



## **Administrative Bulletin re: Integration of Specialized Early Intervention Services**

Date: 6/8/12

From: Ron Benham, Director, Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition

As we move closer to integrating the Early Intervention and Specialty Service systems for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), the Department of Public Health would like to clarify the following:

1. **It is critical that each Early Intervention Program have the staffing capacity within the program and/or has established contract(s) with the Specialty Service Providers currently serving children in their EI programs by July 1<sup>st</sup> to ensure that there is no interruption in IFSP services to those children as is required under Part C of the IDEA.** Please note that the DPH has provided sample contracts and activity report/invoices to programs and can re-send upon request. Any agency that believes it may not be able to comply with the requirements under Part C should contact the Department immediately.
2. MassHealth will accept claims for intensive autism services beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. EIPs have been provided with a list of currently enrolled children who receive Specialty Services that includes the child's insurance coverage. EIPs should be completing the "EIP Checklist to Determine Eligibility for MassHealth Waiver" for each child receiving SSP services who is enrolled in MassHealth to determine if the child's services are eligible for MassHealth reimbursement. The DPH SDR Updates-Fiscal Year 2013 (dated May 11, 2012) contains details about MassHealth billing rules. A Transmittal Letter from MassHealth is in process and is expected to be distributed by July 1<sup>st</sup>. This information should be consistent with guidance you have already received from DPH.
3. The Department is making every effort to ensure that the steps necessary to process claims with the various private health plans are clear. Individual insurers are still making their own decisions regarding what benefits to cover, rates and service allowances. In order to allow time for insurers to get their systems and processes in place for the receipt of EI autism specialty service claims, DPH will institute a "soft" rollout in order to expedite payment of these services.
  - DPH will allow EI providers to bill DPH directly for autism specialty services for children having a commercial insurer prior to the EI program receiving the clinical approval for EI intensive services (ABA) from the insurer.
  - Certain business rules will be waived at DPH for denials from an insurer through December 2012.

More details about this roll out are included in the FISCAL YEAR 2013 – DPH Service Delivery Updates Autism Specialty Services Addendum that will be distributed by the end of this week.

4. To minimize the potential for disruption in cash flow, it is extremely important that all EI programs verify insurance coverage and benefit status for services to be

rendered, for private insurers and MassHealth. As is the case with all EI services in Massachusetts, the DPH is the payer of last resort. EI Programs should contact Steve McCourt regarding insurance or billing issues.

5. The DPH is working with insurers to reduce payment delays. However, if there are unavoidable problems creating significant delays, the DPH will make every effort to minimize the impact to providers. EI programs should contact Rob Seymour in these circumstances.
6. The importance of establishing and maintaining clear communication channels between EI programs and Specialty Service providers cannot be over-emphasized. This system will require a good deal of sharing of information, from a clinical, administrative, and billing perspective. Each agency should identify appropriate clinical, administrative, and billing contact personnel and share that information with their collaborating partners.