

Medical Policy

Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI)*

Policy Number: 019

	Commercial and Qualified Health Plans	MassHealth
Authorization required	X	X
No authorization required		

***Also known as Early Intervention Applied Behavioral Analysis (EI ABA).**

Overview

The purpose of this document is to describe the guidelines Mass General Brigham Health Plan uses to determine medical necessity for Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI) as a treatment for members up to age 3 who have a confirmed diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Coverage Guidelines

Mass General Brigham Health Plan covers EIBI in accordance with MassHealth and regulatory coverage requirements.

Coverage Criteria

Admissions Criteria:

Mass General Brigham Health Plan covers EIBI for members up to age 3 when **all** of the following are met:

1. The Member has a referral from an EIP (Early Intervention Provider).
2. The EIBI provider obtains authorization to conduct assessment.
3. The child must have a confirmed diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), conferred by a physician or licensed psychologist allowing children to get started with services as soon as possible. It is preferred that the diagnosis be made using a diagnostic tool and that the DSM-V criteria are referenced in the diagnostic summary.

Continuing Treatment Criteria:

Mass General Brigham Health Plan covers continuing treatment when **all** of the following are met:

1. The member's condition continues to meet admission criteria for EIBI, either due to continuation of presenting problems, or appearance of new problems or symptoms.
2. There is reasonable expectation that the member will benefit from the continuation of EIBI services. Treatment planning is individualized and appropriate to the member's changing condition with realistic and specific goals and objectives stated. The treatment plan is updated based on treatment progress including the addition of new target behaviors.
3. Initial assessment from a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst, with the request for EIBI services.
4. A member's progress is monitored regularly evidenced by behavioral graphs, progress notes, and daily session notes. The treatment plan is to be modified, if there is no measurable progress toward decreasing the frequency, intensity and/or duration of the targeted behaviors and/or increase in skills for skill acquisition to achieve targeted goals and objectives.
5. There is documented skills transfer to the member and treatment transition planning from the beginning of treatment.

6. Services must be written on the Individualized Family Service Plan and consented to by the family.
7. Services are not duplicative of services that are part of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Plan.

Discharge Criteria:

Discharge from EIBI will occur when any of the following are met:

1. A member's individual treatment plan and goals have been met.
2. The member has achieved adequate stabilization of the challenging behavior, and less-intensive modes of treatment are appropriate and indicated.
3. The member no longer meets admission criteria or meets criteria for a less or more intensive services.
4. The child turns 3 years of age and has been transitioned to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) for services.
5. Treatment is making the symptoms persistently worse.
6. The member is not making progress toward treatment goals, as demonstrated by the absence of any documented meaningful (i.e., durable and generalized) measurable improvement or stabilization of challenging behavior, and there is no reasonable expectation of progress.

Exclusions

1. The member has medical conditions or impairments that would prevent beneficial utilization of services.
2. The member requires the 24-hour medical/nursing monitoring or procedures provided in a hospital setting.
3. The following services are not included within the EIBI treatment process and will not be certified:
 - a. vocational rehabilitation
 - b. supportive respite care
 - c. recreational therapy
 - d. respite care
4. The services are primarily for school or educational purposes.
5. The treatment is investigational or unproven, including, but not limited to facilitated communication, Auditory Integration Therapy (AIT), Holding Therapy, and Higashi (Daily Life Therapy).

Definitions

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA): ABA is the process of applying interventions and techniques, which are based on the principles of learning derived from experimental psychology research, in order to systematically change behavior. Documentation must demonstrate that the interventions and techniques used are responsible for the observable improvement in behavior.

Autism Intake Service: A face-to-face meeting between the family and an autism specialty provider for the purpose of information gathering.

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD): ASD are a group of neurodevelopmental disorders characterized by difficulties in social interaction, impaired communication (both verbal and nonverbal), and repetitive, restrictive behaviors that present in early childhood. ASD has heterogeneous etiology and comorbidities. Diagnostic criteria and nomenclature for these disorders have changed over the years and, while the current terminology in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM 5) uses a single category called Autism Spectrum Disorders, previous versions divided this into multiple subcategories.

Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI): A well-developed scientific discipline among the helping professions that focuses on the analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation of social and other environmental modifications to produce meaningful changes in human behavior. It includes the use of direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relations between environment and behavior. EIBI is



typically an intensive treatment program for children 0-3 years of age, designed to address challenging behaviors as defined in the admission criteria. It is not a center-based program. It can only occur in settings that are natural or typical for a same-age infant or toddler without a disability.

Related Policies

- [Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention Services Payment Policy](#)

Codes

Authorized CPT/HCPCS Codes	Code Description
97151	Behavior identification assessment, administered by a physician or other qualified health care professional, each 15 minutes of the physician’s or other qualified health care professional’s time face-to-time with patient and/or guardian(s)/caregiver(s) administering assessments and discussing findings and recommendations, and non-face-to-face analyzing past data, scoring/interpreting the assessment, and preparing the report/treatment plan.
97153	Adaptive behavior treatment by protocol, administered by technician under the direction of a physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with one patient, each 15 minutes.
97154	Group adaptive behavior treatment by protocol, administered by technician under the direction of a physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with two or more patients, each 15 minutes
97155	Adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional, which may include simultaneous direction of technician, face-to-face with one patient, each 15 minutes
97156	Family adaptive behavior treatment guidance, administered by a licensed professional (with or without the patient present), face-to-face with guardian(s)/caregiver(s), every 15 minutes
97157	Multiple-family group adaptive behavior treatment guidance, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional (without the patient present), face-to-face with multiple sets of guardians/caregivers, each 15 minutes.
H0031-U2	Mental health assessment by physician or other qualified health professional (Assessment and case planning for home services by a licensed professional. 15-minute rate.)

Effective

October 2022: Annual Review.

October 2021: Effective Date.

References

MassHealth Regulations: 130 CMR 440.000 — Early Intervention Services

Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) c. 721

