



NEWSLETTERS

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Opioid dependence treatment in the privacy of a doctor's office



DECEMBER 2012: OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR

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"I had been fighting with my insurance company for about a year trying to get them to pay for services for

my autistic daughter with very little progress. I had even enlisted the help of the CA Department of Insurance, which didn't result in any progress. Then, I met Karen and within a couple of months the check arrived in the mail. She literally saved the day. I was at my wits end. Whenever I have been stuck since that first overwhelming battle I call and she takes care of the problem." -Steve Lasso, Thousand Oaks 2012



The Autism Health Insurance Project (AHIP) was created in 2008 to assist families with children with autism and other related conditions in obtaining medically necessary interventions from insurance. AHIP is the only non-profit organization devoted to helping families get these services through their health care plans. AHIP has helped hundreds of families through their website, message boards, speaking engagements, resource fairs, and direct advocacy.

"We have been so very grateful to both Karen & Lisa at AHIP! Their knowledge of autism and the health insurance system is profound. More importantly, both Karen & Lisa were available and diligent in their advocacy. They are aggressive and

unapologetic. With their help, we are able to secure funding from our HMO insurance by overturning their first denial of coverage. We recommend AHIP whole heartedly." - Melody in Cerritos, 2012

2012 has been a productive year. Here is a snapshot of some of the things that we've been busy

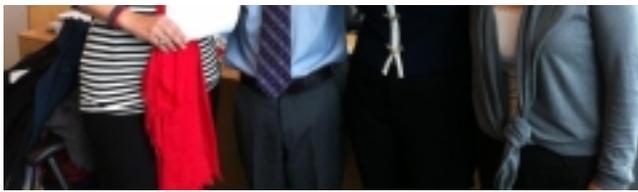
with:

- Successfully advocated for families with CALPERS and Healthy Families Insurance, convincing regulators to require that managed care plans provide ABA .
- Facilitated the implementation of CA SB946, requiring intensive outpatient behavioral health services be provided for people on the autism spectrum. It went into effect July 1, 2012 for all CA state regulated plans.
- Educated regulators, providers, and families on the implementation of SB946.
- Presented at the CALABA Annual conference in February; participated in a panel on implementation of SB946 and led a workshop on securing insurance coverage for children with autism.
- Presented at Autism Speaks Annual Law Summit in Washington D.C. Co-Moderated two yahoo message boards comprised of over over 1300 autism families, and over 9700 messages.
- Conducted 18 educational workshop trainings for parents and professionals throughout CA. Provided individual advocacy to over forty families, with a success rate of over 90%. Health Reform Parents can purchase individual CA state-regulated plans for their children with autism - it is cheapest during the child's birth month. Parents can keep their children on their plans until age 26 (and longer if child has a significant disability). Self-insured plans are now required to offer "Independent Medical Reviews" if denials are based on medical necessity. Habilitative therapy (services designed to develop skills) as well as behavior health treatment will be included as essential benefits, beginning 2014.



CA Regional Centers

Some regional centers are picking up co-pays and co-insurance for ABA and other interventions that are being covered by health plans, if they are already written into the IFSP. Other regional centers are



only doing this in cases of hardship. The Office of Clients Rights Advocacy (OCRA) believes that families should not have to incur ANY out-of-pocket expenses for services listed in the IFSP, and they will help families in their quests for payments. Contact the OCRA

affiliated with your regional center to learn more.

Kaiser Settlement

The DMHC recently issued an enforcement against Kaiser for failing to provide medically necessary speech, OT and PT (not just autism). Any Kaiser families who paid out of pocket for these treatments since January 1, 2009, can submit past billing statements, proof of payment, and a letter attesting that the services were medically necessary and receive reimbursement.

AHIP Needs Your Help!

Please make a tax-deductible contribution and help support future activities: Advocating for policy change by educating policy makers and regulators. Providing educational outreach including workshops for parents and professionals, and hosting "clinics," where families bring in their paperwork and go home with drafts of letters. Developing a quarterly newsletter and maintaining our mailing list. Updating our website more frequently. Helping families to transition to Medical Homes (per Health Reform) and obtain their autism treatments. Allowing us to lower our sliding scale for our direct advocacy services, so that we can serve more low to moderate income working families. Pay for advocacy and assistance to low-income

families. Please give today! Go to our donate page and make a tax deductible contribution - it will make a difference. . Also, check out our website and facebook page, and see what we've been up to and to locate links to the useful information above. Thank you for giving. Sincerely,

Karen Fessel

Karen Fessel, Dr PH
Executive Director & Founder
Autism Health Insurance Project

Special Thanks to our donors who have generously given in the past year:

Supreme Beings (\$1,000 - 10,000):

Safeway Foundation, Drs Curt and Lori Holt, Steve and Beth Lassoff

Heroes (\$200 - \$500):

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