




Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6032; Section 213(1)(bbb); Chapter 299, Laws
of 2018

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Washington State
Health Care Authority

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Background and Legislative Reference

People who have children with disabilities sometimes struggle with understanding health insurance and how to obtain benefits for the specialized services their children need. Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6032 requires the Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to contract and work with Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy (WAAA). The goal is to assist clients and families to understand their insurance benefits and navigate the health care system. Eligible clients are those suspected of having or who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder or developmental disability. WAAA is a non-profit community agency that specializes in this work. Specific legislative requirements include the following:

- Contract with WAAA to educate and assist persons seeking HCA's services.
- DSHS or HCA may refer individuals to WAAA to support them in navigating the health care system.
- HCA, in collaboration with DSHS and WAAA, shall submit reports to the governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 15, 2018, and December 15, 2019.
- Reports shall include how many persons were referred, and how many received services from WAAA, and what services were provided by WAAA.
- The reports shall also include what health care services WAAA was able to connect the referred persons to, the length of time these connections took, the type of health coverage the person referred had at the time of referral, and whether alternate coverage was obtained.

Implementation and Results

HCA executed the contract with WAAA on June 22, 2018. Since then, HCA and DSHS' Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDA) provided information sheets about WAAA and distribution instructions to autism Centers of Excellence¹ and DDA local offices statewide. Centers of Excellence received their materials in mid-August 2018, and DDA local offices received their materials in late-August 2018. As of September 7, 2018, WAAA reports that zero persons have requested services from WAAA after receiving referrals from either HCA or DDA. All three organizations are working together to improve the referral process and results. Table 1 below lists the WAAA measures and results.

¹ Centers of Excellence for applied behavioral analysis (ABA) services are health care facilities that employ health care providers that are experts in diagnosing, determining medical necessity, and writing orders for ABA services.

Table 1. WAAA Measures and Results, June–August 2018

MEASURES	RESULTS
1. Number of persons referred to WAAA (i.e., requesting services from WAAA after receiving a referral from HCA or DDA)	Zero
2. Number of persons who received services from WAAA	Zero
3. List of services the WAAA provided to those persons in (2) above	Not applicable
4. List of health care services to which WAAA connected persons in (2) above	Not applicable
5. Length of time it took for WAAA to connect persons in (2) above to health care services connections	Not applicable
6. Length of time these connections took	Not applicable
7. Type of health coverage the persons in (2) above had at the time of referral	Not applicable
8. Whether alternate coverage was obtained	Not applicable

Source: WAAA, August 2018.

Insufficient time elapsed between distributing materials to Centers of Excellence and DDA local offices and the September 7, 2018, due date for WAAA results reporting. HCA, DDA and WAAA staff are working to improve outreach and referral information. We expect to report increased results in 2019.

