Medicaid Benefit for

Adaptive Behavior Services

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

• 1:64 children (ages 0 to 21) in Georgia have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
  o 1.1 million children in GA on Medicaid younger than 21 years of age
    • Estimated 17,000 children with autism enrolled in GA Medicaid

• Children with ASD require varying levels of support (DSM-V criteria)
  o Level 1 – Requiring Support
  o Level 2 – Requiring Substantial Support
  o Level 3 – Requiring Very Substantial Support

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Treatment for ASD

- **Adaptive Behavior Services (ABS)**
  - Behavioral therapy -- foundation for ASD treatment
  - Social skills development
  - Not currently available through Medicaid in GA

- **Non-behavioral therapies**
  - Speech-language therapy
  - Occupational therapy
  - Physical therapy

- Medical and psychiatric treatment for associated conditions

- Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
ABS Providers

- Behavior Analysis is the scientific study of principles of learning and behavior. Practitioners of behavior analysis are qualified to provide services to address organizational functioning, skill deficits (e.g., communication, adaptive behavior), and problem behavior (e.g., aggression, self-injurious behavior), for examples.
- Behavioral Analysts are Certified nationally by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.

https://bacb.com/about-behavior-analysis/

BCBA-D: Board Certified Behavior Analyst – Doctoral Level
A doctoral level practitioner qualified to diagnose and provide direct services and supervise BCBAbs.

BCBA: Board Certified Behavior Analyst
Masters/graduate level independent practitioners who provide behavior-analytic services. May supervise the work of Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, and others who implement behavior-analytic interventions.

BCaBA: Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst
Bachelor’s level practitioner, must be supervised by BCBA/BCBA-D; can supervise Registered Behavior Technicians.

Registered Behavior Technicians
Paraprofessional who implements the service plan under supervision of Certified Behavior Analyst.

● Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
ABS Providers
Capacity limitations based on already employed workforce

Behavioral analysts
- BCBA-D: doctoral level
- BCBA: masters/graduate level
- BCaBA: bachelor’s level; requires supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Statewide Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCBA-D</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCaBA</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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Additional 323 Registered Behavior Technicians

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Benefit Coverage & Design

Inputs
- CMS Guidance
- Advocate and provider subject matter experts
- Autism Plan for Georgia
- Governor’s Budget Recommendation and Legislative Appropriations

Guiding Principles
- Leverage existing infrastructure
- Open ABS procedure codes
- Phase in multiple access points
- Invest in early intervention
- Expand qualified provider network through enrollment of BCBAs

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Benefit Coverage Framework
Coding and Pricing

• Code Selection
  o Other states
  o CMS proposed codes
  o Additions based on subject matter expert input

• Pricing
  o Model existing CMS-approved behavioral health reimbursement structure (Medicaid Rehabilitation Option)
  o Tiered rates based on provider credentials and other criteria

• Telemedicine

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Current State

- Developmental Screening*: Ages 0 to 3
- Referral for Diagnosis: Ages +/- 5
- Non-Behavioral Therapies: Ages 0 to 21

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative

*Autism-specific screening currently limited by lack of reimbursement
Towards a Full Range of Services

 Ages 0 through 20

ASD-specific Screening → Diagnosis → Comprehensive Assessment

ASD Behavior Therapies

ASD Skills Building

ASD Group/Family Skills and Supports

Access to non-behavioral services continues

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Implementation Phases/Timeline

**Current State**
- Limited Screening, Referral, Therapies

**Phase 1: July 1, 2017**
- Pediatricians receive separate reimbursement for autism screening
  - Psychologists provide/ supervise provision of autism services
  - Babies Can’t Wait Special Instructors provide therapies – Ages 0-3

**Phase 2: October 1, 2017**
- Early Intervention Service Coordinators
  - Public Health Centers provide screening & autism services
  - CSBs provide autism services
  - CIS Licensed Therapists provide autism services

**Phase 3: January 1, 2018**
- BCBAs provide autism services
- Local Education Agencies provide autism services (tent.)
- Crisis Support (Respite, Mobile, Stabilization)
- State refocuses to provider development

Recommendations of the multi-state agency autism collaborative
Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative

Non-Certified Practitioners may not supervise more than 3 staff at any time
## Tiered Reimbursement Levels

- **Level 1** – Physician, Psychiatrist
- **Level 2** – Psychologist, BCBA-D
- **Level 3** – BCBA
- **Level 4** – BCaBA or Master’s level Behavior Analyst without certification
- **Level 5** – Registered Behavioral Technician (RBT)

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*Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative*
Public Notice and State Plan Amendments

• Public Notice – ABS Coverage for Children and the Enrollment of BCBAs
  o September 14, 2017 Initial
  o Opportunity for Written Comment
  o October 12, 2017 Final

• CMS Approval
  o 90 Days from submission to approve

Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Communication and Engagement

• **Deploy Communication Plans**
  - Email blast
  - Letters and mailed “toolkits”
  - Symposium and conference representation
  - Teleconference (VICS)
  - Webinar

• **Staffing Infrastructure & Recruitment**
  - Advertise career announcements
  - Employ and/or contract ABS providers
  - Onboarding and system orientation

• **Establish seat on DCH Medical Care Advisory Committee for Autism Services Provider**

- Recommendations of the multi-agency state autism collaborative
Infrastructure Considerations

• Statewide, opening ABS procedure codes and incentivizing screening will:
  o Increase the demand for providers trained to diagnose ASD
  o Decrease the average age of diagnosis, increasing the need for early intervention providers
  o Increase demand for ABS
  o Increase the demand for intensive services, increasing wait times

• Infrastructure needs:
  o Additional trained providers
  o Increased capacity for intensive services
Proposed Solutions for Capacity Building

• Utilize telemedicine

• Infrastructure investment

• Expand to include crisis services
Questions?

Marcy Alter
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Email Subject: Autism Stakeholder Input