OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The enclosed semiannual report provides the current status of the Department of Defense Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration, as requested by explanatory material to section 732 of the Joint Explanatory Statement, accompanying the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009. Specifically, this report includes: 1) the number of autistic children served; 2) the type and frequency of services provided; 3) the number of available providers by region; and 4) whether reimbursement levels are sufficient to retain qualified providers in TRICARE networks. The report also includes demonstration project cost information for Fiscal Year 2012.

Current results indicate participation by beneficiaries and partners continue to increase. We believe these increases reflect conditions where reimbursement rates are acceptable to providers. This is allowing for increased capacity to meet the needs of enrolled TRICARE beneficiaries.

While this report specifically discusses the Autism Services Demonstration, the Department is actively implementing coverage of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) as a TRICARE Basic Program medical benefit in compliance with a July 26, 2012, federal court order in *Berge v. United States*. TRICARE has begun processing claims for ABA under the Basic Program and will continue to process claims for additional services authorized under the Autism Services Demonstration pending the outcome of ongoing litigation.

Thank you for your interest in the health and well-being of our Service members, veterans, and their families. A similar letter is being sent to the chairmen and ranking members of the other congressional defense committees.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Jim Webb
Chairman
Subcommittee on Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Acting Principal Deputy

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As stated

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member

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PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The enclosed semiannual report provides the current status of the Department of Defense Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration, as requested by explanatory material to section 732 of the Joint Explanatory Statement, accompanying the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009. Specifically, this report includes: 1) the number of autistic children served; 2) the type and frequency of services provided; 3) the number of available providers by region; and 4) whether reimbursement levels are sufficient to retain qualified providers in TRICARE networks. The report also includes demonstration project cost information for Fiscal Year 2012.

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Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member

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4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

OCT 25 2012

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
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The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member

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PERSONNEL AND READINESS

OCT 25 2012

The Honorable Joe Wilson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

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Sincerely,

Jessica L. Wright
Acting Principal Deputy

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Susan A. Davis
Ranking Member

Report to Congress

The Department of Defense Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration

July 2012 Semiannual Report to Congress

Requested by: The Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying S. 3001, Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2009 the Proposal

Preparation of this study/report cost the Department of Defense a total of approximately $8,100 for the 2012 Fiscal Year.
RefID: 1-D622C73

STATUS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ENHANCED ACCESS TO AUTISM SERVICES DEMONSTRATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This semiannual report is in response to explanatory material to section 732 in the Joint Explanatory Statement to accompany S. 3001, the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. The Joint Explanatory Statement requested the Secretary provide an initial report to Congress not later than 90 days after the enactment of S. 3001 and semiannually thereafter on the status of implementation of the TRICARE Autism Services Demonstration.

INTRODUCTION

In response to section 717 of the John Warner NDAA for FY 2007, the Department of Defense implemented the Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration ("Demonstration") on March 15, 2008. This project tests the feasibility of expanding the pool of providers of autism treatment services to include those not meeting the strict guidelines of the current departmental regulations.

To increase access and test the advisability and feasibility of authorizing TRICARE reimbursement for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services delivered by non-professional providers, the Department developed and implemented the Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration. The key feature of the Demonstration is providing Educational Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (EIA) by a two-tiered delivery model:

- Individuals certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) at the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) or BACB Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA) level as "supervisors" who have a contractual relationship with TRICARE, either individually or as an employee of a TRICARE-authorized provider; and

- Non-certified individuals, for example, "Tutors," as the "hands-on" providers of ABA under the supervision of a BCBA or BCaBA.

The Demonstration was initially implemented on March 15, 2008. Administrative requirements of the Demonstration were substantially revised and implemented on September 10, 2008. In addition, section 732 of the NDAA for FY 2009 increased the limit of government liability for certain benefits, including Special Education, from $2,500 per month to $36,000 per year. That change was implemented on April 1, 2009.

RESULTS

The following information for the period September 30, 2011, through March 31, 2012, is based on contractors' reports and claims processed under the Demonstration.

Region	Number of Beneficiaries Enrolled in Demonstration	Providers		Hours of EIA Services Provided[1] (000s)	Cost of EIA Services Provided[2] (Dollars in Millions)
		Supervisors	Tutors		
North	968	400	1364	136	7.6
South	839	630	1999	134	7.0
West	1976	851	5838	316	17
TOTALS	**3783**	**1881**	**9201**	**586**	**31.6**
Increase over Same Period in FY 2011 (1 Oct 2011-31 March 2012)	34.6%	52.1%	47.5%	37.5%	37.0%

CONCLUSION

As evidenced in our previous reports and the above information, participation by beneficiaries and providers continues to increase steadily. We believe these increases reflect conditions where reimbursement rates are acceptable to providers. This is allowing for increased capacity to meet the needs of enrolled TRICARE beneficiaries.

[1] Does not include: ASD-related diagnostic services provided outside the Demonstration, development of EIA Progress Reports and Updated Behavior Plans, and Supervisors' meetings with beneficiaries' primary caregivers.

[2] Claims data were processed from the Medical Data Repository on January 2, 2012.