

HEADs UP Act

Healthcare Extension and Accessibility for Developmentally Disabled and Underserved Population

The HEADs UP Act will be introduced in early March by Reps. Seth Moulton (D-MA-06) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) and directs the Health Services and Resources Administration to designate people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) as a Medically Underserved Population under programs authorized in the Public Health Services Act. In doing so, it will help achieve better health outcomes for the entire I/DD population by improving access to behavioral, medical and dental care for people with I/DD, including those with autism.

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), including those with autism, experience poorer health, shortened life expectancies and lack access to even the most basic forms of care when compared to the non-disabled population. According to a recent study by Autism Speaks researchers, **children with autism are nearly four times as likely to have unmet health care needs when compared to children without disabilities**. They also experience poverty and infant mortality at higher rates than the non-disabled population. Unfortunately, individuals with autism often lack access to even basic primary care services because providers are not properly trained to treat them.

The designation as a special medically underserved population would make many more government programs available to serving people with I/DD. These programs include, but are not limited to, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Community Health Centers and Workforce Development and Training Programs such as the national Health Service Corps Scholarship. It would **provide people with I/DD access to new primary care and specialist services, incentivize new research and authorize more favorable reimbursement rates for providers of this population**.

The HEADs UP Act helps people with I/DD receive the care they deserve which can lead to improved health outcomes, increased longevity and enhanced quality of life.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please cosponsor the HEADs UP Act

Contact the offices of Reps. Seth Moulton or Brian Fitzpatrick

For Rep. Moulton, contact John Chambliss (john.chambliss@mail.house.gov)

For Rep. Fitzpatrick, contact Jacqueline Collie (jacqueline.collie@mail.house.gov)

We look forward to working with you to improve supports for people with autism.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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