

Senate Bill No. 1050

Passed the Senate August 22, 2012

Secretary of the Senate

Passed the Assembly August 21, 2012

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2012, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to add and repeal Section 4643.4 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to autism and autism spectrum disorders.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1050, Alquist. Autism: telehealth task force.

Existing law requires the State Department of Developmental Services to develop evaluation and diagnostic procedures for the diagnosis of autism disorder and other autistic spectrum disorders, as specified. Existing law also requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene, with input from the University of California, the California State University, the department, and other appropriate entities, an advisory committee to develop recommendations identifying the means by which public and nonpublic schools, including charter schools, can better serve pupils with autism spectrum disorders and their parents.

This bill would, until January 1, 2019, require the department to establish an autism telehealth task force and identify a lead administrator to be responsible for the activities and work of the task force. The task force would be required to provide the department with recommendations in the area of telehealth services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders, as specified.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Telehealth is an effective mode of delivering health services to underserved and isolated populations.

(b) Studies have shown that telehealth can be a valuable tool for increasing the effectiveness of treatment and improving access for children and young adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). At times, patients with ASDs are not diagnosed or are not treated due to the lack of adequate health services.

(c) The use and implementation of telehealth technology may have the potential to revolutionize the care available to individuals

with ASDs in a health care climate characterized by limited resources by providing all of the following:

(1) Greater knowledge and information about ASDs to consumers and their families.

(2) Improved access to underserved communities and populations.

(3) Enhanced case management.

(4) Increased coordination of care for this complex disorder.

(d) The utilization of telehealth-delivered services can help achieve the goals of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that include better care, improved health outcomes, and reduced per capita cost of care.

(e) By deploying telehealth to better care for children with ASDs, the state can make larger improvements in its health and social service systems.

SEC. 2. Section 4643.4 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

4643.4. (a) The State Department of Developmental Services shall establish an autism telehealth task force.

(b) The department shall identify a public or nonprofit entity to act as lead administrator to be responsible for all of the activities and work of the task force, including identifying financial support for the task force's costs. The public or nonprofit entity shall have knowledge or experience in all of the following:

(1) Telehealth.

(2) Community-based clinical trials relating to telehealth.

(3) Providing services to underserved populations.

(c) The lead administrator shall appoint, with the approval of the department, members of the task force who have knowledge or experience that includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(1) The early identification of children with autism spectrum disorders.

(2) The treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

(3) Early intervention services provided by regional centers, school districts, and community-based services.

(4) Technology or telehealth in providing services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

(5) Continuity of care for individuals with autism spectrum disorders, and, in particular, for those transitioning from developmental centers to community placement.

(6) Other areas deemed necessary by the department.

(d) Members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except for appropriate travel, food, and lodging reimbursement.

(e) (1) The task force shall provide technical assistance and recommendations in the area of telehealth services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders to the department.

(2) (A) As part of the recommendations made pursuant to paragraph (1), the task force may provide recommendations to the department regarding the implementation of one or more demonstration sites that promote or evaluate any of the following:

(i) The use of telehealth and technology to assist and improve the delivery of services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders by regional centers.

(ii) The use of telehealth to provide seamless integration and coordination of services among regional centers, school districts, community-based resources, and health care providers and organizations.

(iii) The use of telehealth to improve the access of services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders to underserved individuals and to reduce the digital divide in underserved communities.

(B) Any recommendations regarding demonstration sites shall include information about potential sources of funding that may be available to the department to support the demonstration site.

(f) No moneys from the General Fund shall be appropriated for this project. The establishment and responsibilities of the task force shall be contingent upon identification of appropriate and adequate funding sources.

(g) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

Approved _____, 2012

Governor