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Director

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Department of Managed Health Care Convenes Autism Advisory Task Force
First Meeting to be held on February 1st in Sacramento

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Managed Health Care today announced the convening of an Autism Advisory Task Force called for in Senate Bill 946 authored by Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (Chapter 650, Statutes 2011). The Task Force is charged with developing recommendations regarding medically necessary behavioral health treatment for individuals with autism or pervasive developmental disorder, as well as the appropriate qualifications, training and education for providers of such treatment.

“The Task Force is comprised of a diverse group of researchers, providers, advocates and experts charged with developing recommendations for state policy makers on behavioral health treatment for people with autism,” said Department of Managed Health Care Director, Brent A. Barnhart. “The work of the Task Force will be grounded in evidence-based research about interventions that have measurable outcomes.”

The 18-member Task Force will specifically focus on:

1. Scientifically validated interventions that have demonstrated clinical efficacy and measurable treatment outcomes
2. Patient selection, monitoring and duration of therapy
3. Qualifications, training and supervision of providers
4. Provider network adequacy
5. Requirements that unlicensed providers shall meet in order to obtain licensure from the state.

(more)

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The Department of Managed Health Care will submit the Task Force report to the Governor and Legislature by December 31, 2012 at which time the Task Force will be disbanded.

All Task Force meetings will be open to the public. To learn more about the Task Force, including its membership and meeting schedule, visit the Department of Managed Health Care's website at www.HealthHelp.ca.gov.

The California Department of Managed Health Care regulates Health Maintenance Organizations, touching the lives of more than 21 million enrollees. The department has assisted more than one million Californians to resolve their health plan problems through its Help Center, educates consumers on their health care rights and responsibilities, and works with health plans to ensure a solvent and stable managed health care system.

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