

## **ABSTRACT OF FINAL REPORT**

### **PROJECT IDENTIFICATION**

Project Title: Project CASCADE

Grant Number: H6MMC22737

Project Director: John Miles

Grantee Organization: Autism Society of Colorado

Address: 550 S Wadsworth Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80226

Phone Number: (720) 214-0794

E-mail Address: [support@autismcolorado.org](mailto:support@autismcolorado.org)

Web Address: <http://autismcolorado.info/>

Project Period: September 1, 2011 – August 31, 2014

Total Amount of Grant Awarded: \$843,092

Project Officer Name: Deidre Washington-Jones

Grants Management Specialist Name: Mary Worrell

**PURPOSE OF PROJECT:** Project CASCADE sought to improve access to comprehensive, coordinated health care and related services for Colorado children and youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities (DD) by implementing recommendations of the Colorado Autism Commissions' 10 year strategic plan that aligned with the MCHB six core outcomes for children/youth with special health care needs (CSHCN).

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** Goal 1: Improve family-professional partnerships via objectives (OBJs.) to create informative resources for families and professionals; To train families and service providers to work together; To offer culturally/linguistically appropriate resources. Goal 2: Improve medical home access via Objs.: To provide ASD/DD information for Medical Home teams; Implement Medical Home principles (family-centered care, easy access, easy referrals) in local communities. Goal 3: Increase access to adequate health insurance and financing of services, via Objs.: To create present evidence for ASD treatment options; To analyze state and federal policy implementation to inform Colorado Division of Insurance and consumers. Goal 4: Increase early and continuous screening for detection, diagnosis and treatment for ASD/DD, via Objs.: To support developmental screening in pediatric and family medicine practices statewide; To integrate ASD/DD tracking (Screening to Evaluation to Intervention) into Health Department electronic IT system with feedback to community practices; To train pediatricians to score, interpret and communicate ASD/DD screening results to families for better parent participation and follow-up in care of their children; To develop/disseminate follow-up resources. Goal 5: To improve organization of community services for easy use by families, via Obj. To disseminate a Care Coordination Plan and Toolkit to increase knowledge of and access to adequate care coordination. Goal 6: Improve transition to adults systems of care/activities, via Objs.: To create a transition awareness campaign; To train pediatric/adult providers for effective transitions.

**METHODOLOGY:** Lead agency, Autism Society of Colorado (ASC), contracted with Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE), Colorado ABCD, and JFK Partners (U. of CO LEND), to implement the project workplan. ASC conducted community information sessions and trainings (e.g., relevant policies implications, family leadership, private insurance and ASD, etc.) for families and self-advocates, and worked with CO state agencies to address

ASD services in state implementation of health care reform. ABCD conducted pediatric/family practice visits and CME sessions throughout the state to support adoption of standardized screening tools, as well as Referral Roadmap work with more than 20 communities health departments or early childhood councils to promote ASD/DD screening and referral for evaluation and to promote medical homes. CDPHE explored data systems for tracking referral outcomes and worked with JFK Partners on medical homes for children with ASD/DD. JFK Partners conducted extensive live/webinar trainings for local health departments' CSHCN staff and for other providers of screening, evaluation and intervention services. Strong family participation permeated the partnership. Project resources for systems change were leveraged by extensive collaboration with and support of the successor to the Autism Commission, "CO CANDO" (CO Collaborative for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Options), which included broad membership of families, self-advocates, state agencies, LEND ASD/DD faculty experts, advocacy groups and members of the public.

EVALUATION: Qualitative & quantitative data for process & outcome assessments monitored activities & measured attainment of grant objectives. Documentary evidence captured qualitative outcomes such as systems changes (e.g., policies changed), supplementing measurable changes (e.g., growth in practices using standardized developmental screening tools).

RESULTS/OUTCOMES/LESSONS LEARNED: 92% of pediatricians use standardized developmental screening tool and 32% use M-CHAT; Key systems changes achieved: expanded eligibility for DD services to include persons with impaired adaptive functioning and higher IQs; improved access to educational supports for students with ASD/DD independent of medical diagnosis. Study of dually diagnosed (ASD/DD with behavioral issues) informed State agencies of crucial gaps in care. No success in tying ASD/DD into state IDS (IT) system, although the EMR identified as the appropriate vehicle for tracking henceforth.

PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS: More than 40 substantive products were created by the CASCADE team with their partners, including fact sheets, reports, guidelines, algorithms and PowerPoints, etc. Products were disseminated for use, primarily in state, via website postings, webinars, and presentation on quarterly statewide meetings.

DISSEMINATION/UTILIZATION OF RESULTS: Key results were reported to State agencies, and, to ASD/DD stakeholders, in presentations of delivered in quarterly statewide meetings. Results were reported annually to MCHB, Insight Policy, and in annual grantee meetings.

SUSTAINABILITY: Each of the four core partners will continue major areas of emphasis in the project: ASC in family education & partnerships with professional, monitoring policy implementation; ABCD in screening and referral; CDPHE, dayta system exploration, medical homes; and, JFK Partners, training professionals, informing research, and also will support of CO CANDO and the project website.

SUMMARY OF DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY: Grant funds paid personnel, consulting costs and operating expenses. No equipment, nor property/supplies, with FMV  $\geq$  of \$5,000 remain.

KEYWORDS: autism, developmental disabilities, Colorado, early intervention, EPSDT, family centered care, family centered services, insurance, transition planning, dual diagnosis