Developing Alabama's System of Services and Resources for Children With Autism: Lessons Learned and Taught

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Faculty

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The Need

- Need for improved infrastructure
- Need for increased capacity
  - Early detection
  - Getting a diagnosis
  - Insurance coverage
  - Transition services
  - Availability of adult services

The Need

- Eligibility requirements across departments and organizations
- Access to services and best practices
- Training for parents and professionals
- Family structure and support
- Lifelong nature of autism
- Autism research

The Response

- 3/07 – HJR23: Creation of Autism Task Force (Chaired by Rep. Cam Ward)
- 5/08 – HJR3: Creation of Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council (AIACC) and Coordinator (Secured with HB41 in April 2009)
- 6/08 – Needs Assessment Completed
- 5/09 – HB615: Creation of Regional Centers legislated (when funding is available)

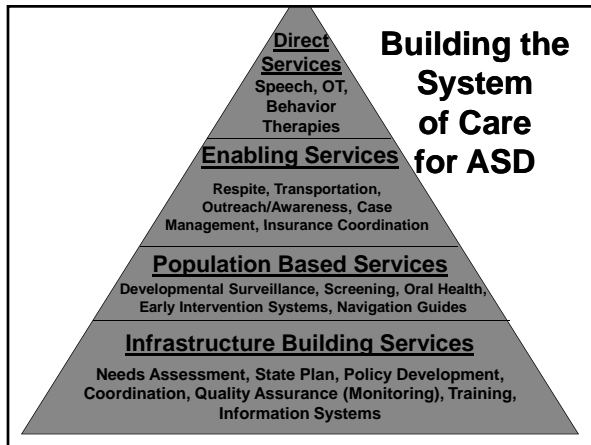## Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council: The Charge

- The AIACC is charged with meeting the urgent and substantial need to develop and implement a:
  - Statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, and interagency system of care for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families

Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council: The Mission Statement

The AIACC guides a collaborative effort to facilitate a lifelong system of care and support for persons and their families with ASD or associated conditions, so that they may enjoy a meaningful and successful life.

From AIACC Strategic Plan, May 2011

Building the System of Care

The MCH Pyramid of Health Services

Building the System of Care for ASD

Direct Services
Speech, OT, Behavior Therapies

Enabling Services
Respite, Transportation, Outreach/Awareness, Case Management, Insurance Coordination

Population Based Services
Developmental Surveillance, Screening, Oral Health, Early Intervention Systems, Navigation Guides

Infrastructure Building Services
Needs Assessment, State Plan, Policy Development, Coordination, Quality Assurance (Monitoring), Training, Information Systems

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Using ADDM Data

- Educating lawmakers
- Demonstrating need to funding agencies
- Looking for gaps in early identification, diagnosis, and appropriate referral
- Policy implications
  - What practices/policies/procedures contribute to late diagnosis and intervention?

Using ADDM Data

- Does service eligibility play a part in diagnoses?
  - Service eligibility is not based on ASD diagnosis, but rather level of functioning and IQ for some services
- What is needed to improve early identification and intervention? (training, funding, insurance reimbursement, etc.)

Legislation

- 2012 – Insurance coverage expanded
- 2014 – BCBA Licensure Board created

AIACC Role / Focus

- **Role of AIACC – to guide development of a system of care for ASD**
- **Purpose of Regional Network – non-residential resource and training services**
- **Objective is to move these two activities forward simultaneously**

Strategic Plan

- **2011 strategic plan**
- **2014 strategic plan**
  - **Accountability**
  - **Public awareness**
  - **Funding**
  - **Professional training**
  - **Accessibility**
  - **Regional Center / Network Development**

Moving Forward

- **Use Strategic Plan to guide next steps in development of system of care**
- **Identify cost and funding for Regional Networks**
- **Refocus committees of the AIACC to align more closely with goals of the Strategic Plan**