



Joan C. Barnish
Director of Communications
Phone: (860) 418-6044
Cell: (203) 233-0150
joan.barnish@ct.gov

Connecticut Autism Implementation Committee Holds First Meeting

(Hartford)- The Autism Implementation Committee recently held its first meeting to start the process of implementing recommendations from the Autism Feasibility Study. Released in April, the Study identifies and analyzes issues related to the services and resources available to people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Connecticut.

Governor Dannel P. Malloy commissioned the study in 2011 to address gaps in the current ASD service system and build on existing infrastructure in order to create a more inclusive and user-friendly system, facilitate better collaboration between state agencies and service providers, make reimbursement rates for autism-related services more consistent across public and private carriers and better meet the needs of individuals with an ASD and their families.

Held at Southern Connecticut State University, the meeting was attended by stakeholders who worked on the study and members of the former Autism Council. Going forward, as part of the recently passed Public Act 13-20, an Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC) will be established by July 1, 2013. The newly appointed council will coordinate a multi-year plan to expand and improve the existing ASD service system through the formation of four subcommittees which will address the following goals:

- Increasing access to qualified professionals and effective services;
- Increasing access to training, consultation, and learning opportunities for providers, professionals, and families;
- Creating a comprehensive, user-friendly and centralized catalogue of ASD resources and services;
- Analyzing and expanding public and private reimbursement for ASD services including existing insurance statutes and Medicaid funding strategies.

“The Autism Implementation Committee Retreat was an opportunity for grass roots members, former Council members, families, providers and state agencies to meet and begin the process of laying the groundwork for the implementation of the feasibility study,” said DDS Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D. “This is a very exciting time for the State of Connecticut, we now have a road map to helping thousands of families. It is the first time in the state that so many different parties have come together with the same goal; to expand and improve services for individuals on the Autism Spectrum.”

To read the Autism Feasibility Study, please visit the DDS website at www.ct.gov/dds

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