

Recently, the American Psychiatric Association released some preliminary draft changes to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-V) that may affect those diagnosed on the autism spectrum. There are several significant changes proposed that are now posted for public view, including: Asperger's Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) would both be subsumed into the Autistic Disorder category, meaning that they would no longer be considered a separate diagnosis from autism, and the inclusion of potential co-morbidities with ADHD and other medical conditions. Comments regarding the proposed changes should be submitted to: [www.DSM5.org](http://www.DSM5.org).

The health care reform bill that the House passed on Sunday includes the following provisions that will affect families with children with autism:

- Insurers would be prohibited from excluding coverage based on pre-existing conditions;
- Insurers would be prevented from selectively refusing to renew coverage;
- Insurers would no longer be able to charge people different premiums based on their health status, gender or occupation;
- A standardized annual out-of-pocket spending limit would be established so that no family would face bankruptcy due to medical expenses;
- Annual and lifetime benefit caps would be prohibited;
- Mental health would be covered;
- “Habilitative” and “maintenance services” would be covered; and
- Coverage of “behavioral health treatments” such as ABA therapy, would be required