

Developmental-Behavioral Fellowships Currently Supported by MCHB/HRSA and Its Relationship to the Autism CARES Act

- The proportion of children with ASD continues to grow – now 1:59 according to CDC/ADDN Network 2014 data.
- Interventions delivered in the early years are most effective in addressing ASD characteristics and changing children’s life course. (Saves over \$300,000 per child) (D Mandell for CMS)
- Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) is the Pediatric subspecialty which is most likely to assess, diagnose and treat young children with concerns for an ASD.
- A 2010 survey of primary care pediatric providers listed DBP as the subspecialty in greatest demand and least supply with 87% reporting there were too few DBPs to meet the needs of patients in their practices.
- In a 2017 Children’s Hospital Association survey, DBP had the second longest average wait time for new patient appointments which was 18.7 weeks. DBP was the top ranked pediatric subspecialty shortage area affecting these Children’s Hospital’s ability to deliver care with 11.8% acknowledging this deficit. Indeed 47% of hospitals reported vacancies in DBP for longer than a year; this is the highest of any pediatric subspecialty.
- More than 40% of children referred to DBP’s in academic settings have concerns for an ASD.
- Evaluation for ASD takes considerable time and effort and wait times for evaluation are on average at least 5 months, more than a year in many locations. (JDBP papers)
- DBP subspecialty training is 3 years after pediatric residency (American Board of Pediatrics)
- As of December 2017 there were only 610 DBPs maintaining their certification in DBP (ABP workforce data)
- On average 33 fellows have completed DBP fellowship training each year since 2012.
- In the last round of certification, which occurs every 2 years, 60 DBP gained certification.
- There are 39 academic programs training DBP fellows in the USA.
- Ten of these fellowship programs currently receive HRSA/MCHB funding (through the Autism CARES Act) for DBP fellowship education. As a group

these programs are currently training 43 DBP fellows, roughly 40% of all fellows now in the pipeline.

- A survey of DBP program directors reported that lack of secure stipend support hampered their ability to recruit or train DBP fellows. Only 45% of accredited slots (48 slots) had “secure funding” for the next 5 years. However, programs supported in part through HRSA LEND or HRSA DBP training grants reported having adequate funds to support fellow’s research in DBP. This highlights the critical role that these training grants provide in support of DBP fellowship education.
- The current round of DBP programs are scheduled to hear about HRSA funding for the next 5 years by July 1, 2018. The maximum funding is listed as \$187,112 per program/year. More than half of the 38 eligible DBP training programs applied for this funding. There is currently an opportunity to fund more DBP education with enhanced funding for additional programs through the Autism CARES Act and/or enhanced funding for the programs gaining competitive renewal.