

## PROVIDER ALERT

### Updates to 97156/97156-U2 and Treatment Plan Guidelines

September 28, 2023

#### Target Audience: Applied Behavior Analysis Providers

Optum Maryland would like to announce the following change to utilization of 97156/97156-U2 codes and updated language to the treatment plan requirements for parent/caregiver training.

1. Utilization of 97156 and 97156-U2 has been updated to allow both codes to be utilized on the same day by 1 rendering provider.
2. The language in the treatment plan requirements for parent training (# 6 in the [Treatment Plan Requirements](#) document) has been updated to include the following items to assist in determining if parent training is occurring in a “*clinically effective manner*” as outlined in COMAR 10.09.25.05 D ([Pages - 10.09.28.05.aspx \(maryland.gov\)](#))
  - The treatment plan should address how the guardian/caregiver will be trained in behavior management skills that can be generalized to the home
    - Caregiver is defined as anyone authorized to regularly look after and/or provides for the needs of the participant
  - Include a narrative discussing the overall progress with implementing ABA strategies and progress toward goals
  - Progress should be documented through quantitative baseline and data updates
  - Document any identified barriers to guardian/caregiver training, all actionable efforts made to mitigate the lack of parent training, and the plan with actionable items to address these barriers moving forward
  - Guardian/caregiver goals must relate to actionable implementation and practice of learned skills. These can include learning ABA content, generalization and maintenance of learned skills, behavior plan implementation, utilizing ABA strategies to teach skills (such as developing/using a task analysis) not covered under the benefit such as chores or academics, and/or transition and discharge planning
  - Note: If there is a lapse in direct services or a delay in beginning services due to staffing, it is best practice to utilize parent/caregiver training during this time to support the family, teach foundational ABA principles, and ensure continuity

For any other ABA-specific questions please contact Optum Maryland at [marylandproviderrelations@optum.com](mailto:marylandproviderrelations@optum.com).

Thank you,  
Optum Maryland Team