



ATAM

AUTISM TREATMENT ASSOCIATION
OF MINNESOTA

An Open Letter to Minnesota Leaders and the Communities We Serve

September 26, 2026

As leaders of organizations providing autism treatment across Minnesota, we are responsible to the children and families who entrust us with their care, the professionals who have devoted their careers to this work, and the communities that depend upon these services.

Today, that responsibility compels us to speak with one voice.

Minnesota is facing a serious disruption in the authorization of medically necessary autism treatment. The Minnesota Department of Humans Services contracts with Acentra Health to process each Individual Treatment Plans within seven days, because it recognizes how important the EIDBI services are. *Yet Acentra Health is now taking over six to eight weeks to authorize these ITPs for coverage.* These delays are creating real instability in a system thousands of Minnesota families depend upon.

We recognize the circumstances surrounding this moment. Minnesota has confronted serious concerns about fraud and misuse of public resources, and those concerns demand action. We support strong oversight, rigorous standards, and meaningful accountability.

In fact, the TEFRA EIDBI program is already highly regulated. We providers and families worked over twenty years to develop the many safeguards in this program. It is more highly regulated than just about every other state Medicaid program.

But protecting Medicaid cannot come at the expense of the people Medicaid exists to serve.

When an ITP is not authorized on time, providers face an untenable choice: Either continue providing medically necessary treatment without timely reimbursement and shoulder the financial burden, or suspend services until authorization is received.

Neither outcome is acceptable. Continuing care places mounting financial pressure on providers that must still pay clinicians, operate treatment centers, and sustain the infrastructure required to serve families. Suspending care disrupts a child's progress, destabilizes family routines, and interrupts treatment that has already been determined to be medically necessary.

Across Minnesota, providers have worked to preserve continuity of care for as long as responsibly possible.

But commitment should not be mistaken for limitless capacity.

These are services that we have already paid the staff to deliver. We are now waiting for the state to authorize coverage for payment. In most cases, these are services that the state has already authorized for coverage in the previous six months, and now requires re-authorization for the next six months. No organization can indefinitely finance Medicaid services while waiting for the state's authorization process to catch up. As delays stretch from a seven-day expectation to more than two months, the consequences compound. Jobs are put at risk. Treatment capacity is strained. Minnesota's specialized autism workforce is destabilized. And a provider network that has taken decades to build becomes harder to sustain.

We're helping people with autism.

Contact: Daniel L. Pollock – dipollock@locklaw.com – 612-889-4649 – atamn.org

ATAM, The Autism Treatment Association of Minnesota: Action Behavior Centers, Anod Inc., Autism Matters, Behavior Frontiers, Behavioral Dimensions, Bridge Autism Clinic, Caravel Autism Health, Foundations Autism Center, Holland Center, JtC AUSM, Kids Discovery Center, Lazarus Project, Lovaas Institute Midwest, Minnesota Autism Center Midwest, Minnesota Behavioral Specialists, Momentum Behavior Services, Nolan's Place, Northway Academy, Partners in Excellence, Solutions Behavioral Healthcare Professionals, The READY Clinic / SWWC, The Rochester Center for Children, and Village Wellness Center

We are asking Minnesota's elected leaders to act now.

Hold the Department of Human Services accountable for restoring timely authorization of EIDBI treatment plans. Require DHS to hold its contracted medical review agent, Acentra Health, accountable for meeting the established seven-day review timeline. Provide transparency about the size of the backlog and the timeline for resolving it. And protect continuity of care while the system is brought back within its required timelines. Other states have already done so when faced with similar backlogs.

There should be no false choice between protecting public dollars and protecting access to medically necessary treatment. Minnesota can combat fraud, hold providers to rigorous standards, and operate an authorization system that works. **We should expect all three.**

As CEOs and/or Owners we understand that accountability comes with leadership. When systems fail, leaders are responsible for correcting them and protecting the people who depend upon them. We are asking the State of Minnesota to meet that same standard now.

Our organizations remain steadfast in our commitment to the children and families we serve, and we stand ready to work constructively toward an immediate solution. But providers cannot indefinitely absorb the consequences of an authorization system that is not functioning as it should.

Medically necessary autism treatment must not be held hostage to administrative delay. Minnesota must act now to ensure the system works for the people it was created to serve.

Signed,

Bryan Davey, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA
Vice President of Public Policy & Advocacy
Action Behavior Centers

Alex Mitchell
Executive Officer
Anod, Inc.

Kelsey Adair, MS, BCBA, LBA, Owner
Michelle Bothun, MA, LMFT, QSP, Owner
Mandy Knight, Owner
Autism Services of Minnesota

Jay O'Neill
President, Compliance Officer
Behavioral Dimensions, Inc.

Amber Bruns, EdD, BCBA, LBA-MN
Clinical Director
Behavioral Health Services at The READY Clinic

Carleton B. Crutchfield, MPA, JD
Co Founder and CEO
Bryan Yanagita, M.A., BCBA, LBA, QSP
Chief Clinical Officer
The Bridge Autism Clinic

Alysha Brumfield, BCBA, MBA
Executive Director
Catalyst Behavior Solutions

Amal Mohumed, MBA, CSM
Executive Director
Comfort Therapeutic Services

Kelly Berth, M.S., BCBA, LBA
Clinical Director and Owner
Connections Behavioral Services

Kris Wainright-Tadych, CEO
Ashley Johnson, COO
Jessica Sauter, CCO
Foundations Autism Center

Katie Thormodsgaard
Director of Therapy Services
Franklin Center

Alina Meisner, MA, LMFT
Clinical Services, Quality & Operations,
Sr. Director
Health Innovations of America

Marietta Hemming, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA
Clinic Director
The Holland Center

Joicy Thomas, MSW, LICSW, EMDR
Managing Director
JTC

Michelle Voigt*Director*

Kaleidoscope Professional Services

Elizabeth Lood, MS, BCBA, LBA*Executive Director*

The Lazarus Project

Eric V. Larsson, PhD, LP, BCBA-D, LBA*Executive Director, Clinical Services*

Lovaas Institute

Christine Bent*CEO*

MAC Midwest

Amy Esler, PhD, LP*Section Head, Autism and**Neurodevelopment Clinic*

Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain

Meghan Manty, M.S., LPCC, QSP*CEO, Owner*

Midwest Autism

Paige Berland, MA, LPCC, LBA*Clinical Supervisor, President of Clinical
Operations***Camille Heyman***President of Program Operations*

Minnesota Behavioral Specialists

Jill Fellows, OTR/L*Founder, Business Manager*

Nolan's Place

Shani Kedrowski, MBA*State Director*

Northway Academy

Dr. Odessa Luna BCBA-D, LBA-MN*Faculty Supervisor and Compliance Official***Charryse Luckey, Ph.D, L.P., BCBA-D, LBA***Director - Autism Discovery Center*

Offerdahl Autism Discovery Center

Amber Crowley, FACHE*Chief Operations Officer*

Partners in Excellence

Jon Sailer*Director*

Rochester Center for Children

Abdirizak Abdi

Village Wellness Center