Bridging the Gap Therapy Solutions Sees Cause For Concern For Florida Special Needs Children and Families

Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) proposes dramatic pay cut for Special Needs Children. AHCA will host the first public meeting in a series of statewide meetings to introduce proposed changes to behavior analysis services covered under the Florida Medicaid program

TAMPA, Fla. (PRWEB) April 04, 2019 -- Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) recently sent out letters from Medicaid to affected Florida families stating pay cuts for Behavior Analysis services. These Medicaid pay cuts will dramatically effect programs and resources for special needs children and their families.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a science that focuses on improving various skills and behaviors. The science has been shown to increase clients functional communication ability, social skills, daily living skills (feeding, toileting, dressing, etc.) and overall quality of life. It can also help to decrease or eliminate inappropriate behaviors, such as physical aggression, tantrums, elopement, property destruction, or task refusal.

Interventions using ABA principles have been established for years and are most commonly known to be utilized with individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. However, the science can be utilized with anyone! Currently, ABA is widely utilized with disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder, Angelman Syndrome, Bi-Polar Disorder, and Down Syndrome.

"The proposed pay cut will cause clinics to lose Registered Behavior Technician (RBT's)," said Lindsey Meyer, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Bridging the Gap Therapy Solutions of Land O' Lakes, FL. "The RBT's are essential to the hours of service and intensive therapy we are able to provide children and their families. They are worth every penny of what they at currently paid. This proposal would cause us to have to drop their pay so low that they could get better paying jobs at local fast food restaurants."

“My son is 11 years old and suffers from a genetic disorder with severe developmental delay. Since 2013 he has been receiving ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) services. During the past few years he has reached many milestones and has achieved goals that he may have never achieved without these services,” parent, Duane Cameron, explains from Tampa, Fl. “ABA works on functional communication, daily living skills, how to interact with peers and members of the public, also teaching safety so he does not run in to traffic. If these changes take effect my son’s life will be forever changed and regression is inevitable. It is critical for him to continue to reach new goals and make improvements in his daily life.”

Currently Medicaid reimburses RBT services at $12.19 (per quarter hour). The proposed change would decrease the reimbursement by more than 50%. "We currently pay our RBTs $4.75/ quarter hour with the remaining $7.44 being used for workers comp, liability insurance, clinic rent and fees, supplies, travel time, non-billable time used for preparation of program materials, taxes, etc," said April Hurley BCBA also of BTG Therapy. "As you can see reducing the RBT reimbursement rate would have to drastically reduce their hourly pay, causing a mass exodus from this valuable field of care!”

To voice concerns or learn more, AHCA will host a series of statewide meetings to introduce proposed changes
to behavior analysis services covered under the Florida Medicaid program. The next AHCA meeting will be held this Friday on 4/5/19 between 10:30-11:30am at the AHCA Field Office located at 6800 N. Dale Mabry Highway, Suite 220, Tampa, Florida 33614.

Additional Statewide Meetings

Thursday, April 18, 2019 10:30 – 11:30 AM EDT Orlando
Agency for Health Care Administration, Medicaid Field Office
400 W. Robinson St., Suite N109 A&B (North Tower)
Orlando, FL 32801

Friday, April 19, 2019 10:30 – 11:30 AM EDT Jacksonville
Florida Department of Health
Bureau of Public Health Laboratories 1217 N. Pearl Street Jacksonville, FL 32202

Thursday, April 25, 2019 10:30 – 11:30 AM EDT Miami
Agency for Health Care Administration, Medicaid Field Office
8333 NW 53rd St.
Doral, FL 33166

Friday, April 26, 2019 10:30 – 11:30 AM EDT Ft. Lauderdale
Agency for Health Care Administration Medicaid, Field Office
1400 West Commercial Blvd, Suite 195
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33309

Friday, May 10, 2019 10:30 – 11:30 AM EDT Pensacola
Agency for Health Care Administration, Medicaid Field Office
160 W Governmental Center Suite 510
Pensacola, Florida 32502

For more information please contact Bridging the Gap Therapy Solutions (BTG Therapy) at 813-816-1786 or email admin@btgtherapy.com
Contact Information
Lindsey Meyer
Bridging The Gap Therapy Solutions
http://btgtherapy.com
+1 8138161786

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