

A response to the 2020 DOD Report to Congress on the Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration

In its June 2020 annual [report](#) to Congress on the Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration (ACD), the Department of Defense (DOD) continues to question the efficacy of applied behavior analysis (ABA) for TRICARE beneficiaries with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This uncertainty appears to stem mostly from their continued use of a single composite score from the Pervasive Developmental Disabilities Behavior Inventory (PDDBI) to measure the effectiveness of ABA interventions.

The PDDBI composite score alone is not a measure of the effectiveness of treatments for children with ASD in terms of response to intervention. Numerous advocacy organizations and experts in the field (including input from the author of the PDDBI) have attempted to clarify the proper use of the PDDBI with DOD and Congress. The Council of Autism Service Providers continues to collaborate with stakeholders and the TRICARE community to advocate for effective implementation of the ACD and valid and reliable assessments of response to treatment for military children with ASD.