256.35A Iowa autism council.

1. An Iowa autism council is created to act in an advisory capacity to the state in developing and implementing a comprehensive, coordinated system to provide appropriate diagnostic, intervention, and support services for children with autism and to meet the unique needs of adults with autism.

2. *a.* The council shall consist of thirteen voting members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate. The majority of the voting members shall be individuals with autism or members of their families. Additionally, each of the following shall be represented among the voting members:

(1) Autism diagnostic and research specialists.

(2) Individuals with recognized expertise in utilizing best practices for diagnosis, intervention, education, and support services for individuals with autism.

(3) Individuals providing residential services for individuals with autism.

(4) Mental health professionals with background or expertise in a pertinent mental health field such as psychiatry, psychology, or behavioral health.

(5) Private insurers.

(6) Teachers and representatives of area education agencies.

b. In addition, representatives of the department of education, the division of vocational rehabilitation of the department of education, the department of public health, the department of human services, the Iowa developmental disabilities council, the division of insurance of the department of commerce, and the state board of regents shall serve as ex officio members of the advisory council. Ex officio members shall work together in a collaborative manner to serve as a resource to the advisory council. The council may also form workgroups as necessary to address specific issues within the technical purview of individual members.

c. Voting members shall serve three-year terms beginning and ending as provided in section 69.19, and appointments shall comply with sections 69.16 and 69.16A. Vacancies on the council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve only for the unexpired portion of the term. Public members shall receive reimbursement for actual expenses incurred while serving in their official capacity and may also be eligible to receive compensation as provided in section 7E.6.

d. The council shall elect a chairperson from its voting members annually. A majority of the voting members of the council shall constitute a quorum.

e. The department shall convene and provide administrative support to the council.

3. The council shall focus its efforts on addressing the unmet needs of individuals with autism at various levels of severity and their families. The council shall address all of the following:

a. Early identification by medical professionals of autism, including education and training of health care and mental health care professionals and the use of best practice guidelines.

b. Appropriate early and intensive early intervention services with access to models of training.

c. Integration and coordination of the medical community, community educators, childhood educators, health care providers, and community-based services into a seamless support system for individuals and their families.

d. General and special education support services.

e. In-home support services for families requiring behavioral and other supports.

f. Training for educators, parents, siblings, and other family members.

g. Enhancing of community agency responsiveness to the living, learning, and employment needs of adults with autism and provision of services including but not limited to respite services, crisis intervention, employment assistance, case management, and long-term care options.

h. Financing options including but not limited to medical assistance waivers and private health insurance coverage.

i. Data collection.

4. The council shall meet quarterly. The council shall submit a report to the governor

and the general assembly, annually by December 15, identifying the needs and making recommendations for improving and enhancing the lives of individuals with autism and their families.

5. For the purposes of this section, *"autism"* means a spectrum disorder that includes at various levels of severity, autism, Asperger's disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified, Rett's syndrome, and childhood disintegrative disorder.

2008 Acts, ch 1187, §126; 2012 Acts, ch 1023, §34
Confirmation, see §2.32