Autism Services
Expanding in Arkansas

Karan Burnette, AAP Director
Partners for Inclusive Communities
Current Service Options

• Private insurance coverage
  – Arkansas Insurance Mandate (effective 10/1/2011)
• Medicaid options
  – AAP (effective 10/1/2012)
  – EPSDT (first approval 3/31/2016)
• AAROC Outreach Centers
• Arkansas Rural Centers for Autism and Related Developmental Disabilities (University of Arkansas)
Arkansas Autism Insurance Mandate

- State employee health plans and fully insured group plans are covered
- Individual plans and ERISA plans are exempt
- Services include:
  - Diagnosis
  - ABA ($50,000/yr. cap for individuals under age 18)
  - Pharmacy care
  - Psychiatric care
  - Psychological care
  - SLP, PT, OT
  - Equipment necessary for evidence-based treatment
  - Any medically necessary and evidence-based care prescribed by a physician
Arkansas Autism Partnership (AAP)

- Autism Waiver Program
- To provide intensive, evidence-based intervention for 20-30 hours per week in the homes (and communities) of young children with autism spectrum disorders statewide
- 100 children (point in time)
- Min of 2 years (if eligible); max of 3 years
Current Status

• 1915(c) renewal application submitted to CMS in June, 2015 for Oct. 1 start date
• CMS declined to approve or amend (lost extra 50 slots the state had approved)
• Opted to approve ongoing extensions, 90 days at a time, while state develops plan to offer services through the state plan; currently in our 5th extension
• Draft SPA submitted to CMS July 28, 2016
• Awaiting response
• Currently: 45 children on waiting list; 22 more with applications that need additional information
Who is eligible?

- Financially eligible for Medicaid
- Confirmed DX of *Autism Spectrum Disorder* by a physician, speech-language pathologist and psychologist
- Age 18 months to 7 years
  - Enter by 5th BD
- Meets ICF level of care criteria
Approved AAP Providers

- AEDD
- Advantages of Southeast Arkansas
- Allen School *
- Arkansas Support Network *
- Bost *
- First Step *
- Focus *
- Frank C. Steudlein Learning Center *
- Gregory Kistler Treatment Center *
- Helping Hand Learning Center *
- Howard County Children’s Center *
- ICM *
- Learning Center of North Arkansas
- Lonoke Exceptional School *
- Pattillo Center School *
- Rainbow of Challenges
- SADCCF
- Sevier County Developmental Center
- Stepping Stone School
- Sunshine School & Development Center *
- UCP *
- University of Arkansas
Staff Qualifications

Consultants:
- BCBA or BCaBA and 2 years experience, or
- Master’s degree (minimum) in Psych, SLP, OT or Spec Ed and 2 years experience

Lead Therapists:
- Bachelor’s degree (minimum) in ed/spec ed, psych, SLP, OT or related field and
- 120 hours autism specific training or UA autism certificate, and
- 2 years experience

Line Therapists:
- High school diploma or GED and
- 80 hours autism specific training and
- 2 years experience
Evidence Based Interventions

- Prompting
- Antecedent-based intervention
- Time delay
- Reinforcement
- Task analysis
- Discrete trial training
- Functional behavioral analysis
- Functional communication training
- Response interruption/redirection
Evidence-Based Interventions

- Differential reinforcement
- Social narratives
- Video modeling
- Naturalistic interventions
- Peer mediated intervention
- Pivotal response training
- Visual supports
- Structured work systems
- Self-management
Outcomes

• Children make significant progress in the program
• Highest accomplishments seem to be tied to those situations with maximum parental participation
• Continue to have significant need to build the workforce, especially in rural areas

Concerns:
  – Children who make great gains are often still placed in restrictive classroom settings in public schools
EPSDT: ABA Therapy

- First approval 3/31/2016
- To date: 9 approvals; 3 in process
- Counties: Pulaski (6), Saline (1), Washington (1), Craighead (1), Cross (1), Crittenden (1), Lonoke (1)
- Ages: 3-5 (1); 6-10 (7); 11-16 (4)
“Stop-Gap” Process

- PCP identifies autism treatment as medically necessary during EPSDT screening
- Referral packet submitted to DMS by PCP:
  - Identified need
  - Completed EPSDT screening
  - Completed DMS-693
  - Documentation of diagnosis by SLP, Psych, MD
  - Patient records indicating other treatment methodology that did not ameliorate patient’s condition
DMS reviews active Medicaid eligibility and TPL
Sends to Beacon Health for verification of DX and determination of medical necessity
Approved sent to partners for processing similar to AAP applications
  - Home visit (Vineland II, risk assessment)
  - POC authorization (6-month period)
  - Submit to provider agency selected by family
Process Continued ...

- Services delivered by provider agency
- Billing submitted to DMS on red line paper form
- Reauthorization every 6 months coordinated by partners
  - Progress review
  - PCP submits DMS 693
  - New POC authorized
Evidence-based Intervention

• ABA therapy
Staff Qualifications

Consultants:
• BCBA

Line therapists:
• High school diploma or GED and
• 80 hours autism specific training and
• 2 years experience
Approved EPSDT Providers

- Arkansas Support Network
- Focus
- Helping Hand Learning Center
- ICM *
- UCP *
- University of Arkansas *

Approved as needed based on referrals
EPSDT Outcomes

- Only one recipient has received 6 months of services to date
- 15 year old with significant behavioral health placements, law enforcement interaction and ER visits
- Additionally, parents were using restraint procedures daily
- “The past 5 months have been the best we’ve had in the last 5 years. I never thought my son could develop this level of self-reflection.” (Quote from Dad)
AAROC/Rural Centers Expansion

• AAROC and Arkansas Rural Centers for Autism and Related Developmental Disabilities

• AAROC Sites:
  – Central Arkansas, Little Rock, .5 Coordinator (Dianna Varady) & .75 time admin assnt. (Chelsea Johnson)
  – NW Arkansas, Fayetteville, .5 parent liaison (Laura Reynolds)
  – Helena/West Helena: .5 parent liaison (TBH)
  – Magnolia: .5 parent liaison (TBH)

• Arkansas Rural Centers for Autism and Related Developmental Disabilities
  – Helena/West Helena, full-time BCBA (TBH), 1/1/2017
AAROC/Rural Centers

• Co-located in AHECs
• AAROC:
  – Non-profit parent-led organization
  – Advocacy/service coordination for families
  – Parent training series
• UA Rural Centers:
  – Early identification/DX
  – Training/technical assistance in any location
  – Fidelity of evidence-based services
Questions
Contact Information

Partners for Inclusive Communities
322 Main Street, Suite 501
Little Rock, Arkansas  72201
1-800-342-2923

Karan Burnette, AAP Director
kbburnet@uark.edu