

## BCN to use updated InterQual® ABA criteria starting March 1

Starting March 1, 2023, the Blue Care Network Behavioral Health department will use updated InterQual® applied behavior analysis criteria when making determinations on prior authorization requests for ABA services. This will apply to BCN commercial members undergoing autism therapy.

The most significant updates to the criteria are outlined in the following table.

Service	Current criteria	Updated criteria
Parent / caregiver training	Training must occur once every three or four weeks with 80% or greater attendance.	The parent or caregiver is adequately participating in treatment and training sessions.  <b>Important:</b> The footnotes in the InterQual criteria are not specific about what constitutes adequate parent/caregiver training in terms of frequency or duration. However, the BCN Behavioral Health department staff and medical director will consider training to be adequate when it occurs at least one hour per month.
ABA treatment: recommended number of hours per week	A certain number of line therapy hours per week are suggested based on whether criteria were met or not met.	The recommended amount of line therapy is based on the severity of the developmental delay or problem behaviors exhibited by the member in conjunction with the number of hours per week they are involved in school or work or a similar program activity.  <b>Important:</b> The severity is categorized as mild, moderate, or severe, and general guidelines for these severity categories can be found in the InterQual criteria footnotes.  The number of hours authorized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can range from 10 hours per week for members with mild symptoms who are involved in full-time school/work/similar program activity to 40 hours per week for members who are not involved in school/work/similar program activity</li> <li>• Depend on the member's age, as well</li> </ul>

Contact the Behavioral Health department at 1-800-482-5982 if you have questions or if you want to request a copy of the updated ABA criteria we'll use starting March 1, 2023.