

DSD eList announcement

Date: Nov. 11, 2025

To: Families, providers and policymakers

From: DHS Disability Services Division

Purpose: To help address common questions related to the recent autism announcement at the federal level and outline how DHS is reviewing potential impacts on state policy, coverage and family supports.

Contact: [Submit questions through the Minnesota Autism Resource Portal](#)

What federal autism announcements mean for policy, coverage and supports in Minnesota

Federal officials recently made statements on the prevalence of autism, maternal health and treatment research. These statements might raise questions for families, providers and policymakers. The Department of Human Services, in collaboration with the Department of Health, is reviewing the implications for state policy, coverage and family supports. Below are some common questions and current responses based on the best available evidence and guidance.

Prevalence findings

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network says autism affects 1 in 31 U.S. children born in 2014.

How does Minnesota compare?

[Minnesota prevalence rates](#) are consistent with [national findings](#), with 1 in 28 8-year-olds identified with autism or 3.6% of that age group. Rates can vary by community and access to diagnostic services. Minnesota continues to work to reduce diagnosis disparities across racial, cultural and geographic groups.

Why are prevalence rates increasing?

Much of the increase reflects improvements in awareness, screening and earlier diagnosis, though environmental and genetic factors are still being studied. The increases show the importance of ensuring our systems are prepared to meet growing needs for evaluation, early intervention and ongoing supports.

Medication and healthcare

What if I have questions about medication or other health-care-related topics?

Anyone with medication or health-care-related questions should talk with their health care provider. It is important to have a care provider you trust.

For more information, see the state Health Department's [Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\) webpage](#).

Autism Data Science Initiative (ADSI)

What is the new Autism Data Science Initiative and how does it affect Minnesota?

The ADSI is a national research effort to study genetic, biological and environmental factors related to autism. Minnesota has strong research and health care partners who may contribute to or benefit from these efforts.

Will Minnesota families be able to participate?

Participation opportunities will be determined at the federal and research-institution levels. DHS will help share information about opportunities that might benefit Minnesota families if they become available. For more information, see [ADSI – National Institutes of Health](#).

Broader policy and services

What steps is DHS taking to prepare for the rising number of children identified with autism?

DHS is committed to strengthening access to early intervention, [evidence-based](#) therapies such as EIDBI and community supports. We are also working to reduce disparities in access to care, support workforce training, increase program integrity and partner with families to ensure services meet their needs.

How will DHS ensure equity in assessment and treatment efforts?

Equity is a top priority. We are focused on making sure all communities — including rural families, BIPOC families and immigrant communities — have access to timely assessment, accurate diagnosis and culturally responsive services.

More information

Visit the [Minnesota Autism Resource Portal](#) for the latest news and resources.

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