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EARLYSTEPS

EarlySteps-enrolled EPSDT providers may provide the following services for Medicaid-eligible children ages birth through 2 years who are EarlySteps-eligible:

- Audiology services;
- Occupational therapy evaluations and treatment services;
- Physical therapy evaluations and treatment services;
- Psychological evaluations and therapy; and
- Speech and language evaluations and therapy.

Descriptions of these covered services are provided in Section 20.1 Covered Services.

Psychological services as described below are available through the EarlySteps program. Family Service Coordination is provided by Medicaid. Information about Family Service Coordination payable through Medicaid may be found in the Case Management Provider Manual.

The EarlySteps program also provides the following services for Medicaid and non-Medicaid-eligible children:

- Assistive technology;
- Family Training, counseling, and home visits
- Health services;
- Medical evaluation services;
- Nursing services;
- Nutrition services;
- Sign language and cued language services;
- Social work services;
- Special Instruction services;
- Transportation and related costs ; and
- Vision services.

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.

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- 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, one-on-one patient contact services, billed as units of time. Group therapy and co-treating are not covered through the EPSDT program for EarlySteps. 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.

Psychological Services

Psychological services are for obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about child behavior, and child and family conditions related to learning, mental health, and development. These services include:

- Administering psychological and developmental tests and other assessment procedures;
- Interpreting assessment results; and
- Planning and managing a program of psychological counseling for children and parents, family counseling, consultation on child development, parent training, and education programs.

Professional Requirements

- Only services provided by a psychologist licensed under the Louisiana Board of Examiners of Psychologists are reimbursable by Louisiana Medicaid.
- Services provided by a school psychologist certified by the Department of Education not meeting the minimum criteria as outlined by the Louisiana Licensing Law for Psychologists are not billable to Medicaid.

Psychological Evaluation

The psychological evaluation includes a battery of tests, interviews, and behavioral evaluations that appraise cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral functioning and self-concept. These services must be provided by a Louisiana licensed physician, psychiatrist, or licensed

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psychologist to be reimbursable by Louisiana Medicaid.

Psychological Therapy

Psychological therapy includes diagnosis and psychological counseling for children and their families. These services must be provided by a Louisiana licensed physician, psychiatrist, or licensed psychologist.