faster. This is called an Expedited Fair Hearing.

You will need to have a letter from your doctor or psychologist faxed to the Department of Public Welfare at 1-717-772-7827 explaining why using the usual time frames to decide your Fair Hearing will harm your health.

If your doctor or psychologist does not fax a letter, your doctor or psychologist may testify at the Fair Hearing to explain why using the usual time frames to decide your Fair Hearing will harm your health.

When will the Expedited Fair Hearing be scheduled?

The Bureau of Hearings and Appeals will contact you to schedule the Expedited Fair Hearing. The Expedited Fair Hearing will be held by telephone within three business days after you ask for the Fair Hearing.

What happens if my doctor or psychologist does not send a written letter and does not testify at the Fair Hearing?

If your doctor or psychologist does not send a written statement and does not testify at the Fair Hearing, the Fair Hearing decision will not be expedited. Another hearing will be scheduled and decided within 60-90 days.

Common characteristics of autism include:

Resistance to changes in routines

No eye contact, appears to "look through" people

Resistance to normal teaching methods

Uneven gross/fine motor skills

Marked physical overactivity or extreme passivity

What happens if my doctor or psychologist sends a written letter or testifies at the Fair Hearing?

If your doctor or psychologist sends a written statement or testifies at the Expedited Fair Hearing, the decision will be made within three business days after you asked for the Expedited Fair Hearing.

What if I want to file an official complaint against my provider or Community Care? How do I do this?

A complaint is when you tell us you are unhappy with Community Care or your provider, or you do not agree with a decision made by Community Care.

Some reasons why you might file a complaint include:

- You are unhappy with the care you are getting.
- You are unhappy that you cannot get the service you want because it is not a covered service.
- You are unhappy that you have not received services that you have been approved to get.

NOTE: An additional review of the grievance process written specifically for parents by a parent is included in **Appendix H**.

What should I do if I have more questions about the complaint and grievance processes?

Call your local Community Care Customer Services representative at 1-866-473-5862.



Despite all the day-to-day hurdles, many people with autism lead fulfilling, happy lives on their own or with help from friends and family.

Most teens with autism like school, and some can attend regular classes with everyone else. They have individual tastes and enjoy different activities, just like you do.

Some people with autism go on to vocational school or college, get married, and have successful careers.

APPENDIX A: DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

The earlier a diagnosis of autism is made, the better the chances are of a person receiving appropriate help and support.

“The autism spectrum disorder” is widely defined to include the entire range of pervasive developmental disorders that are seen in children and adolescents (from birth up to the age of 21). Autistic Disorder is defined in the current version of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV-TR) as:

- A. A total of six (or more) items from (1), (2), and (3), with at least two from (1) and one each from (2) and (3):
 - (1) Qualitative impairment in social interaction as manifested by at least two of the following:
 - a. Marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors, such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction
 - b. Failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
 - c. A lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
 - d. Lack of social or emotional reciprocity
 - (2) Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - a. Delay in or total lack of the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime)
 - b. In individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
 - c. Stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
 - d. Lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level
 - (3) Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests and activities as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - a. Encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
 - b. Apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
 - c. Stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g., hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
 - d. Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
- B. Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age three years:
 - (1) social interaction;
 - (2) language as used in social communication; or
 - (3) symbolic or imaginative play.

APPENDIX B: DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

Asperger's Disorder

- A. Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
- (1) Marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye to eye gaze, facial expression, body postures and gestures to regulate social interaction
 - (2) Failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to a developmental level
 - (3) A lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests or achievements with other people (e.g. by a lack of showing, bringing or pointing out objects of interest to other people)
 - (4) Lack of social or emotional reciprocity
- B. Restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least one of the following:
- (1) Encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
 - (2) Apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
 - (3) Stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g. hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements)
 - (4) Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
- The disturbance causes clinically significant impairment in social, occupational and/or other important areas of functioning.
- C. There is no clinically significant general delay in language (e.g. single words used by age 2 years, communicative phrases used by age 3 years).
- D. There is no clinically significant delay in cognitive development or in the development of age-appropriate self-help skills, adaptive behavior (other than in social interaction), and curiosity about the environment in childhood.
- E. Criteria are not met for another specific Pervasive Developmental Disorder or Schizophrenia.

It is hard to accept the diagnosis of autism for a beloved child. There is often a period of denial and grieving. Most people experience these emotions in some way when first given the news.

But then, for many parents, the diagnosis is almost a relief. Suddenly there is a name for the problem—and even a road map to follow to help your child maximize his potential.

APPENDIX C: DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA

Give the people around you time to accept your child's diagnosis—once they seem receptive, give them information.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (including Atypical Autism)

This category should be used when there is severe and pervasive impairment in the development of reciprocal social interaction or verbal and nonverbal communication skills, or when stereotyped behavior, interests, and activities are present, but the criteria are not met for a specific pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, schizotypal personality disorder, or avoidant personality disorder.

For example, this category includes “atypical autism”—presentations that do not meet the criteria for autistic disorder because of late age of onset, atypical symptomatology, or subthreshold symptomatology, or all of these.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

Autistic Spectrum Disorders: Term that encompasses autism and similar disorders. More specifically, the following five disorders listed in DSM-IV: autistic disorder, asperger's disorder, PDD-NOS, childhood disintegrative disorder, and Rett's disorder.

BHRS/Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services: Community-based mental health treatment available to children with mental health needs in Pennsylvania.

BSC: Behavior Specialist Consultant, refers to an advanced degree behavioral specialist providing services through BHRS.

DSM-IV-TR: The official system for classification of psychological and psychiatric disorders prepared by and published by the American Psychiatric Association.

Discrete Trial Training: A short, instructional training which has three distinct parts: e.g. a direction - a behavior - a consequence. Many discrete trial programs rely heavily on directions or commands as the signal to begin the discrete trial.

Early Intervention (EI): A state-funded program that is designed to identify and treat developmental problems or other disabilities as early as possible.

Evaluation Report (ER): The comprehensive evaluation completed by 3-5 services and forwarded to the school district upon the start of school to formulate the IEP.

IEP/Individualized Educational Plan: A plan that identifies the student's specific learning expectations and outlines how the school will address these expectations through appropriate special education programs and services. It also identifies the methods by which the student's progress will be reviewed. For students 14 years or older, it must also contain a plan for the transition to postsecondary education or the workplace, and help the student live as independently as possible in the community.

ISPT/Interagency Service Planning Team: A regularly scheduled meeting which occurs throughout BHRS, to obtain input from all members of the treatment team.

You play an extremely important role in helping your child develop. Like other children, kids with autism learn primarily through play. So, it's important to join your child in play that you both enjoy.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

Positive ways that you can interact with your child at home include:

Be consistent, have routines in home and when out.

Have a place where your child feels comfortable and secure.

In addition to verbal praise, find other ways to reinforce good behaviors and promote self-esteem. After your child has successfully completed a task, for example, give him or her extra time to play with a favorite toy.

MT/Mobile Therapy/Mobile Therapist: Refers to therapy services available through BHRS.

Neurologist: A doctor specializing in medical problems associated with the nervous system, specifically the brain and spinal cord.

NOS/Not Otherwise Specified: see “PDD-NOS”

OT/Occupational Therapist: Individuals who specialize in the analysis of purposeful activity and tasks to minimize the impact of disability on independence in daily living. The therapist then helps the family to better cope with the disorder, by adapting the environment and teaching sub-skills of the missing developmental components. Occupational therapists often provide Sensory Integration Therapy.

OT/Occupational Therapy: This is a therapy provided by an occupational therapist that assists in the individual’s development of fine motor skills that aid in daily living. It also can focus on sensory issues, coordination of movement, balance, and on self-help skills such as dressing, eating with a fork and spoon, grooming, etc. It can also address issues pertaining to visual perception and hand-eye coordination.

PDD: Pervasive Development Disorder

PDD-NOS or PDD/NOS: Pervasive Development Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified

PECS: Picture Exchange Communication System

Perseveration: Repetitive movement or speech, or sticking to one idea or task, that has a compulsive quality to it.

Psychoeducational Evaluation: An evaluation that consists of a set of systematic observations, which are obtained under standardized conditions. The psychoeducational evaluation is critically important to the determination of eligibility for special education services and is a key component of the comprehensive evaluation report (CER), which is ultimately crafted by the multidisciplinary team. The psychoeducational evaluation is primarily completed by the student’s school district but can also be completed through a private practitioner.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY

PT: Physical Therapy

Self-Stimulatory: A term for behaviors whose primary purpose appears to be to stimulate one's own senses. An example is rocking one's body. Many people with autism report that some "self stims" may serve a regulatory function for them (i.e., calming, adding concentration, shutting out an overwhelming sound). Other examples: hand-flapping, toe-walking, spinning, echolalia.

Sensorimotor: Pertaining to brain activity other than automatic functions (respiration, circulation, sleep) or cognition. Sensorimotor activity includes voluntary movement and senses like sight touch and hearing.

SI/Sensory Integration: This is a term applied to the way the brain processes sensory stimulation or sensation from the body and then translates that information into specific, planned, coordinated motor activity.

SIT: Sensory Integration Therapy

SLP or S-LP Speech-Language Pathologist: An individual who specializes in the area of human communication. The focus is on communication, not speech, to increase the child's ability to interact and to understand their environment.

SSI-DC: Supplemental Security Income-Disabled Child, US program.

STAP/Summer Therapeutic Activities Program: An intensive Summer treatment program for children with exceptionalities, often delivered in a camp-like setting.

TSS/Therapeutic Staff Support: Services or worker, refers to direct services available through BHRS.

Present information visually as well as verbally. Combine the spoken word with the presentation of photographs and pictures, sign language, symbols, or gestures to help your child make his or her needs, feelings, or ideas known.

Try to show your child affection in as many ways as possible. Though some kids with autism have trouble receiving and expressing affection, they can still benefit from nurturing from a parent.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

NOTE: The following list represents a broad sampling of available services in the Carbon-Monroe-Pike area and nationwide. This list is not exhaustive of all available resources. Inclusion does not constitute endorsement. Resources may or may not be Medicare funded. Contact Community Care with questions.

	<u>Page(s)</u>
Adult Issues	31
Advocacy	31-33
Blindness	33
Communication Resources	33
County Assistance Offices	34
Day Care	34
Developmental Optometrists and Pediatricians	34-35
Diagnosis	35-36
Early Intervention and Transitions	36-37
Education and Legal	37-38
Employment, Day Programs, and Vocational Services	38
Feeding	38
Hospitals	39
Interventions	40
Kids	41
Medical Assistance in Pennsylvania	41
Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)	41
Medical Professionals	41
Mental Health/Mental Retardation Offices	42
Miscellaneous	42
National Organizations	42-43
Newly Diagnosed	43
Occupational Therapy	43-44
Opportunities for Financial Giving/Support	44
Ophthalmologists	44
Pediatricians	45-46
Pediatric/Adolescent Psychiatry	46
Psychologists	46
Psychiatrists	47
Recreation	47-48
Residential/Group Home Providers	48
Respite Services	49
Safety	49
School Age to Adult Transition	50
Sensory Integration/Treatment	50
Sibling Issues	50
Social Skills Groups	51
Spanish	51
Speech Therapy	52-53
Summer Programs/Camps	53
Support Systems/Resources	54-55
Local Support Groups	55
For Teachers/Educators	56

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Adult Issues

- Autism Living and Working, <http://www.autismlivingworking.org/>
Demonstrates that adults with Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder can be accommodated in order to live as valued neighbors, workers, and citizens of our Commonwealth.
- CMP Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program
Case Management Services: Targeted and Administrative Case Management and Resource Coordination
Carbon County: 610-377-0773
Monroe County: 570-421-2901
Pike County: 570-296-6484
- Planning for the future, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=livingplanning>

Advocacy

- Autism Advocacy, www.autism-advocacy.org
Autism-advocacy.org offers workshops and special events including the Annual Autism Awareness Event held in April. For information, contact: Susan@autism-advocacy.org
- Autism and PDD Support Network, www.autism-pdd.net
Provides support to cope with autism spectrum disorders
- Autism Information, www.autisminfo.com
Provides information on autism treatments and therapies to parents, teachers, therapists, and doctors.
- Autism Links, www.autismlink.com
Provides opportunities for inclusion, information, and support for parents and family members of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and autistic individuals. Helps parents by providing free of charge opportunities for support, diagnosis, therapeutic services, and information.
- Autism Research Institute, www.autism.com
Researches the triggers of autism and methods of diagnosing and treating autism.
- Autism Resources, www.autism-resources.com
- Autism Speaks, www.autismspeaks.org
Funds research into the causes, prevention, treatments, and cure for autism; raises public awareness about autism and its effects.
- Autism Society of America, <http://autism-society.org>
Increases public awareness, advocates for appropriate services, and provides information regarding treatment, education, research, and advocacy.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Advocacy (continued)

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.htm>
- Center for the Study of Autism, <http://autism.org>
- Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, <http://copaa.net/index.html>
Search for a special education attorney or advocate.
- Cure Autism Now Foundation, www.cureautismnow.org
- Dan Marino's Childnettv, www.childnet.tv
- Dan Marino Foundation, www.danmarinofoundation.org
Supports comprehensive integrated treatment programs, provides outreach services, advances scientific research, and fosters independence through transition programs.
- Defeat Autism Now, <http://www.autism.com/dan/index.htm>
A project of the Autism Research Institute; educates parents and clinicians regarding biomedically based research, appropriate testing and safe and effective interventions for autism.
- Interagency Council of Monroe County, www.iacmonroe.org
PO Box 1278, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-424-1616
- National Autism Association, www.nationalautismassociation.org
Advocates for individuals with autism; educates and empowers families affected by autism.
- Parents Exchange, www.ParentsExchange.web.com
102 Mermaid Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19118
610-692-0337, 570-872-3308
- Pike County Autism Support
570-296-5073; E-mail: mrspass@ptd.net
- Pocono Autism Society, www.poconoautism.org
Bob Dellicker, President
16 Ledgewood Court, East Stroudsburg, PA 18302
570-421-2299
- * Pocono Healthy Communities Alliance, www.poconoalliance.org
PO Box 112, 458 Oakwood Avenue, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-517-3953

Advocacy (continued)

- The Advocacy Alliance, <http://www.theadvocacyalliance.org>
P.O. Box 476. Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-476-6633
- The Autism Education Network, www.autismeducation.net
Provides information and training to parents, public schools and professionals regarding best practices in autism treatment.
- Unlocking Autism, www.unlockingautism.org
Increases awareness about autism

Blindness

- PA Blindness Association, 866-695-7673; 800-757-5042
Covers an initial visit to optometrists for children with Autism if their primary health insurance does not. Home and community-based assistance

Communication Resources

- Adapted Books, <http://schools.nycenet.edu/D75/academics/literacy/adaptedbooks/catalog.htm>
Complete catalog of books with pictures files in order to adapt and make them more interactive. Uses boardmaker and Adobe PDF
- Assistive Communication Links, <http://prekese.dadeschools.net/PRIMETime/PTlinks.htm>
- Boardmaker-Mayer-Johnson, <http://www.mayer-johnson.com>
Enhances learning and human expression for individuals with special needs through symbol-based products, training and services. Powerful, yet easy-to-use software products designed for specific needs: Boardmaker is symbol-based desktop publishing software.
- Do 2 Learn, <http://www.dotolearn.com>
A web site providing activities to promote independence in children and adults with special learning needs. Free teacher and parent materials.
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), <http://www.pecs.com/>
A unique augmentative/alternative training package that allows children and adults with autism and other communication deficits to initiate and develop functional communication.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

County Assistance Offices

- Carbon County Assistance Office
101 Lehigh Drive, Lehigh, PA 18235
610-577-9020
- Monroe County Assistance Office
Business Route 209 at Tanite Road, PO Box 232, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-424-3030 or 877-905-1495
- Pike County Assistance Office
Milford Professional Park, 10 Buist Road, Suite 101, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-6114

Day Care

- Ann Street Learning Center
206 E. Ann Street, Milford, PA
570-296-6124

Dentists

- Dr. Jay Holthus
210 Jpm Road, # 302, Lewisburg, PA 17837
570-522-7070

Developmental Optometrists

- Dr. Chaya Herzberg. <http://www.optometrists.org/herzberg/index.html>
Visual Rehabilitation for special populations, including patients with traumatic brain injuries, stroke, whiplash, developmental delays, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, etc.

Developmental Pediatricians

- CHOP-Child Development Center, <http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/service.jsp?id=26666>
34th Street and Civic Center Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-590-7500
- Dr. Karen E. Senft
Developmental Pediatrics, Good Sheperd Plaza, 850 South Fifth Street, Allentown, PA 18103
610-776-3578

Developmental Pediatricians (continued)

- Drs. Beth Parrish and Maureen Fee, <http://www.stchristophershospital.com/CWSContent/stchristophershospital/ourServices/medicalServices/deptpeds.htm#developmental>
St. Christopher's Hospital, E. Erie Avenue and N. Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134
215-427-5531
- Drs. Scott Meyer and Thomas Challman
<http://www1.geisinger.org/patients/findadoc/docsearchresults.cfm>
Geisinger Medical Center-Pediatric Subspecialties, 100 N. Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6440
- Nancy Eisenhauer, MS, PA-C
Physician's Assistant, Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics
Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-5600
- Nandini Bhargav, MD, FAAD
Developmental Pediatrics, Good Shepherd Plaza, 850 South Fifth Street, Allentown, PA 18103
610-776-3578

Diagnosis

- Albert Einstein Healthcare Network
Behavioral Pediatrics/Developmental Medicine
Einstein Center One, Suite 220, 9880 Bustleton Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19115
215-827-1500
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
34th Street and Civic Center Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-590-1000
- Geisinger Medical Center
Pediatric Neurodevelopment
100 N Academy Ave, Danville, PA 17822
570-214-9361
- Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital
Pediatric Services
850 South Fifth Street, Allentown, PA 18103
888-44-REHAB

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Diagnosis (continued)

- Penn State Hershey Autism Center
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
500 University Drive, P.O. Box 850, HP16, Hershey, PA 17033-0850
717-531-8338
- St. Christopher's Hospital for Children
Department of Pediatrics, Section of Developmental Pediatrics
Erie Avenue at Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134
215-427-5531

Early Intervention (Birth to 3 Years of Age)

- Carbon Intermediate Unit 21, 610-769-4111 or 1-800-223-4821
Early intervention services for residents of Carbon County
- Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, 610-252-5550
Early intervention services for residents of Monroe and Pike counties
- CMP Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program
Carbon County: 610-377-0773
Monroe County: 570-421-2901
Pike County: 570-296-6484

Early Intervention (3 Years to School Age)

- A Family's Introduction to Early Intervention in Pennsylvania
<http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us/regsforms/Resources2.aspx>
This booklet explains how to request early intervention services; eligibility criteria; rights and responsibilities; individualized family service planning for ages birth to 3; and individualized education planning for ages 3 to school age.
- Carbon Intermediate Unit 21, 610-769-4111 or 1-800-223-4821
Early intervention services for residents of Carbon County
- Checklist for growing children, www.dpw.state.pa.us/Child/EarlyIntervention/003670018.htm
Find out what developmental milestones are appropriate for your child between the ages of 1 month to 3 years.
- Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, 610-252-5550
Early intervention services for residents of Monroe and Pike counties

Early Intervention (3 Years to School Age) (continued)

- Early intervention contact numbers
<http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/Child/EarlyIntervention/003670016.htm>
Contact numbers to inquire about an intake/assessment with early intervention. This list is broken down by County.
- First Signs, <http://www.firstsigns.org>
Educate parents, health care providers, early childhood educators, and other professionals in order to ensure the best developmental outcome for every child. Goals are to improve screening and referral practices and to lower the age at which young children are identified with autism and other developmental disorders. Website provides a wealth of vital resources.
- Planning for the IFSP, <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/Child/EarlyIntervention/003670020.htm>
A family's introduction to Early Intervention program planning.

Early Intervention Transitions

- Early Intervention Transition, <http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us/teachlead/EarlyInterventionTransition.aspx>
Information contained here relates to both the transition from the infant or toddler programs to Preschool programs and the transition from Preschool programs to the school age district programs.
- Transitions for you and your child, <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/Child/EarlyIntervention/003670022.htm>
Transitions occur in our lives all the time in many different ways. Changes in our jobs or homes are examples. While receiving early intervention services, you and your child may experience transitions as well. This site discusses how you can plan for and manage transitions.

Education and Legal

- AutismLink, www.autismlink.com
Pennsylvania's statewide resource for autism spectrum disorder.
- Disability Rights Network of PA, www.drnpa.org
- Education Law Center of PA, www.elc-pa.org
- IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act) of 2004.
Outlines your child's rights to an appropriate education.
<http://www.pattan.net/files/IDEA/SCBR.pdf>
- Kids Together, Inc., www.kidstogether.org
Advocates inclusion.
- Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania, <http://www.parenttoparent.org>
1-800-986-4550

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Education and Legal (continued)

- Pennsylvania Consumer Protection & Advocacy, ppa@ppainc.org
1414 North Cameron Street, Suite C, Harrisburg, PA 17103
1-800-692-7443 [Voice: 1-877-375-7139 ITODI]
- Pennsylvania Department of Education, www.pde.state.pa.us/
333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA
717-783-6788
- Pennsylvania Disability Law Project, dlp-pa.org
1-800-538-8070; 215-238-8070
- Pennsylvania Education Law Project, wn.elc-pa.org
610-962-0530
- Pennsylvania Health Law Project, www.phlp.org
- Phil Drumheiser, Esq., pdrumheiser@epix.net
Attorney Specializing in Autism Rights
717-245-2688
- The ARC of PA, <http://thearcpa.org>
1-800-692-7258

Employment, Day Programs, and Vocational Services

- Burnley Employment and Rehabilitation Services
4219 Manor Drive, Stroudsburg, PA 18369
570-992-6616
- Developmental Education Services of Monroe County, Inc.
796 Lindbergh Ave, Stroudsburg, PA 18360-1925
570-424-5410; E-mail: deved@ptd.net
- Devereux Pocono Center
1547 Mill Creek Road, Newfoundland, PA 18445
570-676-3237

Feeding

- The Feeding Evaluation Clinic, Dr. Keith Williams, Director, Hershey Medical Center
P0 Box 850, Hershey, PA 17033, 717-531-7117; Rt. 15, Winfield, PA 17889
570-523-1533

Hospitals

- Blue Mountain Health System

Gnaden Huetten Campus
211 North 12 th Street, Lehighton, PA 18235
610-377-1300

Palmerton Campus
135 Lafayette Avenue, Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-3141
- Community Medical Center
1800 Mulberry Street, Scranton, PA 18510
570-969-8000
- Geisinger Medical Center, www.geisinger.org
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6339
- Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital
501 Saint John Street, Allentown, PA 18103
610-776-3299
- Lehigh Valley Hospital
1200 S Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA 18105
610-402-8000
- Mercy Hospital Scranton
746 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, PA 18501
570-348-7100
- Pocono Medical Center
206 East Brown Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-4000
- St. Luke's Hospital-Bethlehem Campus
801 Ostrum Street (Borough of Fountain Hill), Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-954-4000
- Wayne Memorial Hospital
601 Park Street, Honesdale, PA 18431
570-253-8100

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Interventions

- American Sign Language (ASL), <http://www.lifeprint.com/asl101>
- Applied Behavior Analysis
 - o Discrete Trial Therapy, http://kathyandcalvin.com/manuals/aba_train.htm
Good overview of DTT with examples
 - o Lovaas Therapy, www.lovaas.com
 - o Verbal Behavior, www.autismusaba.de/lovaasvsvb.html
Verbal Behavior approach focuses on teaching specific components of expressive language first.
 - o Fluency Training, <http://www.autismteachingtools.com/page/bbbbfz/bbbbfz>
 - o Precision Teaching, <http://psych.athabascau.ca/html/387/OpenModules/Lindsay/introa1.shtml>
 - o Incidental teaching <http://www.spiesforparents.cpd.usu.edu/Modules/Module%203%20-%20Incidental%20Teaching/Introduction.htm>
Basic overview and explanation of incidental teaching and provides examples.
 - o Positive behavior supports
 - o DIR – Floortime: <http://www.floortime.org/faqs.php?faqid=3>
Provides a framework for understanding and treating children challenged by autism Spectrum and related disorders; focuses on relating, communicating, and thinking.
 - o TEACCH- <http://www.teacch.com/>
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), <http://www.pecs.com>
An augmentative communication system developed to help individuals quickly acquire a functional means of communication. Appropriate for individuals who do not use speech or who may speak with limited effectiveness; those who have articulation or motor planning difficulties, limited communicative partners, lack of initiative in communication, etc.
- Sensory Integration Therapies, <http://216.194.201.208/terrytown/sensoryintegration.org/>
- Social Stories, <http://www.thegraycenter.org/socialstories.cfm>
A Social Story™ describes a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant social cues, perspectives, and common responses in a specifically defined style and format. The goal is to share accurate social information in a patient and reassuring manner that is easily understood.
- Other treatment approaches:
 - o Gluten-free/casein-free diet, <http://www.gfcfdiet.com>
 - o Complimentary approaches <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ComplementaryApproaches> (Discusses art, music, animal therapies)
 - o Biomedical and dietary approaches, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=BiomedicalDietaryApproaches>

Kids

- Just for Kids - Autism Fact Sheet, <http://www.njcosac.org/cosacautism>

Medical Assistance in Pennsylvania

- Take a screening test to see if eligible, apply on line, check benefits.
<https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/compass/PGM/ASP/SC001.asp>

Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)

- Carbon County Community Transit
1201 Cumberland Street, Allentown, PA 18108
610-435-3646
- Monroe County Transit Authority “Pocono Pony”
PO Box 339, Scotrun, PA 18355
570-839-8210
- Pike County
570-775-5550; 1-866-681-4947

Medical Professionals

- AAP-The Pediatrician’s Role in the Diagnosis and Management of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Children, <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;107/5/e85>
- American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/autism.cfm>
- Autism toolkit for Physicians, <http://www.northshorelij.com/body.cfm?id=4726&oTopID=4725&PLinkID=2849>
Helpful informational topics for health care practitioners including special considerations for seeing patients with autism, screening tools, research, and more.
- Centers for Disease Control -Autism Information, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/>
- First Signs, <http://www.firstsigns.org>
Aims to educate parents, healthcare providers, early childhood educators, and other professionals to ensure the best developmental outcome for every child. Goals are to improve screening and referral practices and to lower the age at which young children are identified with autism and other developmental disorders. Website provides resources.
- National Institute of Mental Health, <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/autismmenu.cfm>
Information on autism from the National Institute of Mental Health.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Mental Health/Mental Retardation Offices

- Carbon County Office
146 North Street, Suite 3, Lehighton, PA 18235
610-377-0773
- Monroe County Office
730A Phillips Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-421-2901
- Pike County Office
10 Buist Road, Suite 404, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-6484

Miscellaneous

- Cognitive Learning Systems, <http://www.coglearn.com/Default.aspx>
Develops and markets research-based student and teacher educational programs and to facilitate comprehension and enjoyment of learning.
- Residential Living Options, <http://www.residentiallivingoptions.org/>
A non-profit organization that assists people with disabilities and their families with their individual housing needs.
- Riverside Professional Development, LLC, <http://www.riversidepd.com/>
Improves the performance of your professionals through interactive, classroom style training and one-on-one consultations.
- The Second Mile, <http://www.thesecondmile.org/welcome.php>
A nonprofit organization serving the youth of Pennsylvania. Staff help young people achieve their potential and provide education and support for parents and youth service professionals.

National Organizations

- Autism National Committee, www.autcom.org
Dedicated to “social justice for all citizens with autism.” Founded to protect and advance the human rights and civil rights of all persons with autism, pervasive developmental disorder, and related differences of communication and behavior.
- Autism Society of America, <http://www.autism-society.org>
Dedicated to increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families and the professionals with whom they interact.

National Organizations (continued)

- Autism Speaks, <http://www.autismspeaks.org>
Aims to bring the autism community together as one strong voice to urge the government and private sector to listen and take action to address this urgent global health crisis.
- Center for Disease Control -Autism Information, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/>
- Center for Excellence in Autism Research, (CeFAR) <http://www.wpic.pitt.edu/research/CeFAR/default.htm>
Pittsburgh-based, the Center of Excellence, under the direction of Nancy J. Minshew, MD, an internationally recognized expert in autism, is among the top three CPEA's in the country. Searching for the genetic, cognitive, and neurological basis of autism.
- Cure Autism Now, <http://www.cureautismnow.org>
An organization of parents, clinicians and leading scientists committed to accelerating the pace of biomedical research in autism.
- OASIS, www.aspergersyndrome.org
Parents of children who are diagnosed with AS provide information for families of children diagnosed with asperger syndrome and related disorders, educators who teach children with AS, professionals working with individuals diagnosed with AS, and individuals with AS who are seeking support.
- Organization for Autism Research, <http://www.researchautism.org/index.asp>
Putting research to work providing answers to questions for those confronted by autism.

Newly Diagnosed

- Familial Stress, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=livingfamily>
This article from the Autism Society of America discusses the unique stressors experienced by families who have recently received a diagnosis of autism for one of their children.

Occupational Therapy

- A Total Approach, <http://www.atotalapproach.com/default.asp>
Assists the child in developing more efficient coping strategies inside his/her nervous system, while working at changing nervous system circuitry to develop a more functional adaptive response to the environment in the child.
- Center of Developmental Disabilities
Occupational, Speech, Physical Therapy and Special Instruction
221 Broad Street, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-3992; Fax: 570-296-4919
Contact: Susan Ficken, E-mail: sficken@cddkids.org

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Occupational Therapy (continued)

- * Cindy Duffy – Occupational Therapist
1277 Bridge Street, Honesdale, PA 18431
570-251-9779; E-mail: performanceot@msn.com

- Easter Seals
Occupational, speech, physical therapy and special instruction
109 Seven Bridge Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-1254; Fax: 570-424-2346; Contact: Sandy Shay

- Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital
Pediatric Services
850 South Fifth Street, Allentown, PA 18103
1-888-44-REHAB

- Joseph Schuster - Occupational Therapist
37 Bryden Street, Pittston, PA 18640
570-237-2393; E-mail: nikkinono920@verizon.net

- * Sunshine Therapeutic Services
Occupational, Speech & Special Instruction
P.O. Box 41, Long Pond, PA 18334
570-656-2062; E-mail: suzyqblue@hotmail.com; Contact: Suzanne Igdalsky

Opportunities for Financial Giving/Support

- The Hearts and Smiles Foundation
PO Box 1253, Southampton, PA 18966
215-669-4221; Fax 215-997-7987; heartsandsmiles@comcast.net

- Special Kids Network, www.health.state.pa.us/skn
614 West Fourth Street Williamsport, PA 17701
877-986-4550 (toll free); TTY 877-986-5432
A free service offered to the families of children with special needs.

Ophthalmologists

- Dr. Maria Moon, Wynwood Eye Clinic
428 Windmere Drive, State College, PA 16801
814-234-2015

Pediatricians (in Carbon County)

- Narendar V. Ambani, MD (Speciality: Pediatrics)
990 Blakeslee Boulevard East, Lehighon, PA 18235
610-377-3253; 610-826-9781
- Lehighon Medical Associates
1206 North Street, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
570-325-5010
- Northeast Pediatrics - Sarada Kadewari, MD (Specialties: Adolescent Medicine and Pediatrics)
281 North 12th Street, Lehighon, PA 18235
570-668-4088
- Palmerton Pediatric - Mira N. Slizovsky, MD (Specialty: Pediatrics)
217 Franklin Avenue, Palmerton, PA 18071
610-826-1166
- Penn Kidder Medical Center
PO Box 182, Route 903, Albrightsville, PA 18210
570-722-2125

Pediatricians (in Monroe County)

- Mary Ellen DeFranco, MD
HCR 2 Box 1650, Brodheadsville, PA 18322
570-402-8900
- Dino C. Morello, MD
PMC Physician Associates at Pocono Medical Center and Chestnut Hill Professional Plaza
Route 209 and Kevin Lane, Brodheadsville, PA 18322
570-420-6300
- Northeast Pediatrics, LLC
Gilbert Medical Center, Route 209, Suite E, Gilbert, PA 18331
610-681-8171
- Pocono Kids Pediatrics (Speciality: Pediatrics)
200 East Brown Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-4000
- Pocono Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine - Yoon-Taek Chun, MD
(Specialties: Adolescent Medicine and Pediatrics)
263 Prospect Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-3575

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Pediatricians (in Monroe County) (continued)

- Pocono Pediatrics (Specialties: Adolescent Medicine and Pediatrics)
739 Milsford Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-476-3585; 570-476-6700
- Ayesha R. Shaikh, MD (Specialties: Adolescent Medicine and Pediatrics)
300 Community Drive, Tobyhanna, PA 18466
570-839-9880
- Uchenna R. Ufodu, MD (Specialty: Pediatrics)
302 East Brown Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-476-4161

Pediatricians (in Pike County)

- Bon Secours Health Partners
405 Broad Street, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-7330
- Pediatric Practice of NEPA - Theresa A. Lafranco, MD (Specialty: Pediatrics)
396 Route 6 and 209, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-4901

Pediatric / Adolescent Psychiatry

- Jill M. Gotoff, MD
(Specialties: Clinical Neurophysiology, Pediatric Neurology, Pediatric/Adolescent Psychiatry, Pediatrics)
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6012
- Glenn A. Stayer, MD (Specialties: Pediatric/Adolescent, Psychiatry, Pediatrics)
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6012

Psychologists

- Autism Spectrum Resource Center, <http://www.autismsrc.org>
Provides therapeutic services and educational resources. Provides an environment that fosters a sense of belonging with like-minded individuals and promotes a positive self-image.
- Sara J. Camaerei, PsyD
HCR # 1, Box 166, Sciota, PA 18354
570-992-4267; E-mail: drcam@ptd.net

Psychologists (continued)

- Dr Chew, Pediatric Psychologist Geisinger Medical Center
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-8255
- CHOP Department of Psychology, <http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/service.jsp?id=26704>
Provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient psychological services for infants, children, and adolescents with pediatric conditions and their families.
- Heather Van Artsdalen Hoover, PhD, Geisinger Medical Center Behavioral Medicine
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6516
- Paul Kettlewell, Geisinger Medical Center Behavioral Medicine
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271-6516

Psychiatrists

- CHOP Department of Psychiatry <http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/service.jsp?id=27690>
Offers outpatient and emergency services; provides comprehensive evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents with psychiatric conditions and behavioral or emotional difficulties. Specialty clinics include the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders program, the Mood and Anxiety Disorders clinic, and the Pediatric Psychopharmacology program.
- Kaleen K. Kovalovich, MD, Geisinger Medical Center Psychiatry
100 North Academy Avenue, Danville, PA 17822
570-271 -6516
- Susan D. Mayes, PhD
Department of Psychiatry, Penn State University College of Medicine, Hershey, PA

Recreation

Baseball

- Pocono Autism Society Challenger Baseball League, www.bigpoconolittleleague.org
A baseball league for special needs children sponsored by the Pocono Autism Society

Bowling (Special Needs Children's Bowling)

- Summit Lanes
3 Park Drive, Pocono Summit, PA
570-242-5011, Harriet Horowitz

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Recreation (continued)

Dance

- The Dance Center, <http://www.keepondancingcenter.com>
Route 196, Tobyhanna, PA 18466
570-839-8498

Dolphin Therapy

- Island Dolphin Care, <http://www.islanddolphinscare.org/>
A nonprofit organization that provides dolphin therapy to children from all over the world with critical illnesses, disabilities, and special needs.

Gymnastics

- International Gymnastics School, www.gymschool.com
9020 Bartonsville Woods Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360-8137
570-629-2767; Fax: 570-620-0616

Martial Arts

- Pocono Crimson Dragon Martial Arts Therapy
Route 940, Mt. Pocono, PA
570-839-2940; 1-866-620-6212

Therapeutic Horse Back Riding

- Equi-Librium Inc., www.equi-librium.org
Equine-assisted services
P.O. Box 305, Sciota, PA 18354
570-992-7722; E-mail: equi-librium@itscomp.com

Residential/Group Home Providers

- Fitzmaurice Community Service
480 Clearview Lane, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
1-800-289-3237
- Devereux Pocono Center
1547 Mill Creek Road, Newfoundland, PA 18445
570-676-3237

Respite Services

CMP Mental Health/Mental Retardation Offices - for children involved in or waiting for mental or behavioral health services and who are at moderate to high risk of out-of-home placement due to behavioral health issues.

- Carbon County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Office
146 North Street, Suite 3, Lehighton, PA 18235
610-377-0773
- Monroe County Office
730A Phillips Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-421-2901
- Pike County Office
10 Buist Road, Suite 404, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-6484

Safety

- Child Locator-GPS Watches for kids, <http://childlocator.com/>
Child-friendly watches that serve as a GPS system.
- IonKids, <http://www.ion-kids.com/>
Allows you to monitor your child's whereabouts.
- Medic Alert, <http://www.medicalert.org/Home/HomeEmblemCatalogs.aspx>
Provides comprehensive Kid Smart services that safeguard and identify your child in an emergency. With a single phone call, emergency response personnel can access medical history and records, protecting your child against potentially adverse treatments or medication conflicts.
- Police and Autism, <http://policeandautism.cjb.net/avoiding.html>
Information on how parent and law enforcement can work together to provide a quick response in the event that a child elopes or runs from caregivers.
- Safety in the home, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=livingsafety>
Resources and ideas for assuring the home is a safe environment for the child and family.
- Safety ID cards to print, <http://www.leanonus.org/pages/11/index.htm>
ID cards to print and put relevant information that would assist first responders and police in an emergent situation requiring law enforcement.
- Safety Harnesses, <http://www.the-baby-boutique.com/tottether.html>, <http://www.the-baby-boutique.com/harnessbuddy.html>
Harnesses that protect your child from danger.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

School Age to Adult Transition

- Living beyond high school, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=livinghighschool>
Discusses the importance of transition planning and need to consider when a child is nearing graduation from high school.
- Transition from Special Education to adult life, <http://www.transitionmap.org/>
A road map from school to the future for students ages 14 to 21 with developmental delay residing in Pennsylvania and receiving special education services.
- Transition Health Care Checklist, <http://www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health/cwp/view.asp?q=243876>
Developed to bridge the gap in health services for youth with special health care needs. When these youth leave school, they transition from having different or no insurance coverage, from seeing pediatric specialists to searching for adult medical specialists, and from good coverage for medications to new systems for obtaining medicines.
- Secondary Transitions, <http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us/teachlead/SecondaryTransition.aspx>
The process of preparing students for life after they leave high school, including participation in post-secondary education or training, employment, and community living.

Sensory Integration/Treatment

- Neurosensory Center of Eastern Pennsylvania, www.neurosensorycenter.com
250 Pierce Street Suite 317, Kingston PA 18704
570-763-0054

Sibling Issues

- Autism Society article on sibling issues, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=livingsiblings>
Discusses some strategies on addressing the needs of the siblings of children who have autism.
- Sibshops, www.thearc.org/siblingsupport/sibshops
Support groups for siblings of children with have special needs. Provides a listing by state of available groups. Website has a listserv for siblings as well as a pen-pal program.
 - o Tri-County Human Services Center Sibshops
185 Fallbrook Street, PO Box 514, Carbondale, PA 18407
570-282-1732; Contact: Margie Cosgrove

Social Skills Groups

- Autism Spectrum Resource Center, www.autismsrc.org/
Therapeutic services and educational resources for individuals within the autism spectrum and their families; provides an environment that fosters a sense of belonging with like-minded individuals and promote a positive self-image.
- Bryn Mawr Child Study Institute, www.brynmawr.edu/csi/
A multidisciplinary approach to academic and interpersonal difficulties experienced by children, adolescents, adults and families. Specialists in psychological assessment, educational support services, speech-language therapy, and psychotherapy collaborate closely with parents and teachers to help foster adjustment and competence in school, at home, and in the community.
- Center for Psychological Services, www.centerpsych.com/
Art therapy groups designed to help children, teenagers and young adults develop social skills and awareness. Existing strengths are reinforced and new skills are taught. No art talent is necessary!
- Fitz-All, www.fitz-all.com/services/therapeutic_support/social_thinking/index.html
Small groups for children pre-school through middle school who need to develop and/or improve social interaction skills. Children are provided the opportunity to integrate their skills in a small, more typical play group.
- Prompt and Play, www.promptandplay.com/
A center designed for children ages 3 through 18 in need of social skills, life skills, or individual counseling. Groups are designed to promote social and developmental growth within children.
- Theraplay, www.theraplayinc.com/
- Wanna Play, <http://www.wannaplayprogram.com/>
Offers small social groups for children of all ages and abilities, to help develop their interactive social skills, using fun games and activities in both group and one-on-one settings.

Spanish

- INFORMACION GENERAL SOBRE EL AUTISMO, <http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=autismo>

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Speech Therapy

- A Total Approach, www.atotalapproach.com/default.asp
A trained Master's level therapy program that works on specifically speech and communication through a variety of methods, including oral-motor, speech, articulation, assistive technology, as well as work on social and peer relationships.
- Bloomsburg Speech & Hearing Clinic, Bloomsburg University
For children with various speech and hearing needs. Medical Assistance accepted.
Centennial Hall, 400 East 2nd Street, Bloomsburg, PA 17815
570-389-4436
- Center of Developmental Disabilities
Occupational, Speech, Physical Therapy and Special Instruction
221 Broad Street, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-3992; Fax: 570-296-4919; Contact: Susan Ficken, E-mail: sficken@cddkids.org
- CHOP-Center for Childhood Communications Department of Speech-Language Pathology
www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/division/generic.jsp?id=77649
Evaluates and treats children from birth to 21 years who have difficulties with communication and swallowing. Services are provided across the continuum of care.
- East Stroudsburg University LaRue Hall Speech and Hearing Center
<http://www4.esu.edu/academics/majors2/programs/speech/larue.cfm>
200 Prospect Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-422-3247; Fax: 570-422-3850
- Easter Seals - Occupational, Speech, Physical Therapy and Special Instruction
109 Seven Bridge Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-1254; Fax: 570-424-2346; Contact: Sandy Shay
- Pocono Rehabilitation - Speech and Physical Therapy, www.poconohealthsystem.org
A service of Pocono Medical Center
300 Stroud Building Route 611, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-476-3460
- Pocono Speech Center
1219 N 5th Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-421-2232
- Sunshine Therapeutic Services - Occupational, Speech, and Special Instruction
P.O. Box 41, Long Pond, PA 18334
570-656-2062; Contact: Suzanne Igdalsky, E-mail: suzyqblue@hotmail.com
- Theraplay <http://www.theraplayinc.com>

Speech Therapy (continued)

- Wayne Memorial Outpatient Center
10 Buist Road, Milford, PA 18337
570-296-6358

Summer Programs/Camps

- A Total Approach, www.atotalapproach.com/default.asp
5 to 6-week camps offered every summer to children with developmental delays, including spectrum disorders; heavy amounts of sensory integration work, DIR/Floortime, and educational activities.
- Aaron's Acres, www.udservices.org/aaronsAcres.asp
Founded as a day camp in 1998 by a group of parents who had children with special needs. Provides ongoing supportive, educational, and recreational services to children with special needs and their families.
- Camp Jaycee, www.campjaycee.org
A collaborative effort between the New Jersey Jaycees and the Arc of New Jersey, providing quality camping experiences to persons with developmental disabilities.
- Camp Joy, www.campjoy.com
A special needs camp for kids and adults with developmental disabilities: mental retardation, autism, brain injury, and neurological disorders.
- Camp LeMar, www.lemar.com
A private residential special needs camp for children and young adults with mild to moderate learning and developmental challenges, including but not limited to the following: mental retardation, developmental disabilities, down syndrome, autism, learning disabilities, Williams Syndrome, Asperger Syndrome, ADD, Prader Willi, and ADHD.
- Camp Victory/Camp Emerge for Children with Autism, www.campvictory.com
Jerry Stropniky & Kathy Bass
P.O. Box 810, Millville, PA 17846
(570) 458-6530; E-mail: fun@campvictory.org
Camp Emerge is offered each year for families and children who have autism. Childcare is provided for siblings and the whole family is encouraged to stay and camp the weekend.
- Keystone Pocono Camp, www.campkey.com
Novel as well as proven and meaningful programming to individuals with various disabilities, ranging from developmental delays, ADHD, autism, and other related impairments. Ensuring the proper degree of structure, supervision, and most importantly fun.
- Summit Camp and Travel, www.summitcamp.com
Camping in Honesdale, PA for boys and girls with attention, social, or learning issues.

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Support Systems/Resources

- Access Services, www.accessservices.org/index.php
Mission is to empower and serve persons with cognitive, emotional and behavioral disabilities through innovative services which enable them to live rich and fulfilling lives with positive family and community relationships.
- Autism Spectrum Resource Center, www.autismsrc.org
Provides therapeutic services and educational resources to individuals within the autism spectrum and their families. The center provides an environment that fosters a sense of belonging with like-minded individuals and promote a positive self-image.
- Child and Family Focus, www.childandfamilyfocus.org/
Provides a continuum of mental health services to enhance the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and relational well-being of youth and their families. Provides and advocate for least-restrictive, family- and community-based settings as the most conducive for effective growth and positive change. Offers a unique approach to helping the child and the family of the child, who has been diagnosed with a developmental disability within the autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- Family Village, www.familyvillage.wisc.edu
A global community that integrates information, resources, and communication opportunities on the Internet for persons with cognitive and other disabilities, their families, and those that provide them services and support.
- Grandparents
 - o <http://www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger/grandparents.html>
Answers common questions of grandparents of children with autism.
- Jenny Rose specialized Therapy Center LLC
296 E. Brown Street, Suite B, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-3415
- Kids Play Today
Shohola
570-296-4273
- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, www.namipa.nami.org
NAMI PA offers a Family-to-Family Education course for members who have adult children and an educational program specific to the needs of families of children and adolescents. The NAMI-CAN, for young families, and NAMI-CARE, for consumers, models of support are also available.
- Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania, www.parenttoparent.org/
Matches parents and family members of children and adults with disabilities or special needs, on a one-on-one basis, according to condition or concerns.

Support Systems/Resources (continued)

- Parents Involved Network, www.pinoofpa.org
Parents Involved Network of Pennsylvania (PIN) is an organization that assists parents or caregivers of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders. PIN provides information, helps parents find services and will advocate on their behalf with any of the public systems that serve children. These include the mental health system, education, and other state and local child-serving agencies.
- Religion and Autism
 - o http://www.autism-society.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Religion_and_Autism
Provides both a Christian and Jewish perspective on children with ASD and how the church can provide an inclusive environment
 - o <http://gbgm-umc.org/disc/autism.stm> - Information on autism for religious educators
 - o Autism Information, www.autismlink.com
 - o Accessible PA, www.accessiblepa.state.pa.us
 - o Children's Education and Resource Center, <http://www.frs-inc.com>
- Special Kids Network, www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health/cwp/browse.asp?A=179&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=35825
Information and referrals to services for children with special health care needs and their families.

Local Support Groups

- Parent-to-Parent Groups, www.parenttoparent.org
A parent driven support network created by families for families of children and adults with special needs. They connect families in similar situations with one another so they may share experiences, offer practical information and support.
- Parents of Children with Asperger Syndrome
A discussion group.
Contact: Barbara, 570-424-3766; E-mail: balloonstamper11@yahoo.com
- Other Support Groups
 - Danville - Bill Jones, 570-784-7876, Founder of Meeting
 - Sunbury - Julia Robinson, 570-523-1155, Founder of Meeting
 - Selinsgrove - Meeting founder Gene Brosius, 570-286-9550, or Brandi Ferster, 570-473-7357

APPENDIX E: AVAILABLE RESOURCES

For Teachers/Educators

- Autism Education Network, <http://www.autismeducation.net>
Improves public special education programs and influences public policy that affects individuals with autism. Empower people to affect change. Provides free information about special education rights and programs.
- PaTTAN, www.pattan.k12.pa.us/teachlead/Autism.aspx
Offers information regarding current PA standards, teaching practices, effective assessments and instruction; training and workshop information for educators, and publications relevant to Autism, including Introduction to Early Interventions and Providers Guide to Early Intervention.
- PDE Special Education, http://www.pde.state.pa.us/special_edu/site/default.asp?g=0&special_eduNav=|978|&k12Nav=|1141|
Mission, role, and function of special education in PA schools are defined and addressed.
- Adapted Books, <http://schools.nycenet.edu/D75/academics/literacy/adaptedbooks/catalog.htm>
Provides PECS and other visual materials to adapt books for children. Requires Adobe Acrobat reader and/or Boardmaker.
- IDEA Regulations, www.wrightslaw.com/idea/art.htm; www.pde.state.pa.us/special_edu/cwp/view.asp?Q=111436&A=177
- Wrightslaw, www.wrightslaw.com/
Provides parents, educators, advocates, and attorneys with accurate, reliable information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities. Includes thousands of articles, cases, and free resources on dozens of special education topics.
- Different Roads to Learning, www.difflearn.com/
Strives to meet the needs of families and professionals working with children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Product line includes books, flashcards, and videos, along with other materials critical to Applied Behavior Analysis and Verbal Behavior programs.
- HandRighting, Ink, www.handrightingink.com/index.html
Specializes in teaching handwriting to children and adults of all ages. Provide seminars for teachers and parents, and provide school-based intervention.

APPENDIX F: BHRS PROVIDERS

- Access Services
340 S. Liberty Street, Orwigsburg, PA 17961
570-366-1154
- Behavioral Health Associates
413 Bridge Street, Weissport, PA 18235
610-379-0067
- Devereux Pocono Center
1547 Mill Creek Road
Newfoundland, PA 18445
570-676-3237
- IU #21
4210 Independence Drive
Schnecksville, PA 18078
610-769-1160
- IU #20
6 Danforth Road, Easton, PA 18046
610-252-5550
- Maxis Human Services
Division of Tri-County Human Services, Inc.
(Monroe, Pike and Carbon Counties)
18 South 9th Street, Suite 105
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-421-4555
- Milestones Community Healthcare
Route 191 Paradise Plaza
Paradise Valley, PA 18326
570-595-3686
- Northwestern Human Services
912 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-424-8119
- Progressions
1 Norwegian Plaza, Suite 1
Pottsville, PA 17901
570-622-9448
- Providence Community Services
(has bi-lingual staff)
Behavioral Health Services
1273 North 9th Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-424-6221
- ReDCo Group
Behavioral Health Services
564 Main Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-420-8070
- Step-By-Step, Inc.
Village Park Center, Bldg A, Upper Level
Suite A
Route 940, Pocono Lake, PA 18347
570-646-0377
- Tri-County Human Services
Honesdale, PA
570-298-0149
- Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.
HC1 Box12, Kresgeville, PA 18333
610-681-2488
- Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.
837 Route 6, Unit 3, PO Box 44
Shohola, PA 18458
570-296-5690

APPENDIX G: OTHER SERVICES

Other Levels of Care/Treatment Available to Children With Autism

Inpatient Mental Health Hospitalization — Inpatient units provide a secure/locked setting for the delivery of acute care services for children and adolescents with an autism spectrum disorder, additional serious mental illness, or co-occurring disorders (e.g., MR, D&A). Such acute care requires coordinated, intensive and comprehensive treatment, tailored to the individual consumer's immediate status and needs for the purposes of continued recovery.

Residential Treatment Facilities (RTF) — This level of care includes both facilities that are accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of HealthCare Facilities (JCAHO) and those that are licensed and supervised by the Department of Public Welfare but are not JCAHO-accredited. These are structured treatment facilities. Although the length of stay is determined by medical need, the average length of stay ranges from four to eight months. RTF services are not typically “first line” services invoked for the treatment of children with autism spectrum disorders. Typically, use of this level of care might indicate significant behavioral problems that cannot be managed in a less restrictive treatment environment.

IRT/CRR Host Home/Therapeutic Foster Care (IRT) — IRT provides a 24 hr/day safe, structured environment within a family setting (host home) including intensive community-based treatment to support the child/adolescent's efforts to meet basic needs, utilize appropriate judgment, coping skills and comply with treatment. This is an unlocked, less restrictive, and more flexible alternative than inpatient or RTF for the delivery of acute care and for provision of transitional care from an inpatient or RTF setting.

Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS) — See below.

Family-Based Mental Health Services (FBMHS) — FBMHS for children and adolescents are team-delivered services rendered in the home and community which are designed to integrate mental health treatment, family support services and case management, so that families may continue to care for their children and adolescents with serious mental illnesses or emotional disturbances at home. Family-Based Mental Health Services are intended to reduce the need for psychiatric hospitalizations and out-of-home placements by providing services that enable families to maintain their role as the primary caregiver for their children and adolescents. While FBMHS are utilized less frequently for children with autism spectrum disorders, such individuals may be eligible for these services when they are determined to be at high risk for out-of-home placement and involved with multiple systems.

Partial Hospital Services — This level of care provides a less restrictive, more flexible setting than inpatient hospitalization for the delivery of acute care. It is often used to transition members out of acute care or serves as an alternative. The primary functions of partial hospitalization services include providing support to help the patient manage the safety of himself, others, and property, to reduce acute and chronic symptoms, to evaluate and manage medication therapies, to help the child and family build a variety of skills that strengthen the child's ability to function independently, and to develop an aftercare plan for less restrictive, less intrusive services.

Other Levels of Care/Treatment Available to Children With Autism (Continued)

School-based Partial Hospital Programs (SBPH) — SBPH provides licensed mental health partial hospital services for select children and adolescents with serious emotional and mental health needs. These programs can take place in an Approved Private School and/or an alternative setting such as an outpatient provider. Placement in such settings is normally initiated by the student's home School District when the District can no longer effectively meet the student's education needs within the District's programs. Students in SBPH programs have Individualized Educational Plans as well as formal mental health treatment plans covering the range of strengths, needs, and goals of the programs.

Outpatient Services — These types of services include a range of short-term and long-term treatments which vary with the child's diagnosis, severity of illness, coping skills, and available support systems. Outpatient treatment may include medication evaluations, medication management, individual therapy, family therapy, and group therapy, and may include treatments such as positive behavior support, social skills, cognitive based interventions, and communication. Group therapy may be particularly beneficial for children and adolescents with ASD when the focus of the group is to enhance communication and social skill development. While the range of Autism-specific outpatient programs differs widely in different geographic areas, the development of such programs continues to be a focus of many providers statewide.

Case Management Services — This type of service (which is only available in some counties) assists members and families with service coordination, linkage to resources or other needed services, and mental health advocacy. When receiving BHR services, a member can also receive case management services through their BHRS provider. The case manager in BHRS is responsible for coordination of care between providers, identification of community supports, helping to link members to alternative services, scheduling appropriate ISPT meetings, and organizing/managing packet information required by the Managed Care Organizations.

Resource Coordinator — This individual helps to link families to services, identify appropriate supports/resources including both mental health and educational settings, can aid in transportation to and from medical/psychiatric appointments, and identify community supports.

Intensive Case Manager — An ICM is very similar to an RC and can link families to services, identify appropriate supports/resources including both mental health and educational settings, can aid in transportation to and from medical/psychiatric appointments and identify community supports as well as medication monitoring/compliance. Children involved with an ICM have access to 24-hour on-call ICMs to assist in a mental health crisis.

Crisis Services — These services may be accessed through a medical or psychiatric hospital emergency room or crisis center or via a mobile crisis team. A mobile crisis team provides individual or team-delivered intervention in the member's home, school, work, or community to address the crisis situation. Regardless of the method of crisis intervention, the main goal of crisis services is to establish safety, provide stabilization, and divert hospitalization when possible.

APPENDIX H: DENIAL AND APPEAL PROCESS

A Parent's Guide to the Denial and Appeal Process (a parent-friendly version of the denial and grievance process, written by a parent*)

There are times when prescribed services for children with disabilities are denied by Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations (BHMCOs). Parents often find themselves thrown into the process ill-prepared to advocate for the continued delivery of medically necessary services for their children. Recognizing that parents do not have the luxury of becoming legal and clinical experts in every aspect of the lives of their children, this short paper will not attempt to explain the somewhat ambiguous "Medical Necessity Criteria" used to determine a child's eligibility for BHRS (or wraparound services), nor will it attempt to define an "appropriate diagnostic," as both concepts are beyond the author's range of expertise.

The simple aim of this paper is to (1) familiarize families with the prescribed time lines to which HealthChoices BHMCOs (e.g., Community Care and CBHNP) are required to observe when resolving Grievances, and (2) to offer practical advice to parents on how to use these time lines to the child's advantage.

NOTE: This paper is not a substitute for building a strong and convincing case for your child's level of need and appropriate level of service necessary to meet that need, but is, rather, a companion to a substantive case – that is, a way to use procedure to strengthen your chances for successfully advocating for your child's wraparound service needs.

Some Preemptive Steps

1. Request a copy of the Psychologists Evaluation ("Psych Eval") before its submission to Community Care.

Prepare for the possibility that Community Care will either deny your request for services or request additional information before approving the prescribed services. One of the most common reasons for denial is that Psych Evals do not paint an accurate picture of the child's level of need. Evaluators typically get to see a very small part of the child's day and this can result in impressions that do not give the most accurate portrayal of the child's needs. If you believe an evaluator's report has omitted important information about your child, be sure to bring this to the evaluator's attention.

Words of Advice: (1) Find a psychologist you can trust, and (2) if the psychologist believes more time is necessary to complete a thorough evaluation, contact Community Care immediately for approval of additional billable hours for the Psych Eval.

NOTE: Some evaluating psychologists may balk at a parent's request to review the Psych Eval prior to submission to Community Care. Don't let this deter you – BE PERSISTENT!

*Adapted from Jim Boudier's A Parent's Guide to the Denial and Appeal Process with permission

APPENDIX H: DENIAL AND APPEAL PROCESS

2. Timing of Provider’s Submission of Prescription Packet to Community Care
 - a. Rule of Thumb: The best way to avoid a dispute is to prepare for a dispute.
 - b. Assume Community Care will either deny your request for services or approve a lesser amount than requested.
 - c. A Prescription Packet submitted to Community Care too early could undermine your ability to defeat a service denial.
 - d. Recommendation: Ask your wraparound provider to refrain from submitting the completed packet until approximately two (2) weeks prior the expiration of your current treatment period.
 - i. Community Care must issue a decision on recommended services within days of receiving the Prescription Packet
 - ii. While this may create a “time pinch,” the parent should consider the inconvenience an important preemptive step toward defeating a service denial.

How to Beat a Denial in Three Easy Steps

At a glance, the tactics set forth below may appear to be an unfair use of the process. As advocates for our children, however, we cannot assume that the other side will play fair. In fact, representatives of other BHMCOs have admitted that they do not know how to reduce service intensity in a systematic, child-centered manner. Community Care is bound to specific time lines for resolving Complaints and Grievances. Service denials (and approvals for a lesser intensity of service than what was requested) are resolved through the Grievance process. Each treatment period for wraparound services is 120 days in length. As you can see from Table No. 1 below, a “simple” Grievance could take 150 days to resolve.

NOTE: Grievances that are not resolved by the end of the Treatment Period in dispute become moot, and provided the family requests each Grievance Level within 10 days of each denial, the child will continue to receive the intensity of services received prior to the denial.

TABLE NO. 1

¹ A complaint is filed when you unhappy with Community Care or your provider or you do not agree with a decision made by Community Care (e.g., you are unhappy with the care you are getting, that you cannot get the service you want because it is not a covered service, or that you have not received services that you have been approved to get).	
² A grievance is filed when you do not agree with Community Care’s decision that a service that you or your provider asked for is not medically necessary. You can file a grievance if Community Care denies a service, approves less than what was asked for, or approves a service different from the one that was asked for.	
STEP	DAYS
Time to Request 1st Level Grievance from Time of Denial	10
1st Level Grievance Must Be Decided	30
Time to Request 2nd Level Grievance from Time of 1st Level Decision	10
2nd Level Grievance Must Be Decided	30
Time to Request External Grievance Review (Fair Hearing)	10
External Grievance Review Must Be Decided	60
TOTAL POTENTIAL NUMBER OF DAYS IN PROCESS	150

APPENDIX H: DENIAL AND APPEAL PROCESS

1. Step One: Requesting the First Level Grievance
 - a. Within ten (10) days of the date of your denial letter, request a First Level Grievance.
 - i. You have forty-five (45) days to request a Grievance, BUT in order to ensure your child continues to receive the level of service he or she received prior to the denial, a Grievance must be requested within 10 days of the date of the denial letter.
 - ii. Suggestion: Remember to begin using the time line to your advantage now. Using a calendar, begin counting the days, and make your request 8 or 9 days after the date of the denial letter.
 - b. Ask to be included in the First Level Grievance Meeting, and request the latest date possible (preferably 20+ days following your First Level Grievance request).
2. Step Two: Requesting the Second Level Grievance
 - a. Within ten (10) days of the date of your First Level Grievance decision, request a Second Level Grievance. Suggestion: Remember to continue using the time line to your advantage. Using a calendar, count the days, and make your request 8 or 9 days after the date of the denial letter.
 - b. Contact the Pennsylvania Health Law Project for consultative assistance on how to build your case before the Second Level Grievance Panel.
 - c. Request the latest date possible for conducting the Second Level Grievance Panel Review (preferably 20+ days).
3. Step Three: Requesting the External Grievance Review
 - a. Within ten (10) days of the date of your Second Level Grievance decision, request an External Grievance Review.
 - b. Contact the Pennsylvania Health Law Project for possible free legal representation at the External Grievance Review.
 - c. Request the latest date possible for conducting the External Grievance Review (preferably 40-50+ days).

Hints and Other Possible Tactics

- If the BHMCO argues that the Psychologist's Evaluation fails to support the prescribed hours, request the First Level Grievance as mentioned above and coordinate the filing of an "Addendum" to the Evaluation with your Psychologist. The BHMCO must consider the Evaluation as amended and issue a new decision. If they continue to deny services as prescribed the clock starts over and you can request a First Level Grievance again, further running down the clock.
- Under certain circumstances, you may request as many as 15 additional days to resolve a First Level Grievance.
- Upon receiving a service denial, contact an experienced advocate as soon as possible to discuss "next steps."

Conclusion

Wraparound denials can be disheartening, but with a small amount of thought and planning, your child can continue receiving medically necessary services throughout the grievance process, and the odds of beating a service denial can be greatly improved.

APPENDIX I: COMPLAINT PROCESS

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell us you are unhappy with Community Care or your provider, or you do not agree with a decision made by Community Care.

These are some examples of a complaint:

- You are unhappy with the care you are getting
- You are unhappy that you cannot get the service you want because it is not a covered service
- You are unhappy that you have not received services that you have been approved to get*

* Community Care providers of service must provide services within 1 hour for emergencies, within 24 hours for urgent situations, and within 7 days for routine appointments and specialty referrals. When a treatment plan is approved, you should expect to receive services according to that treatment plan.

What should I do if I have a complaint?

First Level Complaint

To file a complaint, call your Community Care Customer Services representative at 1-866-473-5862 and ask to speak to the Complaints and Grievances Department. Tell us your complaint and assistance will be provided. Or write down your complaint and mail it to:

Community Care
Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466
Attn: Complaints and Grievances Department

When should I file a First Level complaint?

You must file a complaint within 45 days of getting a letter telling you that:

- Community Care has decided you cannot get a service you want because it is not a covered service.
- Community Care will not pay a provider for a service you received.
- Community Care did not decide a First Level complaint or grievance you filed earlier within 30 days of when you filed it.

You must file a complaint within 45 days of the date you should have received a service if your provider did not give you the service. You may file all other complaints at any time.

APPENDIX I: COMPLAINT PROCESS

What happens after I file a First Level Complaint?

Community Care will send you a letter to let you know we received your complaint. The letter will tell you about the First Level complaint process.

You may ask Community Care to see any information we have about your complaint. You may also send information that may help with your complaint to;

Community Care
Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466
Attn: Complaints and Grievances Department

You can also ask for assistance with your complaint by calling 1-866-473-5862.

If you filed a complaint because of one of the reasons listed below, you can be included in the First Level complaint review. (You must call Community Care within 10 days of the date on the letter to tell us that you want to be included.)

- You are unhappy that you have not received services that you have been approved to get.
- You are unhappy that Community Care has decided you cannot get a service you want because it is not a covered service.
- You are unhappy that Community Care will not pay a provider for a service you received.
- You are unhappy that Community Care did not make a decision about your First Level complaint or grievance within 30 days of when you filed it.

You can come to our offices or be included by phone. You are not required to attend this meeting. If you do not attend, it will not affect our decision. One or more Community Care staff, who has not been involved in the issue you filed your complaint about, will make a decision on your complaint. Your complaint will be decided no more than 30 days after we received it.

A letter will be mailed to you no more than 5 business days after Community Care makes its decision. This letter will tell you the reason(s) for the decision. It will also tell you how to file a Second Level complaint if you don't like the decision.

What to do to continue getting services:

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped because they are not covered services for you, and you file a complaint that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the letter (notice) telling you that the services you have been receiving are not covered services for you, the services will continue until a decision is made.

What if I do not like Community Care’s First Level complaint decision?

Second Level Complaint

If you are not happy with Community Care’s First Level complaint decision, you may file a Second Level complaint with Community Care.

When should I file a Second Level complaint?

You must file your Second Level complaint within 45 days of the date you get the First Level complaint decision letter. Use the same address or phone number you used to file your First Level complaint.

What happens after I file a Second Level complaint?

Community Care will send you a letter to let you know we received your complaint. The letter will tell you about the Second Level complaint process.

- You may ask Community Care to see any information we have about your complaint. You may also send information that may help with your complaint to Community Care.
- You can come to a meeting of the Second Level complaint committee or be included by phone. Community Care will contact you to ask if you want to come to the meeting. You don’t have to attend if you do not want to. If you do not attend, it will not affect our decision.
- The Second Level complaint review committee will have three or more people on it. At least one Community Care member will be on the committee. The members of the committee will not have been involved in the issue you filed your complaint about.
- The committee will make a decision no more than 30 days from the date Community Care received your Second Level complaint. A letter will be mailed to you within 5 business days after the committee makes its decision. This letter will tell you the reason for the decision. It will also tell you how to ask for an external complaint review if you don’t like the decision.

What to do to continue getting services:

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped because they are not covered services for you and you file a Second Level complaint that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the First Level complaint decision letter, the services will continue until a decision is made.

APPENDIX I: COMPLAINT PROCESS

What if I still don't like the decision?

External Complaint Review

If you are not happy with the Second Level complaint decision, you may ask for a review of your complaint by the Department of Health or the Insurance Department. The Department of Health handles complaints that involve the way a provider gives care or services. The Insurance Department reviews complaints that involve Community Care's policies and procedures.

You must ask for an External complaint review within 15 days of the date you receive the Second Level complaint decision letter. If you ask, Community Care will help you put your complaint in writing.

You must send your request for External review in writing to either:

Pennsylvania Department of Health
Bureau of Managed Care
Health and Welfare Building, Rm 912
7th and Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Telephone Number: 1-888-466-2787
Fax: 1-717-705-0947
Relay Service: 1-800-654-5984

OR

Pennsylvania Insurance Department
Bureau of Consumer Services
1321 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Telephone Number: 1-877-881-6388

If you send your request for an External complaint review to the wrong department, it will be sent to the correct department.

The Department of Health or the Insurance Department will get your complaint information from Community Care. You may also send them any other information that may help with the external review of your complaint.

An attorney, or another person of your choice, may represent you during the External Complaint review.

A decision letter will be sent to you after the decision is made. This letter will tell you the reason(s) for the decision and what you can do if you don't like the decision.

What to do to continue getting services:

If you have been receiving services that are being reduced, changed, or stopped because they are not covered services for you and you file a request for an External Complaint review that is hand-delivered or postmarked within 10 days of the date on the Second Level complaint decision letter, the services will continue until a decision is made.

Community Care, part of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), is a nonprofit behavioral health managed care organization established to serve the needs of the publicly funded health system. Community Care staff manage mental health and substance abuse services for nearly one million people whose health coverage is through Medicaid, Medicare, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and UPMC Health Plan commercial plans.

Awarded “full” accreditation (the highest level possible) by the National Committee of Quality Assurance (NCQA) for its Medicare and commercial products, Community Care is committed to improving members’ quality of life by expanding access to services, developing and using a clinically-focused care management model, and supporting community-based recovery-oriented services. Staff work with members and their families to create an environment that provides hope, empowerment, choice, and opportunities that facilitate recovery.

To learn more about Community Care, visit www.ccbh.com, as well as www.recoverylearning.com, Community Care’s learning community website to support members in recovery.





Community Care Behavioral Health Organization
Courtyard Professional Art Building
300 Community Drive, Suite F
Tobyhanna, PA 18466
www.ccbh.com