Autism Care Demonstration Update Implementation Timeline

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) published changes to TRICARE's Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) that will be implemented in phases in 2021. To learn more and to sign up for email updates, visit **www.health.mil/autism**. Please continue to visit **www.tricare-west.com/go/ABA-provider** for detailed benefit information. We will be updating content and adding resources as implementation dates approach.

Timeline not all-inclusive; please refer to TRICARE Operations Manual, Chapter 18, Section 4 for complete policy details.

New or Changing Requirements	Summary	Date
Referral Cycle Realignment	HNFS to realign existing ACD participants to a new two-year referral cycle timeline based on the date HNFS received the current two-year referral.	April 1, 2021– May 1, 2021
Outcome Measures Cycle (existing beneficiaries)	HNFS to realign existing ACD participants to a one-year cycle for the Vineland-3 and SRS-2.	April 1, 2021– May 1, 2021
Outcome Measures Cycle (new beneficiaries)	New beneficiaries start on a one-year cycle for Vineland-3 and SRS-2.	May 1, 2021
Outcome Measure Referral	HNFS can authorize directly to preferred outcome measure ABA provider groups (no PCM/ABA provider referral required).	May 1, 2021
Behavior Technicians/Assistant Behavior Analysts Not Authorized to Render ABA in School Setting	HNFS to no longer authorize behavior technicians and assistant behavior analysts for CPT® 97153 services performed in a preschool or school setting (public or private). Current authorizations with approved school services may continue until expiration.	May 1, 2021
Annual Rate Update	Annual rate update for current ABA codes.	May 1 2021
Confirming Diagnosis	Primary care managers no longer required to refer to specialized ASD diagnosing provider to confirm diagnosis.	May 1, 2021
Notification of New Referral and Outcome Measure Cycles	HNFS to notify affected beneficiaries of new referral and outcome measure cycles.	By July 1, 2021
National Provider Identifier (NPI)	NPI required on ABA provider claim submissions. *(Note: While this is a new requirement for the ACD, HNFS already requires an NPI for reimbursement. The NPI on the claim determines where we will send payment.)*	July 1, 2021: new ABA providers Aug. 1, 2021: existing ABA providers
Vineland-3 and SRS-2 Additional Requirements	Name of the person completing the forms and their relationship to the beneficiary required on all submissions; ABA providers must submit full publishers report or manual scoring (imbedded tables within treatment plans will not be accepted).	Aug. 1, 2021
New Outcome Measures	Age-based PSI-4 or SIPA required prior to HNFS authorizing first treatment (after initial assessment) and for all reauthorizations for existing beneficiaries at the next reauthorization period after Aug. 1, 2021.	Aug. 1, 2021
Outcome Measures for Authorization	Valid outcome measures must be completed prior to HNFS authorizing first treatment (after initial assessment) and for all reauthorizations.	Aug. 1, 2021
Active Provider Placement	HNFS to expand active provider placement for all referrals submitted and confirm availability of ABA providers within access to care standards prior to authorization. (Referrals from military facilities that name specific providers will be reviewed, but placement will be based on access to care standards.)	Aug. 1, 2021
Access to Care	HNFS to complete confirmation with ABA providers that 28-day access to care standard was met for initial assessments and treatment authorizations.	Aug. 1, 2021
Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)	HNFS will pay all claims billed by ABA sole providers and ACSPs by EFT. *(Note: Does not apply to claims paid for services rendered by ABA providers who work in a multi-specialty practice.)*	Aug. 1, 2021
New CPT Codes Accepted	ACD to accept new (97157, 97158, 99366, 99368) and modify existing (T1023 transition to 97151) CPT codes. Beneficiaries are not eligible for new codes until the next authorization period and requests submitted prior will be cancelled. Rates available on **health.mil**.	Aug. 1, 2021

CPT Code Requirements Modified	New MUE limits for existing and new CPT codes. Modifications to telehealth and minimum requirements for program modification and parent training effective for authorizations issued after Aug. 1.	Aug. 1, 2021
Parent Training	Providers required to initiate parent training (97156, 97157) within 30 days of the treatment authorization being issued.	Aug. 1, 2021
Parent Training	Providers required to conduct a minimum of six parent training sessions per authorization period. (97157, 97158)	Aug. 1, 2021
Program Modification	ABA supervisors are required to render a minimum of one direct visit per month for 97155 or a 10% penalty to all claims will be applied for the authorization period.	Aug. 1 2021
Treatment Plan Review	HNFS to review 100% of treatment plans for clinical necessity prior to authorization; initiation of clinical necessity consultations with the ABA supervisor when needed prior to authorization.	Aug. 1, 2021
Treatment Plan Documentation	New requirements for treatment plan documentation.	Aug. 1, 2021
Discharge Reports	ABA providers required to submit discharge reports when care has been ended (not a billable service).	Aug. 1 2021
Participation Agreements	ACSPs/sole providers must resign participation agreements. (HNFS to begin contacting providers in May.)	Aug. 1, 2021
Family Definition	Modification to the definition of a family member and/or caregiver.	Aug. 1, 2021
Eligibility Requirements – Validated Assessment Tool	The validated assessment tool is due for referrals that expire on or after Oct. 1 for new beneficiaries prior to enrollment and existing beneficiaries at the two-year referral cycle. Beneficiaries whose referral expires prior to Oct. 1 wait until their next two-year referral cycle to meet this requirement.	Oct. 1, 2021
Eligibility Requirements – DSM-5 Criteria Checklist	HNFS to collect completed DSM-5 Criteria Checklist from the referring provider for new beneficiaries prior to enrollment and existing beneficiaries at their two-year referral cycle.	Oct. 1, 2021
Evaluation for Beneficiaries Age 8 Years or Older	A specialized ASD diagnosing provider diagnostic evaluation (not a PCM) required for new beneficiaries first diagnosed with ASD at age eight years or older prior to authorization of ABA services.	Oct. 1, 2021
Evaluation for Beneficiaries with Referral Over Two Years from Diagnosis	A specialized ASD diagnosing provider diagnostic evaluation (not a PCM) required for new beneficiaries whose first referral for ABA is greater than two years from the initial date of diagnosis.	Oct. 1, 2021
Referring and Diagnosing Provider	New definitions of a referring and diagnosing providers. Referrals must come from newly-defined provider types for all new beneficiaries prior to authorization of ABA and existing beneficiaries at their two year referral cycle.	Oct. 1, 2021
Autism Service Navigator	New beneficiaries will be assigned an Autism Service Navigator after enrollment.	Oct. 1, 2021
Comprehensive Care Plan	A Comprehensive Care Plan for beneficiaries with an Autism Service Navigator (ASN) is required to be completed by the ASN within the first 90 days and prior to each reauthorization.	Oct. 1, 2021
Parent Toolkit	HNFS to provide a parent toolkit containing information about the ACD program on our website.	Oct. 1, 2021
Online Resource Library	Online beneficiary resource to include topics on treatments and services, parental education, military and civilian resources, family resources, etc. to be added to **www.tricare-west.com**.	Oct. 1, 2021
Provider Audits	HNFS to conduct annual provider audits, to include administrative records, medical documentation reviews and medical team conference progress notes.	Oct. 1, 2021
Annual Provider Training	Providers will be required to participate in an annual provider training.	Jan. 1, 2022: Training module available
Steerage Model	HNFS to implement a steerage model and rank ABA providers according to access to care standards and other measures with positive impact to the beneficiary.	Jan. 1, 2022
Directory Changes	ABA providers who rank highest in the steerage model will be given priority placement in HNFS' online provider directory.	Jan. 1, 2022