

# IHCP *bulletin*

INDIANA HEALTH COVERAGE PROGRAMS    BT201605    JANUARY 15, 2016

**Note:** This bulletin is obsolete. Please see [BT201606](#) for the corrected version of this bulletin.

## IHCP adds coverage of applied behavioral analysis therapy

Effective February 6, 2016, applied behavioral analysis (ABA) therapy is covered for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) for members 20 years of age and younger. ABA therapy is the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modification using behavioral stimuli and consequences to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior, including the direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relations between environment and behavior. Coverage applies to dates of service (DOS) on or after February 6, 2016, for all IHCP programs, subject to limitations established for certain benefit packages.

ABA therapy is available to members from the time of initial diagnosis through 20 years of age when it is medically necessary for the treatment of ASD. ABA therapy services require prior authorization (PA), subject to the criteria outlined in *Indiana Administrative Code 405 IAC 5-3*. PA requests must include, at a minimum, the following:

- Individual's treatment plan and supporting documentation
- Number of therapy hours being requested and supporting documentation
- Other documentation as requested to support medical necessity

Treatment plans must include measures and progress specific to language skills, communication skills, social skills, and adaptive functioning. The individual treatment plan must be specific to the individual's needs and include justification and supporting documentation for the number of hours requested. The number of hours must give consideration to the individual's age, school attendance requirements, and other daily activities. The treatment plan must include a clear schedule of planned services and must substantiate that all identified interventions are consistent with ABA techniques.

Generally, ABA therapy is limited to a period of 3 years and should not exceed 40 hours per week. Services beyond these limitations may be approved with PA when the services are medically necessary.

### Initial course of ABA therapy

An initial course of ABA therapy is subject to PA and is covered when **all** the following criteria are met:

- A diagnosis of ASD has been made by a qualified provider.
- The individual has completed a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation performed by a qualified provider.
- The individual is 20 years of age or younger.



- The goals of the intervention are appropriate for the individual's age and impairment.
- Documentation is provided that describes an individual treatment plan developed by a licensed or certified behavior analyst and includes **all** the following:
  - The identified behavioral, psychological, family, and medical concerns
  - Measurable short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals that are based on standardized assessments relative to age-expected norms and that address the behaviors and impairments for which the intervention is to be applied *Note: The goals should include baseline measurements, progress to date, and an anticipated time line for achievement, based on both the initial assessment and subsequent interim assessments over the duration of the intervention.*
  - Plans for parent/guardian training and school transition
  - Documentation that ABA services will be delivered by an appropriate provider licensed or certified as a behavior analyst (see [Provider requirements](#)).



Providers completing the comprehensive diagnostic evaluation must use a standardized assessment tool. Additionally, the evaluation must include a recommended treatment referral for ABA therapy that specifies the projected length of treatment. ABA therapy assessments and reassessments do not require PA.

PA for the initial course of therapy may be approved for up to six months. To continue providing ABA therapy beyond the initial authorized time frame, providers must submit a new PA request and receive approval.

### **Continued courses of ABA therapy**

Continuation of ABA therapy beyond the initial course is subject to PA and may be approved if **all** the following criteria are met:

- The individual has met the criteria for an initial course of ABA.
- The individual treatment plan is updated and submitted, as required.
- Developmental testing was conducted no later than two months after the initial course of ABA treatment began, to establish a baseline in the areas of social skills, communications skills, language skills, and adaptive functioning.
- The individual treatment plan includes age- and impairment-appropriate goals and measures of progress in social skills, communication skills, language skills, and adaptive functioning.
- For each goal in the individual treatment plan, the following is documented:
  - Progress to date
  - Anticipated time line for achievement of each goal based on both the initial assessment and subsequent interim assessments over the duration of the intervention
- Clinically significant progress in social skills, communication skills, language skills, and adaptive functioning is documented.

PA requests for continued ABA therapy will not be approved for longer than a six-month duration and must include an updated treatment plan with the appropriate supporting documentation, as required.

### **Provider requirements**

For purposes of the initial diagnosis and comprehensive diagnostic evaluation, a qualified provider includes any of the following:

- Licensed physician
- Licensed health service provider in psychology (HSPP)
- Licensed pediatrician
- Licensed psychiatrist
- Other behavioral health specialist with training and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of ASD



ABA therapy services must be delivered by an appropriate provider. For the purposes of ABA therapy, appropriate providers include:

- HSPP
- Licensed or board-certified behavior analyst, including bachelor-level (BCaBA), master-level (BCBA), and doctoral-level (BCBA-D) behavior analysts
- Credentialed registered behavior technician (RBT)

Services performed by a BCaBA or RBT must be under the direct supervision of a BCBA, BCBA-D, or an HSPP.

Services performed by a BCBA must be under the direct supervision of a BCBA-D or HSPP. Claims for services rendered by a BCBA, BCaBA or RBT should be billed using the National Provider Identifier (NPI) of the IHCP-enrolled provider with treatment oversight. Services performed by RBTs under the supervision of a BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP will be reimbursed at 75% of the rate on file. Providers must bill the appropriate modifier (U1, U2, or U3) to indicate which practitioner rendered the services. Services rendered by a nonapproved provider will not be reimbursed.

### **Billing requirements**

The IHCP provides reimbursement when the services are specified as direct ABA services and are provided by a qualified service provider, as previously defined. Providers must bill one of the procedure codes listed in Table 1. Providers must bill the procedure codes with a U1, U2, or U3 modifier to indicate services are for ABA therapy, as well as to specify the educational level of the rendering provider.

Reimbursement is not available when the services do not meet the criteria for medical necessity or do not qualify as ABA therapy services, such as the following:

- Services that focus solely on recreational or educational outcomes
- Services that are duplicative, such as services rendered under an Individualized Educational Program (IEP)
- Services performed by an RBT in the home setting or school setting

Table 1 – Procedure codes covered for ABA therapy for DOS on or after February 6, 2016

Code	Description
96150 U1	Health and behavior assessment (eg, health-focused clinical interview, behavioral observations, psychophysiological monitoring, health-oriented questionnaires), each 15 minutes face-to-face with the patient; initial assessment; ABA Therapy Assessment provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96150 U2	Health and behavior assessment (eg, health-focused clinical interview, behavioral observations, psychophysiological monitoring, health-oriented questionnaires), each 15 minutes face-to-face with the patient; initial assessment; ABA Therapy Assessment provided by BCaBA
96151 U1	Health and behavior assessment (eg, health-focused clinical interview, behavioral observations, psychophysiological monitoring, health-oriented questionnaires), each 15 minutes face-to-face with the patient; re-assessment; ABA Therapy Re-assessment provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96151 U2	Health and behavior assessment (eg, health-focused clinical interview, behavioral observations, psychophysiological monitoring, health-oriented questionnaires), each 15 minutes face-to-face with the patient; re-assessment; ABA Therapy Re-assessment provided by BCaBA
96152 U1	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; individual; ABA Therapy provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96152 U2	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; individual; ABA Therapy provided by BCaBA
96152 U3	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; individual; ABA Therapy provided by RBT
96153 U1	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; group; ABA Therapy provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96153 U2	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; group; ABA Therapy provided by BCaBA
96153 U3	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; group; ABA Therapy provided by RBT
96154 U1	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family with patient present; ABA Therapy provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96154 U2	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family with patient present; ABA Therapy provided by BCaBA
96154 U3	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family with patient present; ABA Therapy provided by RBT
96155 U1	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family without patient present; ABA Therapy provided by BCBA, BCBA-D, or HSPP
96155 U2	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family without patient present; ABA Therapy provided by BCaBA
96155 U3	Health and behavior intervention, each 15 minutes, face-to-face; family without patient present; ABA Therapy provided by RBT

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