

Department:	Medical Management	Original Approval:	07/30/2019
Policy #:	MM176	Last Approval:	07/30/2019
Title:	Psychological Testing		
Approved By:	UM Committee		

POLICY

This Clinical Coverage Criteria on Psychological Testing applies to Apple Health members and to Medicare members.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

For individuals of all ages:

- The client’s symptoms, history (including previous treatments and hospitalizations), exam, current diagnoses, current treatment
- Results of psychological evaluation and other assessments already completed
- Documentation of the provider’s review of reports produced by the testing
- An explanation detailing the essential medical knowledge that is expected to be gained from psychological testing
- Specific details documenting how the results of psychological testing will improve the day-to-day care of this client
- Client is not involved in active substance use, in withdrawal, or in recovery from recent chronic use (should be abstinent for at least one month)

In addition, for individuals ages 0-20 years, who are in school:

In addition to the required documentation listed above, it is also required to submit the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), if there is one, outlining all the following:

- The specific clinical issues in the IEP that have not been sufficiently addressed
- The aspects of the child’s rehabilitation that are not improving
- Specific additional benefits that neuropsychological testing will provide the client, describing what the IEP is already addressing, and how the proposed testing will improve the treatment plan
- Relevant consultations from psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, developmental pediatricians, etc.

BACKGROUND

Most diagnostic questions related to behavioral concerns or psychiatric conditions can be answered by a combination of psychiatric/diagnostic interview, observation in therapy or assessment for

required services at a mental health or substance abuse facility. This includes assessment for treatment planning when multiple regimens have been ineffective.

DEFINITIONS

Psychological testing is an adjunctive objective measurement of behavior and involves the assessment of personality, cognitive processes, emotions, attitudes, aptitudes, behavioral traits, and intellectual abilities using standardized evaluation methods (tests) that have been empirically shown to be valid and reliable. Specific tests are administered and scored by a clinically trained examiner (such as a licensed clinical psychologist or board-certified psychiatrist).

CPT Codes:

- **96130:** Psychological testing evaluation services, including integration of patient data, interpretation of standardized test results and clinical data, clinical decision making, treatment planning and report, and interactive feedback to the patient, family member(s) or caregiver(s), when performed; first hour
- **96131:** Psychological testing evaluation services, including integration of patient data, interpretation of standardized test results and clinical data, clinical decision making, treatment planning and report, and interactive feedback to the patient, family member(s) or caregiver(s), when performed; each additional hour.
- **96136:** Psychological or neuropsychological test administration and scoring, two or more tests, any method; first 30 minutes
- **96137:** Psychological or neuropsychological test administration and scoring, two or more tests, any method; each additional 30 minutes (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
- **96138:** Psychological or neuropsychological test administration and scoring, two or more tests, any method; first 30 minutes
- **96139:** Psychological or neuropsychological test administration and scoring, two or more tests, any method; each additional 30 minutes (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
- **96146:** Psychological or neuropsychological test administration, with single automated, standardized instrument via electronic platform, with automated result only

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INDICATIONS/CRITERIA FOR APPLE HEALTH AND MEDICARE MEMBERS

Children for whom psychological testing is being considered may be eligible for testing through the school district, especially if there are concerns about learning, behavioral, and/or emotional disorders possibly interfering with any aspect of schooling. If this is the case, parents should request in writing that the school district assess whether their child qualifies for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This will help ensure that test results are incorporated into the child’s school and

education plan. If a child already has an IEP or previous testing, they should be reviewed by the family and psychologist before requesting psychological testing.

Autism Centers of Excellence assessing children 0-20 years old for Autism may provide 9 units of psychological testing (any combination) without prior authorization.

Psychological testing is considered medically necessary when all the following criteria are met:

- Patient's abnormality requires measurement, monitoring, or differentiation between organic or behavioral cause
- There is a specific clinical question that can be answered by the psychological testing to establish a diagnosis or to inform the treatment plan.
- Other evaluations (including medical, neurologic, developmental pediatric, psychiatric and psychological evaluations, diagnostic testing, mental status testing, observation in therapy, or other assessments) have been inadequate for the formulation of the diagnosis and treatment plan
- Appropriate diagnostic testing has been completed (such as CT or MRI scans).
- Information received from psychological testing cannot be obtained by routine medical, neurologic, or psychological assessments.
- Results of proposed psychological testing are likely to contribute significantly to the treatment plan.
- Psychological testing is appropriate for the underlying behavioral disorder and will support the symptoms identified, behaviors or functional impairment.
- The patient's participation in psychological testing is reasonable based on their developmental level, mental status, intellectual, cognitive abilities and language skills.
- Psychiatric, or substance use disorders and other medical needs are met by collaborating with other providers involved in patient's care and support systems such as family or caregivers
- The amount of time requested for psychological testing is appropriate (9 hours or less) and supports testing implementation and scoring
- The frequency of testing is consistent with the norm (one initial testing evaluation followed by one additional re-testing evaluation within 12-month period)
- **Children who attend school must also meet the following criteria:**
 - There are specific clinical issues in the IEP that have not been sufficiently addressed by the IEP (if there is an IEP)
 - Psychological testing will improve the treatment plan compared with what the IEP is already addressing (if there is an IEP)
 - Verification from the school district that the district will not conduct testing for IEP eligibility (for school-age children without IEPs) or retesting (for children with IEPs)

Psychological testing is NOT appropriate for:

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- Screening for behavioral health conditions
- Adjustment disorders related to assuming residence in an extended care facility
- Patients who are currently engaged in substance use, in withdrawal, or who are only recently abstinent (less than 1 month) from drugs or alcohol as testing may be unreliable in such situations.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

Criteria for Medicare members is the same as for Apple Health members

Per Chapter 15 Section 80.2 of the Medicare Benefits Policy Manual, testing must be performed by the types of providers specified.

<https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/bp102c15.pdf>

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

None.

LIMITATIONS/EXCLUSIONS

Please refer to a product line's certificate of coverage for benefit limitations and exclusions for these services:

PRODUCT LINE	LINK TO CERTIFICATE OF COVERAGE
MEDICARE ADVANTAGE	http://healthfirst.chpw.org/for-members/resource-library/handbooks-and-guides
WASHINGTON HEALTH PROGRAM	http://chpw.org/our-plans/apple-health/

Citations & References

CFR		
WAC		
RCW		
Contract Citation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WAH	Outpatient Mental Health
	<input type="checkbox"/> IMC	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA	
Other Requirements		
NCQA Elements		
References	https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-	



	Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/bp102c15.pdf https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/billers-and-providers/mental-health-svc-bi-20180101.pdf
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Revision History

Revision Date	Revision Description	Revision Made By
06/18/2019	Initial policy developed	LuAnn Chen, MD
07/26/2019	Approval	UM Behavioral Health Committee
07/30/2019	Approval	UM Committee