

National Academies Report Endorses Autism Community's Recommendations to Help Military Families Access Critical Care

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) has released its long-awaited. The findings endorse applied behavior analysis (ABA) as a medically necessary autism treatment. It recommends that the Department of Defense make ABA a TRICARE basic benefit.



TRICARE's Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) is a provisional program that authorizes ABA services on a temporary, experimental basis, rather than as a permanent medical benefit.

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The report includes five critical recommendations:

- Discontinue the ACD and continue ABA as a basic TRICARE benefit.
- Eliminate mandatory assessments that don't support individualized treatment planning.
- Reduce administrative barriers that limit access to ABA services.
- Align TRICARE's ABA coverage with current best clinical practices.
- Establish an independent advisory council to guide the transition and ensure stakeholder input.

“This is an excellent report,” said Lorri Unumb, CEO of the Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP), the leading trade association for organizations providing autism services. “It reflects NASEM's thoughtful interrogation of research and testimony from the autism community, confirming what we've long known: military families affected by autism need and deserve high-quality ABA.”

NASEM heard testimony from a wide range of researchers, practitioners, and others, including:

- Somer Bishop, University of California, San Francisco.
- Kristi Cabiao, Mission Alpha Advocacy.
- Karen Driscoll, child advocate.
- Erick Dubuque, Autism Commission on Quality.
- Thomas W. Frazier, John Carroll University.
- Gina Green, consultant.
- Michelle A. Linn, Alpine Autism Center (CASP member)
- Molli Luke, Behavior Analyst Certification Board.
- Hannah Rue, LEARN Behavioral (CASP member)
- Britt Sims, Integrated Behavior Solutions (CASP member)
- Jocelyn Thompson, LEARN Behavioral (CASP member)
- Dan Unumb, Autism Legal Resource Center.
- Chanti Fritzsching Waters, ABS Kids (CASP member)
- Rebecca Womack, RAW Consulting Solutions



Lorri Unumb, Chief Executive Officer, CASP

“The Department of Defense has everything it needs to make ABA a permanent benefit for military families, thanks to the hard work of NASEM and the autism community,” said Unumb. “Implementing NASEM’s recommendations is the right thing for families and will strengthen America’s military readiness.”

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Founded in 2016, the Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP) is a non-profit trade association of over 430 autism service provider organizations from all 50 states and multiple countries. It supports members by cultivating, sharing, and advocating for best practices in autism services. From developing clinical practice guidelines for ABA to educating legislators about good policy, CASP works every day to ensure autistic people receive quality care.

Learn more at casproviders.org.

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