



Ohio Children's Hospital Association

Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

For immediate release

December 21, 2012

Steve Allen, M.D., Chairman, Ohio Children's Hospital Association Board of Directors, and CEO, Nationwide Children's Hospital, today issued the following statement in response to Ohio Governor Kasich's announcement to expand autism coverage to include state employee health insurance, private health insurance and insurance sold through the future federally managed health insurance exchange.

We applaud the governor's decision to ensure children with autism will have access to coverage for the treatment, therapies and services they need. More than 50,000 Ohio families are affected by autismⁱ, and today's announcement is surely a relief to those families who are struggling with affordability and access to care for their children.

Providing coverage of early intervention and comprehensive services for children affected by autism will ensure that families have access to the care they need to better manage their children's health, improve outcomes and help them live healthy, productive lives.

We are particularly pleased that the governor will include autism services as part of the Essential Health Benefit package that will be part of the federally managed health insurance exchange in Ohio.

As the governor said, Ohio is doing the right thing today, as Ohio joins 32 other states in guaranteeing the provision of autism services in health insurance.

Ohio's children's hospitals work to save, protect and enhance the lives of Ohio's children, providing the highest quality of care to every child – including those with autism – regardless of their family's ability to pay. We look forward to working with Ohio lawmakers and Governor Kasich's administration to continue to identify ways in which Ohio can ensure that we have a strong, healthy workforce in the future through stable, predictable funding mechanisms for children's health care in our state.

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More information about the Ohio Children's Hospital Association is available at ohiochildrenshospitals.org.
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ⁱ Autism Society of Ohio, <http://www.autismohio.org/>