Treatment Intervention Advisory Committee Review and Determination

Date: July 25, 2014

To: DHS/DLTC

From: Wisconsin Department of Health Services Autism and other Developmental Disabilities, Treatment Intervention Advisory Committee: Lana Collet-Klingenberg, Ph.D. (chairperson)

RE: Determination of Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) as a proven and effective treatment for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and/or other developmental disabilities

☐ This is an initial review

☒ This is a re-review. The initial review was November 14, 2012.

Section One: Literature Review and Determination

Please find below a statement of our determination as to whether or not the committee views Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) as a proven and effective treatment for children with autism spectrum disorder and/or other developmental disabilities. In subsequent sections you will find documentation of our review process including a description of the proposed treatment, a synopsis of review findings, a listing of the literature considered, and the treatment review evidence checklist. In reviewing treatments presented to us by DHS/DLTC, we implement a review process that carefully and fully considers all available information regarding a proposed treatment. Our determination is limited to a statement regarding how established a practice is in regard to quality research. We do not make funding decisions.

In the case of Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) please refer to the attached reference listing that details the reviewed research (expansion of previously reviewed research). The committee's conclusions regarding Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) include:

- This re-review is expanded by one article—a theoretical piece that adds nothing to the sparse empirical literature reported previously. I have provided a summary of those previously reviewed materials to give context for this re-review' determination.

In sum, it is the decision of the committee that Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) receive a Level 4 – Insufficient Evidence (Experimental Treatment) rating.

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Section Two: Rationale for Focus on Research Specific to Comprehensive Treatment Packages (CTP) or Models

In the professional literature, there are two classifications of interventions for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (National Research Council, 2001; Odom et al., 2003; Rogers & Vismara, 2008):

(a) **Focused intervention techniques** are individual practices or strategies (such as positive reinforcement) designed to produce a specific behavioral or developmental outcome, and

(b) **Comprehensive treatment models** are "packages" or programs that consist of a set of practices or multiple techniques designed to achieve a broader learning or developmental impact.

To determine whether a treatment package is proven and effective, the Treatment Intervention Advisory Committee (TIAC) will adopt the following perspective as recommended by Odom et al. (2010):

The individual, focused intervention techniques that make up a comprehensive treatment model may be evidence-based. The research supporting the effectiveness of separate, individual components, however, does *not* constitute an evaluation of the comprehensive treatment model or "package." The TIAC will consider and review only research that has evaluated the efficacy of implementing the comprehensive treatment *as a package*. Such packages are most often identifiable in the literature by a consistently used name or label.

National Research Council. (2001). *Educating children with autism.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Odom, S. L., Brown, W. H., Frey, T., Karusu, N., Smith-Carter, L., & Strain, P. (2003) Evidence-based practices for young children with autism: Evidence from single-subject research design. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 18,* 176-181.

Odom, S. L., Boyd, B. A., Hall, L. J., & Hume, K. (2010). Evaluation of comprehensive treatment models for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 40,* 425-436.

Rogers, S., & Vismara, L. (2008). Evidence-based comprehensive treatments for early autism. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 37,* 8-38.

Section Three: DLTC-TIAC Treatment Review Evidence Checklist

Name of Treatment**:** Relationship Development Intervention (RDI)

Level 1- Well Established or Strong Evidence (DHS 107 - Proven & Effective Treatment))

- ☐ Other authoritative bodies that have conducted extensive literature reviews of related treatments (e.g., National Standards Project, National Professional Development Center) have approved of or rated the treatment package as having a strong evidence base; authorities are in agreement about the level of evidence.
- ☐ There exist ample high quality studies that demonstrate experimental control and favorable outcomes of treatment package
  - Minimum of two group studies or five single subject studies or a combination of the two
  - Studies were conducted across at least two independent research groups
  - Studies were published in peer reviewed journals
- ☐ There is a published procedures manual for the treatment, or treatment implementation is clearly defined (i.e., replicable) within the studies
- ☐ Participants (i.e., N) are clearly identified as individuals with autism spectrum disorders or developmental disabilities

Notes: At this level, include ages of participants and disabilities identified in body of research

Level 2 – Established or Moderate Evidence (DHS 107 - Proven & Effective Treatment)

- ☐ Other authoritative bodies that have conducted extensive literature reviews of related treatments (e.g., National Standards Project, NPDC) have approved of or rated the treatment package as having at least a minimal evidence base; authorities may not be in agreement about the level of evidence
- ☐ There exist at least two high quality studies that demonstrate experimental control and favorable outcomes of treatment package
  - Minimum of one group study or two single subject studies or a combination of the two
  - Studies were conducted by someone other than the creator/provider of the treatment
  - Studies were published in peer reviewed journals
- ☐ Participants (i.e., N) are clearly identified as individuals with autism spectrum disorders or developmental disabilities

Notes: At this level, include ages of participants and disabilities identified in body of research

Level 3 – Emerging Evidence (DHS 107 – Promising as a Proven & Effective Treatment)

☐ Other authoritative bodies that have conducted extensive literature reviews of related treatments (e.g., National Standards Project, NPDC) have recognized the treatment package as having an emerging evidence base; authorities may not be in agreement about the level of evidence

☐ There exists at least one high quality study that demonstrates experimental control and favorable outcomes of treatment package
- May be one group study or single subject study
- Study was conducted by someone other than the creator/provider of the treatment
- Study was published in peer reviewed journal

☐ Participants (i.e., N) are clearly identified as individuals with autism spectrum disorders or developmental disabilities

Notes: At this level, include ages of participants and disabilities identified in body of research

Level 4 – Insufficient Evidence (Experimental Treatment)

☒ Other authoritative bodies that have conducted extensive literature reviews of related treatments (e.g., National Standards Project, NPDC) have not recognized the treatment package as having an emerging evidence base; authorities are in agreement about the level of evidence

☒ There is not at least one high quality study that demonstrates experimental control and favorable outcomes of treatment package
- Study was conducted by the creator/provider of the treatment
- Study was not published in a peer reviewed journal

☒ Participants (i.e., N) are not clearly identified as individuals with autism spectrum disorders or developmental disabilities

Notes:

*The participants were often ASD but the assessments (see attached document summarizing previous reviews) generally speaking were not properly used.

Level 5 – Untested (Experimental Treatment) &/or Potentially Harmful

☐ Other authoritative bodies that have conducted extensive literature reviews of related treatments (e.g., National Standards Project, NPDC) have not recognized the treatment package as having an emerging evidence base; authorities are in agreement about the level of evidence.

☐ There are no published studies supporting the proposed treatment package

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☐ There exists evidence that the treatment package is potentially harmful

- Authoritative bodies have expressed concern regarding safety/outcomes
- Professional bodies (i.e., organizations or certifying bodies) have created statements regarding safety/outcomes

Notes: At this level, please specify if the treatment is reported to be potentially harmful, providing documentation

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Date: July 25, 2014

Committee Members Completing Initial Review of Research Base: Roger Bass, Jeff Tiger

Committee Decision on Level of Evidence to Suggest the Proposed Treatment is Proven and Effective: Level 4 – Insufficient Evidence (Experimental Treatment)

References Supporting Identification of Evidence Levels:

Chambless, D.L., Hollon, S.D. (1998). Defining empirically supported therapies. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 66(1)* 7-18.

Chorpita, B.F. (2003). The frontier of evidence---based practice. In A.E. Kazdin & J.R. Weisz (Eds.). *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* (pp. 42---59). New York: The Guilford Press.

Odom, S. L., Collet-Klingenberg, L., Rogers, S. J., & Hatton, D. (2010). Evidence-based practices in interventions for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders. *Preventing School Failure, 54(4)*, 275-282.

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References reviewed

Empirical studies were sought in these references and within their references:

Gutstein, Steven E. *Autism/Aspergers: Solving the Relationship Puzzle.* Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, 2000. Accessed September 20, 2012.

Gustein, Steven E. "Relationship Develop Intervention: Developing a Treatment Program to Address the Unique Social and Emotional Deficits in Autism Spectrum Disorders." *Autism Spectrum Quarterly* (Winter 2005): 8-12. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://colotraining....Quarterly11.pdf.

"Relationship Development Intervention." Autism Speaks, Inc. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.autismspe...ntervention-rdi.

Boll, Michael. "Episode 32: Dr. Steve Gutstein Creator of RDI, Relationship Development Intervention." AutismPodcast. August 6, 2006. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.autismpod...n&submit=Search.

Gutstein, Steven E., Hannah R. Gutstein, and Carlotta Bird. *My Baby can Dance: Stories of Autism, Asperger's and Success through the Relationship Development Intervention (RDI®) Program,* Houston, TX: Connections Center Publishing. Accessed September 20, 2012.

"Relationship Development Intervention® (RDI®)." Raising Children Network. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://raisingchildr...les/rdi_th.html.

"Autism Therapies: ABA, RDI, and Sensory Therapies." WebMD. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.webmd.com...nsory-therapies.

Boll, Michael. "Episode 42: RDI Consultant Maisie Soetantyo." AutismPodcast. October 5, 2006. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.autismpod...n&submit=Search.

"Consultant Training Program." RDIconnect. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.rdiconnec...ng-Program.aspx.

National Standards Project. Massachusetts: National Autism Center, 2009. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.nationala... Report_FIN.pdf.

Gutstein, Steven E., A.F. Burgess, K. Montfort. "Evaluation of the Relationship Development Intervention Program. Abstract. *Autism 11*, no. 5. (September 2007): 397-411. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://www.ncbi.nlm....pubmed/17942454.

Gutstein S. (In Press). "Preliminary Evaluation of Relationship Development Intervention." Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. Accessed September 20, 2012. http://faculty.caldw... manuscript.pdf.

"Find a Consultant." RDIconnect. Accessed September, 20, 2012. https://www.rdiconne...Consultant.aspx.

The handbook *Relationship Development Intervention with Young Children Social and Emotional Development Activities for Asperger Syndrome, Autism, PDD and NLD*Steven E. Gutstein and Rachelle K. Sheely describe numerous RDI techniques but cite not one study. The basic premise is that creating friendship is critical and that the procedures described within do that.

The Texas Guide for Effective Teaching (http://www.txautism.net/uploads/target/RDI.pdf) indicates that only one study looked at RDI—the one Zane critiqued for ASAT (see above).