

NOTE: These criteria apply to Capital BlueCross (CBC) and Independence Blue Cross (IBC) benefit plans.

Outpatient Behavior Specialist Consultation

Criteria for Authorization

The specified requirements for severity of need, and intensity and quality of service must be met to satisfy the criteria for outpatient behavior specialist consultation (BSC).

I. Admission - Severity of Need

Criteria A and B must be met to satisfy the criteria for severity of need.

There must be documentation of:

- A. An established DSM-IV diagnosis of a Pervasive Developmental Disorder.¹
- B. There is a need for intervention strategies that:
 - Diminish a patient's risk of harm to self or others (such as self-injury, aggression toward others, destruction of property, stereotyped/repetitive behaviors, elopement, severe disruptive behavior); *or*
 - Reduce maladaptive behaviors; or
 - Enhance communication; or
 - Improve social skills.

II. Admission – Intensity and Quality of Service

Criteria A, B, C and D must be met to satisfy the criteria for intensity and quality of service for Behavioral Specialist Consultation.

- A. Serves as a consultant to the Mobile Therapist and/or the Therapeutic Support Staff while maintaining some direct contact with the child and the family.
- B. Works with the family and other members of the treatment team such as school staff to design and direct a behavior modification plan that will meet the needs of the child and family.
- C. Provides assessment, program design and monitoring of treatment interventions rather than direct therapy.
- D. The number of service hours necessary to effectively address the challenging behaviors and a rationale for the number of hours is listed in the treatment plan.

Criteria for Continued Stay

III. Continued Stay

Criteria A or B **AND** C, D, E and F must be met to satisfy the criteria for continued stay:

- A. Patient continues to meet the criteria defined in above admission criteria.
- B. Appearance of new problems or symptoms that meet admission criteria.
- C. Reasonable expectation that the patient will benefit from the continuation of services.
- D. Measurable progress is documented or there is a reasonable expectation, based on the patient's clinical history and recent clinical experience that the current treatment is of benefit to the patient, such that withdrawal of treatment will result in the patient's decompensation or the recurrence of signs or symptoms that necessitated treatment.
- E. The treatment plan is updated on a frequent basis, and it addresses a maintenance plan for progress made and an updated plan for areas with no or minimal progress.
- F. Treatment is not making the symptoms persistently worse.

Exclusion Criteria

IV. Exclusion Criteria

BSC treatment will not be authorized for any of the following purposes:

- A. Speech therapy
- B. Occupational therapy
- C. Vocational rehabilitation
- D. Supportive respite care
- E. Recreational therapy
- F. Orientation and mobility.

Discharge Criteria

V. Discharge Criteria

Criteria A, B, C or D must be met to satisfy the criteria for discharge.

- A. No meaningful, measurable improvement has been documented in the patient's behavior(s) for a period of three months of optimal treatment, and there is no reasonable expectation that

termination of the current treatment would put the patient at risk for decompensation or the recurrence of signs and symptoms that necessitated treatment.

For changes to be “meaningful” they must be durable over time beyond the end of the actual treatment session, and generalizable outside of the treatment setting to the patient’s residence and to the larger community in which the patient resides.

- B. Treatment is making the symptoms persistently worse.
- C. The patient has achieved adequate stabilization of the challenging behavior and less-intensive modes of therapy are appropriate.
- D. The patient demonstrates an inability to maintain long-term gains from the proposed plan of treatment.

¹ The DSM-IV-TR, Fourth Edition, 2000 has established a category of Pervasive Developmental Disorders, which includes: Autistic Disorder, Asperger’s Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett’s Disorder, and Pervasive Development Disorder Not Otherwise Specified.