

Justification for Increased Reimbursement for Clinically Addressing Challenging Behaviors

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Objective:

1. Learn about the current day-to-day operations of the Day Treatment Clinic and understand the workload requirements for treating patients in this clinic.
2. Understand the reimbursement methods that exist for services such as the Day Treatment Clinic and where there are opportunities for improvement on reimbursement amounts and methods.

Method:

- A comprehensive review of relevant literature, government reports, and reimbursement data was conducted to gather information on the use of Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCBA) current procedural terminology (CPT) billing codes in Iowa.
- The primary sources of data included Iowa Medicaid billing records, Iowa Department of Public Health reports, and published studies on BCBA services in Iowa.
- Observations of the Day Treatment Clinic, including stakeholder interviews and chart reviews.

Results/Conclusion:

- **Results**
 - The utilization of BCBA CPT billing codes in Iowa has increased steadily over the past decade, reflecting a growing demand for BCBA services. Commonly used CPT codes include 97153 (adaptive behavior treatment by protocol), 97155 (group adaptive behavior treatment), and 97156 (family adaptive behavior treatment guidance).
 - Reimbursement rates for BCBA services in Iowa vary depending on the payer. For example, Iowa Medicaid reimburses BCBA services based on a fee schedule, which specifies the allowable rates for each CPT code. Private insurance companies may have their own reimbursement rates, which can vary widely. On average, reimbursement rates for BCBA services in Iowa range from \$30 to \$150 per hour, depending on the complexity of the services provided and the qualifications of the provider (IDHS, 2022).
- **Recommendations**
 - Build in more opportunities for follow-ups
 - Follow-ups usually occur on breaks, if patients cancel or no-show, outside of patient appointments, etc.; not much time for follow-ups

- Re-negotiate payor contracts with Wellmark, United, and Iowa Medicaid and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)
- Bill autism specific codes since 75% of patients have autism (97151, 97152, 97153, 97156, or G9012)
- Bill the following CPT codes for the interview prior to first appointment (According to CMS):
 - 98970 (Qualified nonphysician healthcare professional online digital evaluation 5-10 minutes)
 - 98971 (Qualified nonphysician healthcare professional online digital evaluation 11-20 minutes)
 - 98972 (Qualified nonphysician healthcare professional online digital evaluation 21+ minutes)

References:

- *2021 annual update to the Therapy Code List - Centers for Medicare ...* 2021 Annual Update to the Therapy Code List. (2020, December 31). Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/mm12126.pdf>.
- Dalphonse, A. (2023, January 12). *Board Certified Behavior Analyst Certification: Complete Guide*. Master ABA. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from <https://masteraba.com/board-certified-behavior-analyst-certification-complete-guide/>
- *Medicaid Provider Manual: Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA)*. Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS). (2022). Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/BCBAMedicaidProviderManual.pdf>