

## **NEWS**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's  
hosts new autism support group**

*—First meeting to take place Sunday, October 11—*

*—Guest speaker will discuss health insurance and the new autism insurance reform law—*

**NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (September 30, 2009):** The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital will host a new support group for families of children with autism—Restoring Hope in Autism Family Support Group. The group will meet the second Sunday of each month, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the Sister Marie de Pazzi Conference Center at Saint Peter's University Hospital, 254 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick. Child care will be available during the meetings. The group will be led by Barbie Zimmerman-Bier, M.D., chief of Developmental Pediatrics at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's, and Genevieve Kumapley, Pharm.D., clinical pharmacist at Saint Peter's and founder of the group.

The first meeting will take place Sunday, October 11. Guest speaker Jodi F. Bouer, Esq., an insurance lawyer and advocate for children, will explain the New Jersey Autism Insurance Reform Bill and what it means for families. The new law, which was signed by Gov. Jon Corzine

on August 13, requires insurers to cover treatments, including speech, occupational and behavioral therapies, for children up to age 21 who have autism or other developmental disabilities. New Jersey has the highest rate of autism in the country, with one in 94 children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, and is the 15<sup>th</sup> state to enact such insurance reform.

Ms. Bouer will give parents practical tips on:

- What the new insurance bill really means and how you can use it to obtain the maximum amount of health insurance coverage for your child
- How to use the New Jersey Mental Health Parity Law to obtain the maximum amount of health insurance coverage for your child
- How to obtain health insurance coverage for your child, even though New Jersey state law may not apply to your insurance policy

Jodi Bouer specializes in helping families of children with disabilities and medical conditions obtain health insurance coverage. She has worked as an insurance litigator for top New Jersey law firms and insurance companies for more than 10 years and has taught insurance law at Seton Hall Law School. She became interested in counseling and representing insureds after successfully helping a family member and a close friend with health insurance coverage issues.

Restoring Hope in Autism Family Support Group is sponsored by My GOAL Inc. (My Gateway to Overcoming Autism in Life Inc.), a non-profit organization that helps families with limited economic resources access therapies, programs and information about autism spectrum disorders. For more information, please call 877-886-9462, or visit [www.mygoalautism.org](http://www.mygoalautism.org).

### ***The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital***

*The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital is a state-designated acute-care facility that treats more children than any other hospital in central New Jersey and ranks second in the state for number of children treated (based on 2008 inpatient statistics compiled by New Solutions, Inc., a market research firm). It is an affiliate of The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), ranked the best children's hospital in the nation for many of its specialties by U.S. News & World Report (2009). The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's provides families with access to a full range of pediatric specialties, including cardiology through the affiliation with CHOP, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, a dedicated Pediatric Emergency Department, inpatient acute care, intensive care, the Neonatal and Pediatric Transport Teams, neurology, hematology-oncology, radiology, nephrology, surgery, anesthesiology, infectious disease medicine, otolaryngology, physical therapy and audiology. Other programs and services include the Institute for Genetic Medicine, which counsels, tests and treats children with rare inborn errors of metabolism; the Craniofacial and Neurosurgical Center, which offers corrective surgery and multidisciplinary support for children born with cleft lip, cleft palate and other facial deformities; the Dorothy B. Hersh Regional Child Protection Center, a state-designated regional Diagnostic and Treatment Center for child abuse prevention; For KEEPS, a partial hospitalization program for children, ages five through 17, who suffer from emotional and behavioral difficulties; and the Center for Diabetes Self-Management and Education, which diagnosis and treats children with diabetes and other endocrine disorders.*

*Saint Peter's University Hospital, part of the Saint Peter's Healthcare System, is a 478-bed acute-care hospital sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen. Saint Peter's is a sponsor of residency program in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, and internal medicine and is an academic affiliate of Drexel University College of Medicine. Saint Peter's also sponsors residency programs in radiology and orthopedic surgery in affiliation with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. The hospital is fully accredited by The Joint Commission, is recognized as a Magnet hospital for nursing excellence by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and is recognized by the American Diabetes Association in all areas of diabetes education. It is a clinical research affiliate of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey. Saint Peter's is located at 254 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. For more information about Saint Peter's facilities and services, please visit [www.saintpetersuh.com](http://www.saintpetersuh.com) or call 732-745-8600.*

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