

Autism Treatment Acceleration Act

Senators Durbin, Casey and Menendez

To improve the quality of life for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and their families, Senators Durbin, Casey, and Menendez have introduced the “Autism Treatment Acceleration Act,” authorizing federal funding for services, treatment, support, and research on autism spectrum disorders.

Summary

Autism Care Centers Demonstration Project

Creates a demonstration project to develop Autism Care Centers in order to increase access to quality health care services and communication among healthcare providers, educators, and other providers of services; enable beneficiaries to designate a personal primary care coordinator as a source of contact for a family; and provide a full array of medical, behavioral, mental health, educational and family care services to individuals and families in a single location

Adult Services Demonstration Project

Creates a demonstration project to provide an array of services to adults with autism spectrum disorders including: post secondary education, vocational and self advocacy skills, employment; residential services, supports and housing; nutrition, health and wellness; recreational and social activities; and transportation and personal safety

Registry

Establishes a voluntary population-based autism spectrum disorders case registry to help understand the root causes, rates, and trends of autism

Public Education and Awareness Campaign

Develops a national multimedia campaign to increase public education and awareness about healthy developmental milestones and autism throughout the lifespan. Campaigns will be targeted at a general public audience or specific audiences such as medical, criminal justice, or emergency professionals.

Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee

Establishes an Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee to coordinate and advise on government activities relating to research, services, and programs for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Members will include representatives from relevant governmental agencies (Dept. of Health and Human Services, Dept. of Education, etc) and members representing individuals with autism, parents, service providers, and advocacy groups.

National Network for Autism Spectrum Disorders Research and Services

Establishes a National Network in order to strengthen linkages between research and service initiatives at the federal, regional, state and local levels, and facilitate the translation of research on autism into services and treatments that will improve the quality of life for individuals with autism and their families. A national data repository will be created to share emerging data, findings, and treatment models.

National Training Initiative

Creates a national training initiative on autism and a technical assistance center to develop and expand interdisciplinary training and continuing education on autism spectrum disorders.

Insurance Coverage

Requires that health insurers cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including Applied Behavioral Analysis therapy and assistive communication devices.