

Medicare Coverage for the Treatment of Autism

WHEREAS the rate of autism spectrum disorder (“ASD”) among Canadian children is now a shocking 1 in 68, constituting a national epidemic and, for reasons unknown, continues to rise;

WHEREAS Canada’s “universal” health care system currently excludes from coverage the recognized, effective, science-based treatment for ASD called Applied Behavioural Analysis (“ABA”), despite the deplorable incidence of this neurological condition and advocacy from numerous citizen groups;

WHEREAS the BC Supreme Court, in 2000, found that ABA was “medically necessary treatment” and that “there were no effective competing therapies”, a decision which was upheld on appeal to the BC Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada;

WHEREAS funding in Canada respecting ABA for ASD currently is not only grossly insufficient, it varies widely between provinces;

WHEREAS the lifetime cost of an individual receiving inadequate treatment (or none) for ASD is reliably estimated between \$2.4-\$3.2 million, excluding indirect costs to society;

WHEREAS the US Government requires all states to provide treatment for ASD as part of state-wide Medicaid programs and 43 out of 50 states require private health insurers to provide coverage for the ASD treatment;

BE IT RESOLVED the *Canada Health Act* be amended to include Medicare coverage for Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or, alternatively, the Government of Canada work with all provincial and territorial governments to ensure inclusion of ABA for ASD within their respective Medical Services Plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Government of Canada provide funding to each province and territory to fully cover the costs associated with the provision of ABA treatment of ASD.

South Surrey-White Rock