

Washington State Neurodevelopmental Center Service Expansion Project

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Background: Neurodevelopmental Centers (NDCs) provide specialized therapy and related services to children with neuromuscular or developmental disorders. These centers provide speech, occupational and physical therapies for children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN). Currently these services are provided as a carve-out of Medicaid Managed Care (MCO) funding. Additional services (such as nursing, nutrition, social work, educational, adaptive equipment, augmented communication therapy) may be provided through referrals to other providers of direct services. . Washington State contracts with 16 NDCs across the state to provide support for infrastructure and service system development for these centers. Direct client services are paid for from other funding sources including Title XIX (Medicaid) and private insurance. Washington State Department of Health’s Healthy Starts and Transitions Unit (HST) is working with Health Care Authority (HCA) and the NDC’s to expand NDC billable services. This would allow families with CYSHCN to receive a broader array of needed services within one setting and facilitate interdisciplinary team care.

Method:

- Survey: The 16 NDC’s were surveyed to identify additional services needed for families with CYSHCN within the NDCs that are currently billable to the state Medicaid program.. These included: Team evaluations and conferencing, Certified Dietician, ABA therapists, Dental, Pediatrician, Nurse Practitioners, Mental Health, Orthotic and Prosthetic Services. This list was presented to HCA.
- Meeting with HCA: HST met with HCA to discuss the NDCs list of desired services to add for allowable billing. A new list was generated based on available billing avenues including eligibility requirements for professionals such as licensure.
- Next Steps: HST will provide documentation to allow HCA to expand billing including definition of NDCs and necessary WAC amendments. HCA will work to amend WACs and billing instructions. They will evaluate and make necessary changes to future managed care contracts.

Summary: A process was identified to expand available services for CYSHCN receiving OT/PT/Speech therapy in NDCs in Washington State. By amending the WACs related to NDC services, establishing new avenues for billing, and partnering with MCOs and NDCs, access to coordinated interdisciplinary care will be enhanced. It is anticipated that these changes will be implemented in 2015.