

What are Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)?

- “ASD are complex neurobiological disorders that present varying degrees of impairment in communication skills, social interactions, and restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior (CDC, 2011).”
- The “autism spectrum” refers to the continuum of symptom severity and expression that individuals with ASD can experience. As the word “spectrum” implies, everyone diagnosed with ASD is unique.

Who Qualifies for the Michigan Medicaid/MiChild ASD Benefit?

- This benefit is for children with Medicaid or MiChild only. Commercial insurances have their own provider panel.
- Children between the ages of 18 months through 5 years old with a diagnosis of Autistic Disorder, Asperger’s Disorder, or Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) are eligible to receive services through this benefit.
- *Children age 6 and older with an ASD diagnosis who are covered by Medicaid and MiChild are not eligible for the Michigan Medicaid ASD Benefit, but they are eligible for the standard Medicaid State Plan and Alternate (B3) services.*

How Do We Receive Services under The Benefit?

- Early detection and diagnosis of ASD is critical for your child and for their success! First signs of autism can be found at <https://www.firstsigns.org/>.
- Consult with your primary care physician if you are concerned about any characteristics your child is exhibiting.
- Ask your primary care physician to complete the Modified Checklist for Autism Toddlers (M-CHAT) or the Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ) for your child. These screening tools will allow your physician to know if your child shows “at risk” or “low risk” characteristics for autism. Your primary

care provider can refer you to Northern Lakes Community Mental Health for further evaluation, diagnosis and treatment options.

- It should be noted that the M-Chat and SCQ are *screening*, not diagnosis, tools. If the tool shows “at risk” characteristics for autism, this does not mean your child has ASD.

What Services are Being Delivered under the Benefit?

- The main service being delivered is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).
- ABA therapy encourages positive behaviors and discourages negative behaviors in order to improve a variety of skills.
- ABA therapy may be used to increase language, communication, social, attention and academic skills. ABA therapy is also used to decrease problem behaviors.
- ABA therapy is based on the science of learning and behavior. ABA therapy is considered an evidence-based practice treatment by the US Surgeon General and by the American Psychological Association. “Evidence-based” means that ABA therapy has passed scientific tests of its usefulness, quality, and effectiveness.

The Importance of Parents and Family!

- Research consistently shows that when parents are involved in the ABA therapy process, outcomes are more positive.
- ABA therapy just isn’t as effective without a team approach. This means that everyone who works closely with your child should participate in the ABA program and work together to improve your child’s skills.
- Parent training is part of the services provided within the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health system and as part of the ASD Benefit.

For more information contact

- To learn more, please contact Mary Hubbard, LMSW, Chief Operations Officer, at (231) 775-3463.

Serving people in Crawford, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Missaukee, Roscommon and Wexford Counties.

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