

The Council of Autism Service Providers is a nonprofit trade association that advocates for best practices in autism service provision. According to the CDC, 1 in 36 children are now diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. Early intervention and access to medically necessary care can dramatically improve outcomes.

### Closed Networks for a Brand-New Benefit

Although New York rolled out its Medicaid benefit for applied behavior analysis just a few months ago, many Managed Care Plans already indicate that their networks are closed to new providers.

In comparison, CASP member organizations indicate that MCOs are still open their networks in nearby states, including Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and New Hampshire. Here are some examples:

- Healthfirst has a closed panel,
- Optum has reported a closed panel,
- Fidelis and Magellan offer in-network rates well below the State's published rate (the rate that plans are capitated at). This strategy allows the plan to have an "open network," but the rates limit the provider's ability to participate and operate a viable program.

Because of this limitation, wait lists continue to grow longer as New York's Medicaid-enrolled children seek medically necessary care that they are entitled to under both Early Periodic Diagnostic Screening and Treatment (EPSDT) as well as federal Mental Health Parity law (MHPAEA).

**Solution: Require plans to open their networks to providers as the Medicaid benefit is implemented.**

### Early Intervention Hub is a Barrier to Care

According to clinical practice guidelines, applied behavior analysis interventions are provided by behavior analysts. New York Early Intervention has recognized licensed behavior analysts for five years. From a practical perspective, that recognition is non-existent because these providers will only be included in the provision of early intervention services once the new Early Intervention Hub is launched. This hub has been in the works for years, with no implementation date in sight. Meanwhile, children who need access to behavior interventions are not receiving them. Instead, they receive services that do not align with generally accepted standards of care from providers from other fields.

**Solution: Require New York Early Intervention to provide a workaround, recognizing licensed behavior analysts immediately.**