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## **Health Foundation Supports Pilot Project for Autistic Children**

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. , November 20, 2014** – University of Rochester’s Division of Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at UR Medicine’s Golisano Children’s Hospital at Strong was awarded a three-year grant of up to \$424,775 for a pilot program to improve the behavioral health outcomes of children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and co-morbid behavior disorders in a cost-effective manner.

ASD is a lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder for which there is no cure. It affects one percent of children, or about 2,600 children between the ages of five and 18 in the nine counties in the Greater Rochester area. Children with this disorder display a wide range of behavioral health conditions, from impairments in social communication and interaction, to disruptive behavior and repetitive motions.

“With this funding, we will be able to determine if we can improve the behavioral health outcomes for at least 75% of the 110 children recruited to participate in the program in a cost-effective manner, which is essential to long-term sustainability of the program,” said Caroline I. Magyar, Ph.D., Associate Professor and grant recipient.

Parents often do not understand what behavioral treatments might be best for their child or how to access such care. Schools and primary care physicians may also be unsure where to send a child for treatment.

“The Division of Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at the Golisano Children’s Hospital will pilot an evidence-based treatment approach designed to address the behavioral health care needs of children and adolescents with ASD to improve their lives,” says John Urban, president and CEO of the Health Foundation. “They have a strong track record in working with families, providers and schools and have a great deal of success working with children with ASD.”

Essie Calhoun-McDavid, Greater Rochester Health Foundation board chair, adds, “Families are looking for help. We are pleased to fund a pilot program for ASD children that has been effective in other geographic areas. We see this as a sound investment in the future health of ASD children and their families.”

**About Greater Rochester Health Foundation:**

The mission of Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to improve the health status of residents of the Greater Rochester community, including people whose unique health care needs have not been met because of race, ethnicity, or income. For more information, please visit [www.thegrhf.org](http://www.thegrhf.org).