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# FLORIDA MEDICAID

*A Division of the Agency for Health Care Administration*

## Florida Medicaid Health Care Alert

November 4, 2019

**Provider Type(s): 39**

### **Behavior Analysis Services – Multidisciplinary Team and Comprehensive Diagnostic Evaluation Updates**

**This alert provides information to behavior analysis providers in Regions 4 and 7**

#### **Multidisciplinary Team Updates**

The Agency directed eQHealth Solutions, Inc. to implement a multidisciplinary team approach to reviewing prior authorization requests for behavior analysis services in Regions 4 and 7, as a pilot, beginning July 1, 2019. As a part of the MDT review process, all requests for more than 20 hours per week must undergo a telephone or face-to-face staffing to ensure the child is receiving all necessary services and supports. While this approach has proven valuable in obtaining additional information about the needs of the child, the Agency has identified opportunities to streamline and expedite the process, while continuing to engage providers and parents.

Effective immediately, the Agency will limit the circumstances in which an MDT meeting is needed, as follows:

- If the request for BA services can be approved after completion of the desk review, the provider will be notified electronically via eQSuites, and the care coordinator will contact the parent/legal guardian to notify of the final decision.
- If the request for BA services cannot be approved because information is missing, there are inconsistencies in the record, or the request does not meet medical necessity (in whole or

part), eQHealth will schedule a peer- to-peer telephonic review with the provider in lieu of an MDT meeting. If the concerns can be resolved during the peer-to-peer review, the case will be approved.

- If the request still cannot be approved after the peer-to-peer review, eQHealth will call the parent to discuss the decision and follow with the standard denial letter with appeal rights.
- If eQHealth believes the child may benefit from additional services or supports, a care coordinator will contact the parent to discuss how to initiate those services. BA services will not be delayed while this is occurring.

eQHealth will only initiate MDT meetings in cases where convening treatment providers may be of benefit in maximizing the treatment outcomes, particularly where progress has stalled or regressed over several review periods.

It is of chief importance to us to solicit input from parents prior to making a service authorization decision, so eQHealth will continue to contact the child's parent/guardian prior to completing the review to collect information and to discuss any additional needs that may have arisen.

### **Comprehensive Diagnostic Evaluation**

Effective immediately, in order to initiate BA services while a child is waiting for his/her scheduled appointment for the comprehensive diagnostic evaluation (CDE), eQHealth will accept the following documentation, in lieu of the CDE:

- Children 0 – 36 months of age: Early Intervention Services evaluation/Individual and Family Support Plan
- Children older than 36 months of age:
  - Individual Education Assessment (IEP) or school district assessment for IEP
  - Neurological evaluation
  - History and physical from a licensed physician documenting behaviors and evaluation conducted to ascertain diagnosis

These alternative assessments do **not** replace the requirements for a CDE. If parents are having difficulty finding a provider to perform the CDE, their child's health plan is available to help. Parents can also contact the Agency at 877-254-1055 and we will work with them or their child's plan to find a provider.

For additional information on the CDE requirements, please refer to the Agency behavior analysis [website](#).

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**QUESTIONS?** [BAComments@ahca.myflorida.com](mailto:BAComments@ahca.myflorida.com)

**COMPLAINTS OR ISSUES? ON LINE** <http://ahca.myflorida.com/Medicaid/complaints/> | **CALL** 1-877-254-1055

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