



## *Autism Efforts in Oregon: A Timeline*

Autism is a public health priority both nationally and in the state of Oregon. The prevalence of autism has increased significantly over the last ten years. This has led to an increased focus on how best to diagnose and treat autism. A number of efforts have been made over the last few years to address healthcare for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in Oregon. OCCYSHN tracks and informs these efforts, which are summarized here.

**2006:** **Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS)** received a small grant to conduct open community forums. OPS engaged a variety of stakeholders in a discussion on how to improve the state-wide system of care for children and youth with autism and their families. Three workgroups emerged, and their efforts around screening and assessment, interventions, and reimbursement will continue within subcommittees of the Oregon Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders formed in March, 2009.

**Screening initiatives began.** OPS, in collaboration with OCCYSHN and the NW Autism Foundation, began training primary care providers on autism screening. The Artz Center, in collaboration with Care Oregon and the NW Health Foundation, began training local primary care providers on developmental and behavioral screening through the Screening Tools and Referral Training program, or START.

**2007:** **Legislation passed.** HB 2918 passed. HB 2918 is a parity bill which requires health insurance to cover pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) subject to the same considerations as treatment of physical illness. HB 2918 also directed the Health Resources Commission to develop a report on medical evidence-based standards of effectiveness of treatments for people with ASDs. The report was ultimately provided to the 2009 legislature. It can be found at [www.oregon.gov/OHPPR/HRC/docs/HRC.Reports/ASD.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/OHPPR/HRC/docs/HRC.Reports/ASD.pdf)

**2008:** **An ad hoc workgroup formed** during the legislative session. With Representative Chris Edwards as Chair, the workgroup reviewed current services, identified gaps, and developed priorities. The workgroup held a series of public forums to assist with the review of current services.

**2009:** **Legislation related to autism was proposed but did not pass.** Bills addressed reimbursement for treatment, strategic planning to improve transition from high school to adult living, and funding for a commission. Broader legislation, HB 2445, would have taken advantage of the Family Opportunity Act by allowing families of children and youth with special health needs who meet certain criteria to buy into Medicaid, thereby increasing access to services. The language was incorporated into HB 2116, but it was later removed.

**Oregon Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders** was established by Executive Order of the Governor in March. The Commission is charged with engaging stakeholders, identifying priorities related to autism, promoting efficient use of resources, and developing and monitoring a ten-year strategic plan to address services for individuals with autism. The plan will be delivered to the Governor by May 1, 2010. Bob Nickel, MD, Professor of Pediatrics, CDRC, OHSU and an OCCYSHN medical consultant, sits on the Commission, which began meeting in September.

The establishment of the Oregon Commission on ASD paves the way for future autism work. OCCYSHN aims to support the efforts of the Commission as it develops a statewide plan to address autism services in a comprehensive manner.

## Upcoming OCCYSHN Webinars

### Screening Children for Autism

A Webinar for Pediatric Primary Care Providers

January 20, 2010, 8:00-9:00am

*Presented by Robin McCoy, MD*

Child Development & Rehabilitation Center, OHSU

**(Free)**

**To register, click [HERE](#).**

### Strategies for Addressing Sensory Dysfunction in Children with ASD

A Webinar for Allied Health Providers, Educators and

Community Service Providers

*Presented by Kersti Pettit-Kekel, OTR/L*

Child Development & Rehabilitation Center, OHSU

January 20, 2010 2:30-3:30pm

**(Free)**

**To register, click [HERE](#).**

**After January 20, the webinar sessions will be archived on the OCCYSHN website: [www.ohsu.edu/cdrc/occyshn/resources/presentations.html](http://www.ohsu.edu/cdrc/occyshn/resources/presentations.html)**

# Resources

**Autism Speaks** provides research funding, awareness, advocacy and services for families. Go to [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

**Autism Society of America** is a grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of persons with autism. Go to [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

**Oregon Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorder.** When the Commission's website is established, it can be found by going to [www.governor.oregon.gov/Gov/board\\_list.shtml](http://www.governor.oregon.gov/Gov/board_list.shtml)

**National Medical Home Autism Initiative** provides technical assistance, resources and advocacy toward improving capacity to identify, serve, and integrate children with autism into their communities. Go to [www.waisman.wisc.edu/nmhai/index.php](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/nmhai/index.php)

**American Academy of Pediatrics** provides information and resources for families, including a Q&A on the recent autism prevalence study published in Pediatrics. For health care providers, it has an autism toolkit and an array of resources. Go to [www.aap.org/healthtopics/Autism.cfm](http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/Autism.cfm)

## Further Reading Related to Autism

Kogan, M. et al. (2009). Prevalence of Parent-Reported Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children in the US, 2007; *Pediatrics Vol 24, No.4. pp. 1-9.*

Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders—Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, Six Sites, United States, 2000 [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5601a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5601a1.htm)