

December 22, 2014

Glen Dickinson, Director LSA
Ground Floor, State Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Richard Shults
Iowa Department of Human Services
1305 E Walnut
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Michael Marshall
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Carmine Boal
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Enclosed please find the report as required by 2014 Iowa Acts, Chapter 1140, Section 25 on the Mercy Autism Center pilot project (Mercy), to determine the necessary support services for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families to be included in the children's disabilities service system.

A grant of \$22,010 is being used to provide training to community partners and family members in the Iowa counties of Allamakee, Cedar, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Jackson and Jones. The training programs will consist of information regarding early identification and treatment options for children with autism spectrum disorders.

This objective was brought forth in 2014 by the Mercy Service Club Autism Center with collaboration of the following Community Service providers:

Dubuque Community School District—Rozy Warder, Director Special Education
Child Health Specialty Clinics (CHSC)—Sabrina Schultz, Family Navigator
Hills & Dales—Marilyn Althoff, CEO, Alyson Beytien BCBA and Laura Keehner BCBA

Progress to date:

Mercy Service Club Autism Center has entered into a contractual arrangement with Medical Associates Child Psychologist and with Hills & Dales board certified behavior analysts (BCBA) to provide monthly autism evaluation clinics (clinic). To date in state fiscal year (SFY) 15, 12 children have been served through the clinic. Mercy is billed for the time spent in evaluation by these clinicians and bills the Department of Human Services (DHS) for services provided. Non-covered services are presented to the Mercy Service Club for charity care. This contractual arrangement has been extended through June 2015.

We have also included information from the CHSC Family Navigator in packets sent to families interested in the clinic. This past month this collaboration among the Family Navigator service, the clinic staff and the clinicians conducting the evaluations allowed us to get a child in the clinic within 1 week for an evaluation and start services within the first two weeks. The close communication and flexibility of all agencies involved helped to assure the child and family had the needed services and supports.

Plans are underway to provide a three part education series for parents and family members of persons on the autism spectrum, as well as students of University Education and Healthcare programs, daycare providers, DHS/parent education groups and service agency caregivers. Planning began in November and the slated sessions will include:

Autism Community Supports: "In The Beginning" February 2nd, 2015,
Autism Community Supports: "Across the Ages" March 2nd, 2015
Autism Community Supports: "Transitions to Adulthood" April 7th, 2015.

The planning time for these events has not been billed to Mercy so no money has been used to date. However we will utilize the planned budget for these events in advertising and marketing costs to assure we get the message to our target population.

Plans are also underway to meet with local psychiatric services, social services and special education directors to discuss crisis intervention needs. These sessions will begin in January, 2015.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Schell, Director Mercy Service Club Autism Center
250 Mercy Drive
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
563-589-8180

cc: Governor Terry E. Branstad
Senator Jack Hatch
Senator David Johnson
Representative David Heaton
Representative Lisa Heddens
Legislative Services Agency
Aaron Todd, Senate Majority Staff
Josh Bronsink, Senate Minority Staff
Carrie Malone, House Majority Staff
Zeke Furlong, House Minority Staff