



Autism Services Update

New 1915(b)(4) Selective Contract for Autism Evaluation/Assessment

Effective upon approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Autism 1915(b)(4) selective contract for Comprehensive Evaluation will be administered by a sole, independent, state-contracted evaluation team selected through a competitive Request For Proposals (RFP) procurement process to ensure contractor independence, and statewide coverage and access.

The Autism Comprehensive Evaluation team will evaluate members to establish medical necessity eligibility for Autism State Plan Services and ongoing utilization review. With the exception of the pediatrician or child or adolescent psychiatrist on the team, evaluation team members cannot provide, nor be employed by an agency that provides, any of the recommended treatments, to ensure the contractor's independence. DPHHS anticipates a sole, independent state-contracted Comprehensive Evaluation team provider who is **required** to provide Autism Comprehensive Evaluation statewide will better ensure access for eligible Medicaid members to this critical component, especially in more rural regions of Montana, **including reservations**.

New Autism Medicaid State Plan

Effective January 1, 2016, the Department will amend the Preventive Services State Plan to comply with a CMS requirement that autism treatment be available as a Medicaid State Plan option. The new State Plan services are designed to provide Applied Behavior Analysis and evidence-based treatment for members up to age 21 who have an autism diagnosis or related condition. There will be two levels of services based on medical necessity criteria. Lower intensity members will be eligible for a treatment plan and implementation guidance to coach and educate guardians on implementing the treatment plan. Higher intensity members will be additionally eligible for intensive treatment that will be delivered face to face in the member's home or other community environments that are a part of the member's typical day.

Children's 1915(c) Autism Services Waiver Renewal

Effective January 1, 2017, the 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services Children's Autism Waiver (CAW) Waiver renewal proposes to phase out currently enrolled children. The Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) will not enroll any new applicants into the CAW.

The CAW is designed to provide early intervention based upon Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) training models to children age 15 months through 7 years of age to reduce or eliminate serious life-long disability. Services in this waiver are provided for three years or when the child turns eight years of age, whichever comes first. The CAW serves approximately 60 children per year. Seven agencies across the state provide program design and training, case management services, and other supports to enrolled children and their families.

DDP is currently working with CMS to finalize and approve a new Autism Treatment Services State Plan to provide services to those who meet the State Plan's eligibility criteria. Eligible children receiving Program Design and Monitoring through the CAW will transition to the Treatment Plan service component of the State Plan. Eligible children receiving Children's Autism Training through the CAW will transition to the State Plan's Implementation Guidance or Implementation Guidance and Intensive Treatment service components.