



State of New Jersey

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TO: SEMI Participating School Districts
FROM: Nancy Kuprewicz, SEMI Coordinator *Nancy Kuprewicz*
CC: Elaine Lerner, Elise Sadler-Williams, CSCS, Kate Grainger
RE: February 2011 Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Provider Handbook Revisions
DATE: March 14, 2011

Effective February 2011, the following changes have been made to the SEMI Provider Handbook:

- Audiology services are now claimable under the SEMI program.
- Qualifications for speech providers were modified to better align with Federal requirements.

These changes are reflected in the SEMI Provider Handbook that is available at the Department of Treasury website as well on each district's EasyTrac™ site.

Audiology Services

Definitions:

- Audiology includes the non-medical and non-surgical application of principles, methods and procedures of measurement, testing, evaluation, consultation, counseling, instruction, and habilitation or rehabilitation related to hearing, its disorders and related communication impairments for the purpose of nonmedical diagnosis, prevention, identification, amelioration or modification of these disorders and conditions in individuals or groups of individuals with speech, language or hearing handicaps, or to individuals or groups of individuals for whom these handicapping conditions must be ruled out. (NJSA 45:3B-2)
- Services for individuals with speech, hearing and language disorders means diagnostic, screening, preventive, or corrective services provided by or under the direction of a speech pathologist or audiologist, for which a patient is referred by a physician or other licensed practitioner of the healing arts within the scope of his or her practice under State law. (42 CFR § 440.110(c).)

Provider Qualifications:

- The federal Medicaid regulations state:
 - A qualified audiologist is an individual who holds a master's or doctoral degree in audiology that maintains documentation to demonstrate the he or she is licensed by the State to provide audiology services and the State's licensure requirements meet or

exceed the standards for obtaining a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

- The New Jersey Department of Education does not issue an educational certificate for audiology.
- Audiology services must be provided by or under the direction of a speech pathologist or audiologist who is qualified to bill Medicaid in accordance with State and federal guidelines. A qualified audiologist is an individual who is licensed by the State Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Committee in accordance with New Jersey law at NJSA 45:3B-1 et seq.

Record Retention:

- The LEA must maintain documentation that these qualifications are met for audiologists whose services are billed to Medicaid. The required documentation must include a copy of the State license or other verification of licensure.
- Audiology services required in a student's IEP must be documented as referred by a licensed physician or a qualified audiologist within the scope of his or her practice under New Jersey law. This documentation must be maintained in the student's records in accordance with New Jersey rules. Certification current to the date of service must be maintained with the service documentation or IEP.

Services Provided Under the Direction:

- Audiology services must be provided by or under the direction of a qualified audiologist who is licensed by the State. (42 CFR § 440.110(c)) Audiology services may be billed to Medicaid when provided by an unlicensed individual who is in the process of accumulating 350 clock-hours of supervised clinical experience under the direction of a licensed audiologist. "Under the direction" means that the licensed audiologist:
 - Maintains responsibility for the services delivered;
 - Sees the student, at least, once;
 - Provides input into the type of care provided;
 - Monitors treatment status after treatment has begun;
 - Meets regularly with the staff being supervised; and
 - Is available to the supervised staff.
- The licensed audiologist must sign the monthly related service documentation form or approve the logs of the Non-SEMI qualified audiologist in EasyTrac™.

Speech Services

Changes to Provider Qualifications:

- Previously, if a speech therapist had a DOE certification and met the qualifications for ASHA certification, was licensed at any point, or had completed the equivalent educational requirements and work experience necessary for ASHA certification, then that person was considered to be SEMI qualified.
- *Effective February 2011: In order to be considered SEMI qualified, a speech therapist must have*
 - DOE Certification and current ASHA or

- DOE certification and a current license from the State Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Committee.

Changes to Evaluation/IEP Service:

- Previously, speech therapy services required in a student's IEP had to be documented as referred by a qualified speech-language pathologist, speech-language specialist or other titles authorized by New Jersey law (NJSA 45;3B-2).
- *Effective February 2011:* In order to bill for speech-language services as documented in a student's IEP, a student's evaluation/IEP (Evaluation Services, as identified in Section B of the SEMI Provider Handbook) must specify that speech services are ordered by a licensed physician (order must be maintained with the IEP) or a New Jersey licensed speech language pathologist and holds a DOE certification as a speech language specialist (N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.6 (a)(b)) who must either sign the IEP or provide documentation that identifies the referral of speech services that are included in or with the student's IEP (N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.3k 10 (i)).