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COVERED SERVICES**Local Education Agencies**

Local education agencies (LEAs) may provide the following services for children ages three through twenty:

- Audiology services;
- Occupational therapy evaluations and treatment services;
- Physical therapy evaluations and treatment services;
- Speech and language evaluations and therapy (individual and group); and
- Other

The Direct Service Model

The direct service model consists of individual treatment provided to an eligible child. Although this model is the most restrictive, it is analogous to the “medical model” of service delivery billable under Medicaid.

- Tracking/monitoring consists of directly observing the eligible child, talking with his parents and school staff, conducting any needed assessments and occasional hands-on interaction between the therapist and the eligible child.
- Only direct observation and hands-on intervention is Medicaid billable as therapy. Case colleague or system consultation cannot be billed as a therapy service.
- Intervention on an indirect nature that does not directly involve the eligible child and therapist is not billable as a Medicaid health service.

Medicaid reimburses only for direct patient contact services billed as units of time. With the exception of Occupational Therapy as required by the Occupational Therapy Practice Act, services provided through and IEP or IFSP do not require a physician’s order for reimbursement. However, the services must be documented on the IEP or IFSP as the authorization for the service to be paid through the EPSDT Health Services program.

The procedures for all Medicaid-reimbursed evaluations and services including codes, descriptions, and maximum reimbursements are listed in Appendix A. The evaluation procedure may only be reimbursed once in a 180-day period by the same provider.

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Audiology Services

Audiology services are for the identification of children with auditory impairment, using at risk criteria and appropriate audiologic screening, evaluation and treatment techniques. These services include:

- Determination of the range, nature, and degree of hearing loss and communication functions, by use of audiological evaluation procedures in appropriate sound treated setting as necessary;
- Referral for medical and other services **necessary for the** rehabilitation of children with auditory impairment; and
- Provision of auditory training, aural rehabilitation, speech reading and listening device orientation and training, and other services.

Professional Requirements

Audiology services must be provided by or under the direction of a qualified, licensed audiologist or a physician in Louisiana in accordance with the licensing standards of the Louisiana Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (LBESPA). A qualified audiologist means an individual with a Master's or Doctoral degree in audiology with a current Louisiana license from LBESPA.

Federal regulations also require that the audiologist have one of the following:

- A certificate of clinical competence from the American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association (ASHA);
- Completion of the equivalent educational **requirements** and work experience necessary for the certification; or
- Completion of the academic program and is acquiring supervised work experience to qualify for **the certificate**.

Audiologic Evaluation

Audiologic evaluation is the determination of the range, nature, and degree of a child's hearing loss and communication functions for modifying communicative behavior.

Occupational Therapy Services

Occupational therapy services address the functional needs of a child related to the performance of self-help skills, adaptive behavior, play and sensory, motor and postural development.

Occupational therapy services include:

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- Identification, assessment, and intervention;
- Adaptation of the environment;
- Selection, design, and fabrication to assistive and orthotic devices to facilitate development and promote the acquisition of functional skills; and
- Prevention or reducing the impact of initial or future impairment, delays in development, or loss of functional ability.

Medicaid reimburses only for direct, one-to-one patient contact services, billed as units of time, in physical and occupational therapy.

Professional Requirements

Occupational therapy must be provided to a child by or under the direction of a qualified occupational therapist licensed in Louisiana to provide these services in accordance with the licensing standards of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (Board for Occupational Therapists). For additional information, reference La. RS 37:2650 - RS 37:2666.

Services provided by an occupational therapy assistant certified by the AOTA who is licensed to assist in the practice of occupational therapy must be provided under the direction and supervision of an occupational therapist licensed in Louisiana. Supervision of assistants must be in accordance with the supervisory requirements of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

Occupational therapy treatment services require a written referral or prescription by a physician licensed in Louisiana on at least an annual basis. An initial evaluation may be done without such a referral or prescription.

Occupational Therapy Evaluation

Occupational therapy evaluations determine the Medicaid-eligible child's level of functioning and competencies through professionally accepted techniques. Evaluations must include assessment of the functional abilities and deficits as related to the child's needs in the following areas:

- Muscle tone, movement patterns; reflexes, and fine motor/perceptual motor development;
- Daily living skills; including self-feeding, dressing, and toileting (Informal assessment tools may be used);
- Sensory integration;
- Prosthetic evaluation, when appropriate;
- Orthotic (splint) evaluation, when appropriate; and
- Need for positioning/seating equipment and other adaptive equipment.

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All evaluation methods must be appropriate to the child's age, education, cultural, and ethnic background, medical status, and functional ability. The evaluation method may include observation, interview, record review, and the use of appropriate nationally approved evaluation techniques or tools.

Evaluation data must be analyzed and documented in summary form to document the child's status. The specific evaluation tools and methods used must also be documented.

The evaluation must be conducted by a licensed occupational therapist. An occupational therapy assistant may not perform an evaluation.

Physical Therapy Services

Physical Therapy Services are designed to improve the child's movement dysfunction. These services include:

- Screening of infants and toddlers to identify movement dysfunction;
- Obtaining, interpreting and integrating information appropriate to program planning; and
- Services to prevent or alleviate movement dysfunction and related functional problems.

Professional Requirements

Physical therapy services must be provided by or under the direction of a qualified physical therapist in accordance with the state licensing standards of the Louisiana Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. For additional information, reference La. RS 37:2401-37:2424.

Physical Therapy Evaluation

Physical therapy (PT) evaluation includes testing of gross motor skills and orthotic and/or prosthetic, neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, respiratory, and sensorimotor functions. These services must include the following:

- Muscle, manual, extremity, or trunk testing, with report;
- Total physical therapy evaluation;
- Range-of-motion measurements and report on each extremity excluding hand; and
- Range of motion measurements and report.

Information methods, including observation of behavior during the evaluation and supplemental testing, may be used.

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Speech-Language Pathology Services

Speech-language pathology services are for the identification of children with communicative or oropharyngeal disorders and delays in development of communication skills including diagnosis and appraisal of specific disorders and delays in those skills. These services include:

- Referral for medical or other professional services necessary for the rehabilitation of children with communicative or oropharyngeal disorders and delays in development of communication skills; and
- Provision of services for the rehabilitation or prevention of communicative or oropharyngeal disorders and delays in development of communication skills.

Professional Requirements

Speech pathology services must be provided by or under the direction of a licensed speech pathologist in accordance with the licensing standards of the Louisiana Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (LBESPA). For additional information, reference La. RS 37:2650 – La. RS 37:2666.

Licensed speech-language pathology assistants may also provide services under the supervision of a certified licensed speech-language pathologist. Supervision of assistants must be in accordance with the supervisory requirements of the Louisiana Board of Examiners for Speech Language Pathology and Audiology.

Speech/Language Evaluation

A speech/language evaluation includes tests used to determine a child's ability to understand and use appropriate verbal communication, identify communication impairments, and assess:

- Phonology and language;
- Voice and fluency;
- Oral structure; and
- Oral mechanism and functioning.

These services must include the following:

- Oral motor examination/consultation;
- Velopharyngeal examination/consultation;
- Child language consultation; and
- Observations of feeding dysphagia, when appropriate.

Speech/Language Therapy

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Speech/language therapy services include the provision of services for the prevention of or rehabilitation of communicative oral pharyngeal disorders, dysphagia disorders, and delays in development of communication. Speech, language, and hearing therapy include the following services, as appropriate and medically necessary:

- Speech/language or hearing therapy (individual or group);
- Stuttering therapy;
- Speech reading/aural rehabilitation;
- Voice therapy;
- Feeding/dysphagia training; and
- Esophageal speech training therapy.

Other EPSDT Covered Services

Medicaid covers all medically necessary diagnosis and treatment services in addition to EPSDT Health Services for Children with Disabilities for recipients under age 21. The Louisiana Medicaid Program may require determination of medical necessity of the services.

Behavioral Health Services

School-based health services include covered behavioral health services, treatment and other measures to correct or ameliorate an identified mental health or substance abuse diagnosis. Services are provided by or through an LEA to children who attend public schools with or suspected of having a disability. Services must be performed by qualified providers, who provide these services as part of their respective area of practice. Behavioral health services provided in a school setting will only be reimbursed for recipients who are at least three years of age and less than 21 years of age, who have been determined eligible for Title XIX and IDEA, Part B services, with a written service plan (an IEP) which contains medically necessary services recommended by a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts, within the scope of his or her practice under state law. Medicaid-covered services are provided in accordance with the established behavioral health service limitations.

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Durable Medical Equipment

Medicaid-covered services include purchase of medical supplies or rental/purchase of durable medical equipment (DME) and appliances for children with disabilities. These services are only covered if authorized in advance by the Prior Authorization Unit (PAU) at the fiscal intermediary. A licensed physician must recommend the item in writing. It must be medically necessary and not a convenience item. Nor can it be investigational or experimental. A Medicaid enrolled vendor must make the request for payment of the item. The request is submitted to the PAU at the fiscal intermediary on a form PA-01 (see Appendix D) with appropriate medical documentation attached. The request must be acted upon within 25 days for a non-emergent request or the item is automatically approved.

The DME Provider Manual chapter contains detailed information on items covered, requirements for approval, and request procedures.

Transportation

If a Medicaid covered child requires transportation in a vehicle adapted to serve the needs of the disabled, including a specially adapted school bus, that transportation may be billed to Medicaid if the need for that specialized transportation is listed in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), is properly documented and another IDEA Health Service identified in the child's IEP occurs on the same day as transport.

The unit of service for transportation will be a one-way trip. Trips to/from school to another location where IEP services are provided on the same day as transport are also covered.

Documentation for Transportation Services:

- Trip logs must record all trips taken by all students on the special school bus each day.
- This information must be cross-referenced with attendance records and the documentation of receipt of a covered IDEA Health Service that is included in the student's IEP, on the same day as transport.