



December 21, 2009

## Update to procedural changes related to autism spectrum disorder

*The information in this bulletin replaces Provider Bulletin P14-09 entitled “Procedural changes related to autism spectrum disorder” that was issued on May 11, 2009.*

To ensure members receive the appropriate quality and level of care for autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and autism early intensive behavioral interventions (EIBI), Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Blue Plus published an updated medical policy relating to assessment of autism spectrum disorder and developed a new medical policy regarding the steps to follow when providing early intensive behavioral interventions.

- **Autism spectrum disorder: Assessment**
- **Autism spectrum disorder: Early intensive behavioral interventions (EIBI)**

The updated assessment policy replaces the pervasive developmental disorders policy. The medical policies are available on [providers.bluecrossmn.com](http://providers.bluecrossmn.com). These policies became effective on August 17, 2009.

Along with the policies, Blue Cross made some procedural changes related to diagnostic assessment requirements and the initiation and continued services review for EIBI. These changes apply to all Blue Cross and Blue Plus members enrolled in fully insured plans or Minnesota Health Care Programs, with the exception of members enrolled in SecureBlue or CareBlue.

### ASD assessment requirements

To ensure appropriate care and use of benefits, Blue Cross requires the following to be done before the initiation of health services for EIBI:

- A comprehensive diagnostic assessment must have been completed within the past 12 months.
- The assessment must be on file in the provider’s office as part of each patient’s medical record.

In addition, effective since August 17, 2009, providers are expected to follow the diagnostic assessment standards as described in the assessment section of the Blue Cross behavioral health medical policy, autism spectrum disorder.

### EIBI authorization and concurrent review process

Effective since August 17, 2009, a prior authorization (PA) is recommended for all EIBI. In addition, a concurrent review will be performed at 180 days of service with a medical necessity review based on criteria detailed in the Blue Cross autism EIBI medical policy. These changes apply only to Blue Cross and Blue Plus members enrolled in fully insured plans or Minnesota Health Care Programs, with the exception of members enrolled in SecureBlue or CareBlue.

Failure to comply with the PA and concurrent review recommendation will result in a retrospective review, which could mean provider liability for denied services.

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## **Change**

Beginning January 1, 2010, a PA will be recommended for EIBI services only when the level of treatment provided consists of three (3) or more visits per week for intensive therapies. A week is defined as a period of seven consecutive days. This change applies only to Blue Cross and Blue Plus members enrolled in fully insured plans or Minnesota Health Care Programs, with the exception of members enrolled in SecureBlue or CareBlue.

Medical Policy X-44, **Autism spectrum disorder: Early intensive behavioral interventions (EIBI)**, will be updated with this information as well. To view medical policies go to **providers.bluecrossmn.com** and select “medical policy” under “tools & resources.”

## **Questions?**

If you have questions, please contact provider services at **(651) 662-5200** or toll free at **1-800-262-0820**.