



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois Provider Manual

HMO Scope of Benefits Section

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company,
an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Benefit

ASD related services are in benefit when provided for the treatment of any autism or other related diagnoses. The extent of the inpatient and outpatient benefits available to any given member is defined by the members' benefit plan and state law.

Illinois Public Act (PA) 95 -1005 "Autism Spectrum Disorders" is effective Dec. 12, 2008, for new groups and upon renewal for existing groups. The law mandates coverage for members up to age 21. In addition, Pervasive Developmental Disorders are considered Serious Mental Illness (SMI) under Public Acts (PA) 094-0906 and PA 094-0921.

Interpretation

ASD includes, but may not be limited to the following diagnosis:

- Autistic disorder – childhood autism, infantile psychosis, Kanner's syndrome
- Childhood disintegrative disorder – Heller's syndrome\
- Other specified pervasive developmental disorders – Asperger syndrome, atypical childhood psychosis, borderline psychosis of childhood
- Pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) Childhood psychosis Not Otherwise Specified (NOS), childhood type schizophrenia NOS, schizophrenic syndrome of childhood NOS
- Rett's syndrome

Services are subject to medical necessity/maintenance, determination to be consistent with the manner used for other diseases or illnesses. Medically necessary as defined in the law means any care, treatment, intervention, service or item which will or is reasonably expected to do any of the following: prevent the onset of an illness, condition, injury, disease or disability, reduce or ameliorate the physical, mental or developmental effects of an illness, condition, injury, disease or disability, or assist to achieve or maintain maximum functional activity in performing daily activities.

In addition to benefits already in place, the Illinois Public Act (PA) 95 -1005 provided additional benefits for treatment of ASD, including Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), psychiatric, psychological, habilitative, rehabilitative and therapeutic care. From the effective date through the calendar year 2009, there was a maximum of \$36,000.00 additional benefit. In calendar year 2010, the maximum additional benefit was \$37,260.00. The limit was removed as of Jan. 1, 2011.

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a mixture of psychological and educational techniques that are utilized based upon the needs of each individual child. Applied Behavior Analysis is the use of behavioral methods to measure behavior, teach functional skills, and evaluate progress. ABA approaches such as discrete trial training (DTT), Pivotal Response Training (PRT), Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Self-Management, and a range of social skills training techniques are all critical in teaching children with autism. The intent is to increase skills in language, play and socialization while decreasing behaviors that interfere with learning. Many children with autism spectrum disorders have ritualistic or self-injurious behaviors and this treatment reduces or eliminates these behaviors.

The law defines it as "the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications using behavioral stimuli and consequences to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior, including the use of direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relations between environment and behavior."

ABA is predominantly performed in the home, although if these services are performed in a clinical facility they would remain the IPA risk. Services that may be included and covered under the benefit:

- An in-home ABA evaluation
- Training of family and tutor staff.
- Tutor staff hours, including documentation of all activities (15-40 hrs per week)
- Supervision hours by a therapist
- Clinic or team meetings with the family and tutor staff

The benefits for treatment of ASD were also affected by the passage of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 included the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 in the following manner:

- There was no coverage if the member self directs to an out of network provider for SMI Diagnosis except in emergency conditions.
- Previous day/visit limits no longer apply once the employer group implemented the ACT.
- There were 20 additional speech therapy visits after the contracted rehab benefit limit is reached for members with a ASD diagnosis
- Mental Health benefits could not be used for rehab visits.

Benefits were applied in the following manner:

- If a member was seeing a rehab therapist for rehab services, they use their contracted rehab limit, then the additional 20 speech therapy, then the additional Illinois Mandated Coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders annual benefit.
- If member is seeing a Mental Health specialist, for mental health services, they have unlimited services if they meet medical necessity criteria.
- If member is receiving “ABA therapy” by an ABA provider, it is deducted from the Illinois Mandated Coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders annual benefit only.

Paid by	Inpatient Professional charges	IPA
	Outpatient Professional charges (including ABA therapy)	IPA
	Inpatient and/or Outpatient Surgical Facility charges	HMO
	DME equipment charges (from a contracted provider)	HMO
	DME equipment charges (from a non-contracted provider)	IPA

Note: See related benefits interpretation on Mental Health Care (Inpatient), Mental Health Care (Outpatient), Dental and Durable Medical Equipment

Note: Effective July 1, 2011, for the State of Illinois members only, Durable Medical Equipment (DME) will be paid at 80% and the member will pay the remaining 20%. The employer group numbers affected are: H06800, H06801, H06802, H06803, B06800, B06801, B06802 and B06803

Note: Members who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder will have additional occupational, physical, and speech therapy for the treatment of ASD after the purchased benefits are exhausted by accessing the Illinois Mandated Coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders Annual Benefit.

Coverage Variation: Benefit Plan DIRPI:

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is normally excluded from the DIRPI benefit package, however, with the Illinois Mandated Coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Annual Benefits - DME would be covered for the DIRPI members for the treatment of ASD. The normal process regarding use of a contracted DME provider must be followed.

Note: Blue Precision HMOSM, BlueCare DirectSM have a separate contracted provider list for Durable Medical Equipment (DME) and Orthotic and Prosthetic devices.

Note All DME exception requests must be submitted prospectively to the CAU. See the instructions located on the Introduction page of this section of the Provider Manual. It is the intent of the CAU to respond to your requests within two business days.

Note: Effective July 1, 2013, Medicare Primary members must use a Medicare Contracted Provider to ensure coverage by Medicare. If submitting the claim to the HMO for coordination of benefits and the provider is not an HMO contracted provider – stamp the claim group approved and indicate in writing “Medicare Contracted Billing.”