

School-Based Medicaid Program (SBMP) Update for OT, PT, & SLP

December 14, 2022

Attention School-Based Providers,

We would like to ensure that you, as a school-based therapist, are aware of the many resources available to help you and your school district/local education agency (LEA) to understand and manage the requirements and process for participating in the Massachusetts School-Based Medicaid Program (SBMP). Please read on for background information and available resources.

The MassHealth School-Based Medicaid Program (SBMP) is a reimbursement mechanism to offset local education agency (LEA) costs for providing certain health care services and administrative activities in a school setting. Congress granted access to Medicaid reimbursement in 1988 due to shortages in IDEA funding.

In July of 2019, the Massachusetts SBMP underwent an [expansion](#) to include additional billable healthcare services (e.g., nursing, ABA services). This expansion resulted in changes (and perceived changes) that caused confusion for school-based therapists, particularly around determination of medical necessity and documentation requirements. The Massachusetts Tri-Alliance of School Therapists has been working collaboratively on behalf of school therapists with the School-Based Medicaid Program (SBMP) and other stakeholders to clarify the medical necessity determination and documentation requirements. This collaborative effort has resulted in some helpful changes and clarifications including revised and reissued guidance for LEAs and school providers which we have shared previously. In addition, the SBMP has put out a series of training webinars designed to inform all involved parties within LEAs of the SBMP process and requirements. All of these resources are available in the [SBMP Resource Center](#).

Key Resources

1. [Direct Service Claiming \(DSC\) Guide \(updated August 2020\)](#): Updated in 2020 with numerous changes including clarification on SBMP therapy services provided in the school setting. For example, this statement is now included in a section outlining reimbursable service requirements "This may include services that are provided to help students access the curriculum when provided because of an underlying medical (physical or behavioral health) need." (DSC Guide 2020, p.10)
2. [Top 5 Things Providers Need to Know](#): A "new" document created during the 20/21 school year providing essential information for school therapists and LEAs.
3. [SBMP 101 Trainings](#): MassHealth has provided a series of training modules that comprise a "Medicaid 101" training series for LEAs. This series provides foundational information about the SBMP in a series of modules focused on specific audiences at each LEA to provide information about the program that is most pertinent to each set of roles and responsibilities.
4. Check the [School-Based Medicaid Program website](#) for additional resources.
5. Sign up for the ["What's new with the SBMP?" listserv](#) to receive email notifications when new SBMP updates are posted.

The Massachusetts Tri-Alliance of School Therapists is working to support Massachusetts school-based OTs, PTs, and SLPs.

This document, with embedded links, can be accessed at maot.org, aptaofma.org, and msahahearsay.org