

**Regional Autism Assistance Program  
Expert Panel Meeting  
May 2, 2023, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Via Zoom**

Name	Organization/Role Representing	Attended
Alyson Beytien	Life Connections, Family Member	X
Amy Chebuhar	Iowa Department of Health & Human Services	X
Josh Cobbs	Family Advisor	
James Curry	Family Advisor	
Allison Drew	Regional Autism Assistance Program, Family Member	X
Connie Fanselow	Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services Commission	X
Kirstin Hanson	AXIS Therapy and Support Services	X
Erika Hertel	Regional Autism Assistance Program, Family Member	X
Michelle Holst	Iowa Department of Public Health- 1st Five	
Aaron Kauer	UI SFCH Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	X
Andrea Keith	Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services	X
Lisa Kemmerer	Star Autism Support	
Vanessa Kimm	Family Advisor	
Todd Kopelman	UI SFCH Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	X
Monica Kurtz	Grant Wood Area Education Agency	X
Stacie Lane	Tanager Place	
Toni Fuller Merfeld (Megan Christensen)	Metro West Learning Center	X
Caroline Moniza	Mercy Family Counseling & EAP	
Steve Muller (Evelyn Horton)	Balance Autism	X
Kelly Pelzel	UI SFCH Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	X
Mary Roberts	Family Advisor	
Leslie Rogers (Samantha Cermak)	ChildServe	X
Thomas Scholz	Division of Child & Community Health	X
Kristine Steinmetz	Autism Society of Iowa, Family Member	X
Wendy Trotter	Iowa Department of Education	
Maria Valdovinos	Drake University	
Brad Zelinger	Stride Autism Centers	X

## **Welcome and Introductions** (Facilitator: Erika Hertel)

### **Member Update** (Kris Steinmetz, Legislative Update)



Legislation  
Report.docx

- April has been proclaimed as Autism Acceptance Month
- Bills discussed by Kris
  - ✓ [SF68](#)- Governor's education savings plan/private school vouchers
  - ✓ [SF494](#)- Public assistance reform, asset tests for SNAP
  - ✓ [HF602](#)- student suicide prevention, Your Life Iowa on Student ID Cards
  - ✓ [HF604](#)- Removing disruptive students from classrooms
  - ✓ [HF608](#)- Seizure ready schools
  - ✓ [SF210](#) and [HF273](#)- Changing mental health and behavioral health to brain health
  - ✓ [HF252](#)- Comprehensive transition scholarships for programs like REACH, NEXT, etc.
  - ✓ [HF243](#) and [SSB1050](#)- Remove age and dollar caps in Autism treatment
  - ✓ [HF610](#) and [SF343](#)- Excused absences for autism related medical treatments
  - ✓ [HSB49](#)- Creating an autism waiver

### **Member Updates** (Kelly Pelzel, ImPACT Providers)



Pelzel ImPACT  
Trainees.pdf

- ImPACT is one of a group of naturalistic developmental behavioral intervention blending principles of ABA, speech language training, and developmental approaches like you would see in Floor Time
- Kelly does course training and has trained ~66 people and is now hoping to offer the training once each year with a balance of clinicians from within and outside of the University. Targeting a time around the beginning of fall semester.
- Next steps are to build a database to see who is practicing and accepting referrals.
- Currently the University of Iowa and ChildServe are offering the ImPACT program
- The time investment looks like 6 hours of online didactics and 14 hours of face-to-face training. This should be bolstered with outside practicing and learning before you'll be ready to teach.

### **Member Update** (Andrea Keith, Vocational Rehabilitation)

- Officially under Iowa Workforce Development agency and report to Director Townsend instead of the Board of Education. IVRS will lose 25 support positions and those employees will find positions within Workforce.
- This change has prompted some concerns about Voc Rehab's relationship with the schools and ease of access to the students/student information but at this point, they have no insight on how things will pan out.

**Member Update (Erika Hertel, CASP Conference and Autism in Black)**

- Attended the Autism in Black conference and communicated with Leondra Dodd, Senior Advisor for Health Investigations (Mental Health Parity Compliance) for the US Department of Labor at the Kansas City Regional Office. She asked if we could meet to discuss Iowa residents' challenges receiving autism care, including insurance obstacles like prior authorization and medical necessity denials. Some of the topics of concern that brought up during member discussion were:
  - Insurance companies stating they need certain diagnosis tests or scores for the patient to receive interventions
  - The age and dollar caps in the bill that didn't pass [HF243](#) and [SSB1050](#)
  - ABA and some other mental health services not being covered under HAWK-I and needs some legislative support
  - Insurance denials based on no recommendation of ABA by a physician for an autistic adult
  - Issues with denials because the provider who diagnosed was an ARNP
  - Not having enough physicians that meet the Iowa law criteria. ARNP in the current areas allowed should be accepted for dx

**Member Update (Connie Fanselow, Autism Support Program)**

- The application and the family information packet has recently been updated. If you want copies, please contact Connie at 515-725-0131 or [cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us).
- An updated list of Medicaid rate increases and codes (change effective July 1<sup>st</sup>) is also available. If you need an updated form, please contact Connie at 515-725-0131 or [cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us).

**Member Update (Alyson Beytien, ABA clinic openings)**

- Beyond Behavior is opening ABA clinics in Denison, Mt. Pleasant and Ottumwa within the next 3 months. Referrals can be done through our website [beyond-behavior.org](http://beyond-behavior.org)