

Outpatient Applied Behavior Analysis - Fully Insured Maryland Regulated Accounts

Parameters for the treatment of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

The specified requirements for severity of need and intensity and quality of service must be met to satisfy the criteria for outpatient applied behavior analysis (ABA).

I. Admission - Severity of Need

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

There must be documentation of:

- A. An established DSM-5 diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- B. The provider's identification of the need for ABA services.
- C. The provider's prescription of specific treatment goals.
- D. The patient is medically stable and does not require the 24-hour medical/nursing monitoring or procedures provided in a hospital level of care.

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.

- A. ABA treatment must be prescribed by the treating physician who has identified the need for such treatment.
- B. The treatment plan is built upon individualized goals. The treatment plan must delineate both the frequency of baseline behaviors and the treatment development plan to address the behaviors. The treatment plan must include care coordination involving parents or caregiver, school, state disability programs and others as applicable. Treatment plan objectives are measurable, based upon clinical observation, outcome measurement assessment and tailored to the patient.
- C. Interventions emphasize generalization of skills and focus on the development of spontaneous social communication, adaptive skills, and appropriate behaviors.
- D. Interventions are consistent with ABA techniques.

Criteria for Continued Stay

III. Continued Stay

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

- A. Patient continues to meet the criteria defined in above admission criteria.
- B. New problems or symptoms that meet admission criteria have appeared.
- C. A reasonable expectation exists that the patient will benefit from the continuation of ABA services.
- D. The treatment plan including care coordination and consultation with the habilitative services provider is updated with documentation of benefits to the child and identification of new or continuing treatment goals on a yearly basis.
- E. 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 such benefit to the patient, that withdrawal of treatment will result in the patient's decompensation or the recurrence of signs or symptoms that necessitated treatment.
- F. Treatment is not making the symptoms persistently worse.
- G. All applicable elements in Admission-Intensity and Quality of Service Criteria are applied as related to assessment and treatment, if clinically relevant and appropriate.

Exclusion Criteria

IV. 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 at least six months of optimal treatment. In addition, the patient has reached their cognitive potential, 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.
 - 1) 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 within which the patient resides.

- B. Treatment is making the symptoms persistently worse.
- C. The patient has achieved adequate stabilization of the deficits and behaviors and can be managed in a less intensive environment e.g., inclusive school setting. Note that services will not be denied based on the treatment goal identifying the location of the services as the child's school. Services provided by early intervention or IDEA are not covered by insurance.
- D. The patient demonstrates an inability to maintain long-term gains from the proposed plan of treatment.