

Autism assessments and protocol modification during the COVID-19 crisis

We've made changes to coverage for autism spectrum disorder services to ensure that members can receive the care they need during the COVID-19 crisis.

These changes are temporary and in effect as specified below. Be sure to check for updates; they'll be available on the web-DENIS home page and on our coronavirus webpages, which are available on our public website at bcbsm.com/coronavirus and through Provider Secured Services.

***97151: Assessment**

Normally, assessments include live interaction with a child. This service is critical to the evaluation process and is not normally covered via telehealth.

During this crisis and until further notice, we're temporarily allowing providers to perform assessments via telehealth. This will allow providers to collect information via interviews, questionnaires, rating scales, etc.

***97155: Protocol modification**

Normally, protocol modification uses a combination of face-to-face and telehealth services, when a technician is present face to face and telehealth is used only up to 50% of the total time of the services provided.

During this crisis and until further notice:

- A parent/caregiver can perform this service in place of a technician.
- A licensed behavior analyst, or LBA, may troubleshoot treatment protocols directly with the parent/caregiver.

Additional information

For more information about billing these codes, see the "Billing telehealth visits" section of the *Telehealth for behavioral health providers* guide. Also, we've updated the *Telehealth for behavioral health providers* guide to reflect the changes above. You can find this guide in the telehealth sections of our coronavirus webpages, which are available on our public website at bcbsm.com/coronavirus and through Provider Secured Services.

This information applies to Blue Cross' PPO and BCN HMOSM members.

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