

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Question: What is the TRICARE Autism Demonstration?

**Answer:** Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) affect behaviors such as social interaction, the ability to communicate ideas and feelings, imagination and the establishment of relationships with others. Several treatments, therapies and interventions, known as **Educational Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (EIA)**, are available and they have been shown to reduce or eliminate specific problem behaviors and teach new skills to individuals with autism.

These EIA services are not covered under basic TRICARE coverage (TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard and Extra, etc.), and only partially covered through the Extended Care Health Option (ECHO). The Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration allows eligible beneficiaries to have access to a greater range of existing evidence-based EIA services through an expanded network of educational intervention providers.

Requirements are defined in Chapter 20, Section 10, of the TRICARE Operations Manual, which can be found online at <http://manuals.tricare.osd.mil>.

The Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration begins March 15, 2008 and is only available in the 50 United States and the District of Columbia.

### 2. Question: What is the basic coverage that will be reimbursed?

**Answer:** Under the Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration, TRICARE covers **Educational Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (EIA)**, services that:

- Implement basic principles of **Applied Behavior Analysis** and target behaviors associated with the core deficits of ASD
- Focus on changing the child's behavior by observing and measuring the behavior in real-life environments
- Use scientific behavioral data to identify functional relationships between environmental events and behavior
- Gather behavioral data to track progress in reaching behavioral objectives identified in the **Behavior Plan** and periodically modifies the plan to adapt to the child's response to the intervention
- Incorporate parent training so family members/caregivers can teach and support skills during typical family activities
- Require meetings between family members/caregivers and those designing and implementing the intervention program.

One parent or caregiver in the beneficiary's immediate family must complete classroom and practical training each year the child participates in the demonstration. (It does not need to be the same family member each year.) Generally, the training must focus at a minimum on the following topics:

- How to implement the Behavioral Plan at home
- How behavioral change is measured and how can progress in the child receiving services be tracked
- How parents/caregivers can support the principles and methods of EIA service delivered
- How to promote generalization of behaviors learned as a result of EIA services.

### **Educational Intervention Providers**

This demonstration expands the definition of **EIA Supervisors** and adds a new provider class, **EIA Tutors**, both of which should increase the number of providers available to provide EIA services to participating beneficiaries. All EIA Supervisors and Tutors must be participating TRICARE-authorized providers to participate in this demonstration.

### 3. **Question:** How do I sign up to be a Participating Provider?

**Answer:** Sign the Participation Agreement and return with the Credentialing Information in the self-addressed envelope attached.

### 4. **Question:** How will I be reimbursed?

**Answer:** Please see **Article 3** of the Participation Agreement

### 5. **Question:** How will I receive a referral?

**Answer:** A TRICARE beneficiary must have their PCM or ASD Specialist submit information necessary to allow the Managed Care Support Contractor to confirm eligibility. Diagnostic Testing must be submitted if the diagnosis is made by someone other than an ASD Specialist. Referrals and clinical information may be faxed to the market ECHO Case Manager.

Southwest Market

(TX excluding the El Paso Area, Louisiana west of the Mississippi River, AR, OK)

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GulfSouth Market

(LA east of the Mississippi River, FL panhandle, TN, MS, AL)

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Demonstration Case Managers can be reached by calling the toll free number in your area.

Southwest Market (800) 447 8808

Gulf South Market (866) 323 7155

Southeast Market (800) 447 6072