



408414

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
04/06/2009	.	
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	.	

The Committee on Health Regulation (Bennett) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Section 381.986, Florida Statutes, is created to
read:

381.986 Screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis for autism
spectrum disorder.—

(1) If the parent or legal guardian of a minor who is an
eligible individual, as defined in s. 627.6686 or s. 641.31098,
believes that the minor exhibits symptoms of autism spectrum



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12 disorder, the parent or legal guardian may report his or her
13 observation to a physician licensed in this state. The physician
14 shall immediately refer the minor to an appropriate specialist
15 for screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis for autism spectrum
16 disorder. This section does not apply to a physician providing
17 care under s. 395.1041.

18 (2) As used in this section, the term "appropriate
19 specialist" means a qualified professional who is experienced in
20 the evaluation of autism spectrum disorder, who has training in
21 validated diagnostic tools, and includes, but is not limited to,
22 a person who is licensed in this state as:

23 (a) A psychologist;

24 (b) A psychiatrist;

25 (c) A neurologist;

26 (d) A developmental or behavioral pediatrician and who
27 specializes in child neurology;

28 (e) A speech language pathologist; or

29 (f) A professional whose licensure is deemed appropriate by
30 the Children's Medical Services Early Steps Program within the
31 Department of Health.

32 Section 2. Subsection (11) is added to section 627.6686,
33 Florida Statutes, to read:

34 627.6686 Coverage for individuals with autism spectrum
35 disorder required; exception.—

36 (11) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the
37 contrary, an insurer shall provide direct patient access for
38 screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis for autism spectrum
39 disorder to an appropriate specialist, as defined in s. 381.986.
40 As used in this subsection, the term "direct patient access"



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41 means the ability of a subscriber or insured to obtain services
42 from an in-network provider without a referral or other
43 authorization before receiving services. The insurer's policy
44 shall, pursuant to this subsection, provide a minimum of three
45 visits per policy year for the screening, evaluation of, or
46 diagnosis for autism spectrum disorder.

47 Section 3. Subsection (10) is added to section 641.31098,
48 Florida Statutes, to read:

49 641.31098 Coverage for individuals with developmental
50 disabilities.-

51 (10) Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the
52 contrary, a health maintenance organization shall provide direct
53 patient access for screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis for
54 autism spectrum disorder to an appropriate specialist, as
55 defined in s. 381.986. As used in this subsection, the term
56 "direct patient access" means the ability of a subscriber or
57 insured to obtain services from an in-network provider without a
58 referral or other authorization before receiving services. The
59 health maintenance organization's contract shall, pursuant to
60 this subsection, provide a minimum of three visits per policy
61 year for the screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis for autism
62 spectrum disorder.

63 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.

64
65 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

66 And the title is amended as follows:

67 Delete everything before the enacting clause
68 and insert:

69 A bill to be entitled



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70 An act relating to autism; creating s. 381.986, F.S.;
71 requiring that a physician refer a minor to an
72 appropriate specialist for screening for autism
73 spectrum disorder under certain circumstances;
74 defining the term "appropriate apECIALIST"; amending
75 ss. 627.6686 and 641.31098, F.S.; requiring certain
76 insurers and health maintenance organizations to
77 provide direct patient access to an appropriate
78 specialist for screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis
79 for autism spectrum disorder; defining the term
80 "direct patient access"; requiring the insurer's
81 policy or the health maintenance organization's
82 contract to provide a minimum number of visits per
83 year for the screening, evaluation of, or diagnosis
84 for autism spectrum disorder; providing an effective
85 date.