



Illinois Department of Insurance

PAT QUINN
Governor

MICHAEL T. McRAITH
Director

TO: ALL COMPANIES WRITING POLICIES SUBJECT TO PUBLIC ACT 95-1005

FROM: MICHAEL T. MCRAITH *MTM*

DATE: MARCH 30, 2011

RE: COMPANY BULLETIN 2011-04
AUTISM BENEFIT MANDATE – ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION

Section 356z.14 of the Illinois Insurance Code (the “Autism Mandate”) requires all individual and group health insurance policies and HMO contracts to provide coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism for children under 21. 215 ILCS 5/356z.14. The law established an annual benefit of \$36,000 for the mandated coverage, and required the Director to adjust the annual benefit for inflation each year using the Medical Care Component of the United States Department of Labor Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (“CPI-U”).

In 2009, the annual average Medical Care Component of the CPI-U for the Midwest Census Region increased by 3.5% compared to 2008.¹ As a result, the annual benefit required by the Autism Mandate for 2010 increased from \$36,000 to \$37,260. In 2010, the annual average Medical Care Component of the CPI-U for the Midwest Census Region increased by 3.4% compared to 2009.² As a result, the annual benefit required by the Autism Mandate for 2011 has been increased from \$37,260 to \$38,527.

The yearly adjustment to the Autism Mandate benefit takes effect on January 1 of each year and applies to insurance policies and HMO contracts that are issued, renewed, or modified on or after January 1 of each year.

Benefits provided under the Autism Mandate are in addition to benefits required by the Illinois Serious Mental Illness Mandate (215 ILCS 5/370c). Group insurance policies and group HMO contracts that cover more than 50 employees are also subject to federal mental health parity laws, which in general prohibit annual and lifetime dollar limits, financial requirements, and treatment limitations for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse disorders that are more restrictive than those that have general application to medical and surgical benefits. Policies and contracts subject to the federal mental health parity laws must ensure that benefits provided for the diagnosis and treatment of autism comply with all applicable parity requirements, regardless of any minimum or maximum benefits or limits established by Illinois law.

Questions regarding the yearly adjustments to the Autism Mandate benefit should be directed to Dave Grant at Dave.Grant@illinois.gov.

¹ See Table 11A of the Annual Average Indexes, 2009 (“Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: Regions, by expenditure category and commodity and service group”), available at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpid09av.pdf>.

² See Table 11A of the Annual Average Indexes, 2010 (“Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: Regions, by expenditure category and commodity and service group”), available at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpid10av.pdf>.