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Bulletin Number:	16-003
Issued:	February 22, 2016
Effective:	March 1, 2016
Subject:	Autism Benefit – Staff Qualifications
Provision of Service Affected:	Autism Benefit for Children Under 21 Years of Age
Approved codes:	Staff Qualifications Chart
Guidance Usage:	

The purpose of this Bulletin is to provide information on the staff qualifications for the coverage of Behavioral Health Treatment (BHT) services, including Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), for children under 21 years of age with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

All children, including children with ASD, must receive Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services that are designed to assure that children receive early detection and preventive care, in addition to medically necessary treatment services to correct or ameliorate any physical or behavioral conditions, so that health problems are averted or diagnosed and treated as early as possible.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) approved the state plan amendment on 12/23/2015. The approval included ASD /ABA services that will be covered for children under 21 years of age under the EPSDT benefit.

Background:

Accurate and early diagnosis of ASD is critical in ensuring appropriate intervention and positive outcomes. The comprehensive diagnostic evaluation must be performed before the child receives BHT services. The comprehensive diagnostic evaluation is a neurodevelopmental review of cognitive, behavioral, emotional, adaptive, and social functioning, and should include validated evaluation tools. Based on the evaluation, the practitioner determines the child's diagnosis, recommends general ASD treatment

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interventions, and refers the child for a behavior assessment. The provider who conducts the behavior assessment recommends more specific ASD treatment interventions. These evaluations are performed by a qualified licensed practitioner working within their scope of practice and who is qualified and experienced in diagnosing ASD. A qualified licensed practitioner includes: a physician with a specialty in psychiatry or neurology; a physician with a sub-specialty in developmental pediatrics, developmental-behavioral pediatrics or a related discipline; a physician with a specialty in pediatrics or other appropriate specialty with training, experience or expertise in ASD and/or behavioral health; a psychologist; an advanced practice registered nurse with training, experience, or expertise in ASD and/or behavioral health; a physician assistant with training, experience, or expertise in ASD and/or behavioral health; or a clinical social worker, working within their scope of practice, and is qualified and experienced in diagnosing ASD.

The provider qualifications for the services provided under the Autism Benefit can be reviewed in detail using the MSA Bulletin 15-59.

The ASD Benefit is now including the use of tele-practice services. All tele-practice providers must be prior authorized by the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority **and** Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Tele-practice is the use of telecommunications and information technologies for the exchange of encrypted patient data for the provision of services. Tele-practice must be obtained through real-time interaction between the child's physical location (patient site) and the provider's physical location (provider site). Tele-practice services are provided to patients through hardwire or internet connection. It is the expectation that providers, facilitators, and staff involved in tele-practice are qualified and trained in the use of equipment and software prior to servicing patients. Qualified providers of behavioral health services include Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBA), Licensed Psychologists (LP), Limited Licensed Psychologists (LLP), and Qualified Behavioral Health Professionals (QBHP). Providers of tele-practice services must be currently certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB), be a QBHP enrolled in a BACB degree program, be licensed in the State of Michigan as a fully licensed psychologist, or be a practitioner who holds a limited license and is under the direction of a fully licensed psychologist. Providers must ensure the privacy of the child and secure any information shared via tele-practice.

Definition:

See attached Provider Qualification Grid (January 2016) and MSA Bulletin 15-59.

Codes:

N/A

For additional information please submit your questions to procedure.coding@dwmha.com

References: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, MSA Bulletin 15-59

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS / RESPONSIBILITIES

Medicaid Autism BHT/ABA Services Qualified Providers

Qualified Provider	Education and Training Requirements	License/Certification	Services Provided
Board Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral (BCBA-D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of a doctoral degree from an accredited institution conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a course sequence approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). 	Current certification as a BCBA-D through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral assessment Behavioral intervention Behavioral observation and direction
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of a master's degree from an accredited institution conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a course sequence approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). 	Current certification as a BCBA through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral assessment Behavioral intervention Behavioral observation and direction
Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution conferred in a degree program in which the candidate completed a course sequence approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). Works under the supervision of the BCBA/BCBA-D. 	Current certification as a BCaBA through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral assessment Behavioral intervention Behavioral observation and direction

Qualified Provider	Education and Training Requirements	License/Certification	• Services Provided
<p>Licensed Psychologist (LP)</p> <p>Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of one year experience in treating children with ASD based on the principles of behavior analysis. • Minimum doctoral degree from an accredited institution. Works within their scope of practice and has extensive knowledge and training in behavior analysis. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical considerations. 2. Definitions & characteristics and principles, processes & concepts of behavior. 3. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies. 4. Experimental evaluation of interventions. 5. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data. 6. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports. • Works in consultation with the BCBA/BCBA-D to discuss the caseload, progress, and treatment of the child with ASD. 	<p>Doctoral level psychologist licensed by the State of Michigan. Must complete all coursework and experience requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral assessment • Behavioral intervention • Behavioral observation and direction
<p>Limited Licensed Psychologist (LLP)</p> <p>Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of one year experience in treating children with ASD based on the principles of behavior analysis. • Minimum of a master's or doctoral degree from an accredited institution. Works within their scope of practice and has extensive knowledge and training in behavior analysis. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical considerations. 2. Definitions & characteristics and principles, processes & concepts of behavior. 3. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies. 4. Experimental evaluation of interventions. 5. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data. 6. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports. • Works in consultation with the BCBA/BCBA-D to discuss the progress and treatment of the child with ASD. 	<p>Doctoral or master's level psychologist licensed by the State of Michigan. Must complete all coursework and Experience requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral assessment • Behavioral intervention • Behavioral observation and direction

Qualified Provider	Education and Training Requirements	License/Certification	Services Provided
<p>Qualified Behavioral Health Professional (QBHP)</p> <p><i>Must be certified as a BCBA by September 30, 2020</i></p>	<p>Must meet at least one of the following state requirements:</p> <p>A. Must be a physician or licensed practitioner with specialized training and one year of experience in the examination, evaluation, and treatment of children with ASD.</p> <p>B. Minimum of a master's degree in a mental health-related field from an accredited institution with specialized training and one year of experience in the examination, evaluation, and treatment of children with ASD. Works within their scope of practice and has extensive knowledge and training in behavior analysis. Extensive knowledge is defined as having received documented coursework at the graduate level from an accredited university in at least three of the six following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethical considerations. 2. Definitions & characteristics and principles, processes & concepts of behavior. 3. Behavioral assessment and selecting interventions outcomes and strategies. 4. Experimental evaluation of interventions. 5. Measurement of behavior and developing and interpreting behavioral data. 6. Behavioral change procedures and systems supports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And works under the supervision of the BCBA/BCBA-D. 	<p>A license or certification is not required, but is optional.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral assessment • Behavioral intervention • Behavioral observation and direction

Qualified Provider	Education and Training Requirements	License/Certification	Services Provided
Behavior Technician (BT) Formerly ABA Aide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will receive 40 hours of training in accordance with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) Task List as conducted by a professional experienced in BHT services (BCBA, BCaBA, LP, LLP, and/or QBHP), but is not required to register as an RBT with the BACB upon completion in order to furnish services. • Must be at least 18 years of age • Must be able to practice universal precautions to protect against the transmission of communicable disease • Must be able to communicate expressively and receptively in order to follow individual plan requirements and beneficiary-specific emergency procedure, and to report on activities performed • Must be in good standing with the law (i.e., not a fugitive from justice, a convicted felon who is either under jurisdiction or whose felony relates to the kind of duty to be performed, or an illegal alien) • Must be able to perform and be certified in basic first aid procedures • Must be trained in the IPOS/behavioral plan of care utilizing the person-centered planning process. • Works under the supervision of the qualified provider who is able to perform behavioral observation and direction (i.e. BCBA, BCBA-D, BCaBA, LP, LLP or QBHP) and who provides oversight of the behavioral plan of care, with minimally one hour of clinical observation and direction for every 10 hours of direct treatment. 	A license or certification is not required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral intervention