

Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems

**Florida Medicaid
Guidelines
and
Review Process**

**June 24, 2011
Medicaid Quarterly Therapy Forum**

Which AAC Devices Are Reimbursable by Medicaid?

- Dedicated AAC systems

versus

- Non-dedicated AAC systems (not covered)

Who is Eligible?

- Demonstrate a severe, expressive communication disorder
- Have **the physical, cognitive, and language abilities necessary to use the specific type AAC device requested, supported through documentation in an evaluation performed and dated by a licensed speech-language pathologist within the past 6 months**

Are there Age Criteria for Eligibility?

- **21 years of age and older or not enrolled in public school or homeschooled**
 - Does not require an Interdisciplinary Team, but requires that evaluation be completed by a speech-language pathologist
 - Individualized Action Plan or Plan of Care
- **Under 21 years of age**
 - Interdisciplinary Team
 - Individualized Action Plan or Plan of Care

Documentation Required in Speech-Language Evaluation

- ✓ Significant Medical Diagnosis(es)
- ✓ Significant Treatment and Medications
- ✓ Medical Prognosis
- ✓ Motor Skills
- ✓ Cognitive Skills
- ✓ Sensory and Perceptual Abilities

Documentation Required in Speech-Language Evaluation, Cont'd

- ✓ Language Comprehension
- ✓ Expressive Language Capabilities
- ✓ Oral Motor Speech Status
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Writing Impairments
- ✓ Environment and Barriers

Documentation Required in Speech-Language Evaluation, Cont'd

- ✓ AAC Device Recommendation
 - General Features of the Recommended AAC device
 - Input Features
 - Output Features

Other Features

- Portability and weight
- Need for a protective carrying case
- Battery
- Mount, if needed
 - provide specifics and copy of manufacturer's catalog – pricing and information
- Keyguard

Report Requirements

- Evaluator's printed name, title, professional license number or DOE Certification
- Legible and dated signature (all evaluations are valid for 6 months from the date of evaluation)
- Evaluator's telephone number and name of office/facility/company for contact purposes

Individual Action Plan or Plan of Care

- If AAC device is currently used and/or owned
- Current use of the system(s) and limitations
 - Should demonstrate that recipient can use a low tech device. If recipient is able to learn to use the low tech device well and consistently, and is advancing in language, this gives support that a higher tech device is indicated.
- If treatment results do not demonstrate a low tech device is being used and that new words or images are required, then it may not be time for a higher tech device.
- Appropriate long and short-term therapy objectives

Individual Action Plan or Plan of Care, Cont'd

- Recommended AAC Device (cost effective and meets need)
- Recommended length of trial period if applicable
- Description of any AAC devices (low-tech, no tech) that recipient has previously tried
- Benefits of the recommended AAC over other possibilities

Individual Action Plan or Plan of Care, Cont'd

- Plan for Mounting (if needed)
- Plan for Repairing
- Plan for Maintaining Device

AAC Selection is Based on:

- Current Medical Needs
- Projected changes in recipient's communication development over at least a 3 year period

Please note: Florida Medicaid's policy for AACs is one device per five years.

Prior Authorization Process 21 and Under

- Interdisciplinary Team evaluates, recommends, writes, no conflict statement
- Concurrence Form by public school personnel (or home school personnel)
- Sends to designated physician
- Physician reviews and if concurs signs prescription
- Interdisciplinary Team forwards prior authorization request to the DME provider
- Provider sends to Medicaid fiscal agent

Review Process

- Medicaid Professional Consultant(s) reviews the PA Packet
- Consultant may request **additional documentation and video of the recipient using the device** in different functional settings
- Upon receipt of additional documentation, consultant reviews total documentation

Review Process, Cont'd

- Consultant prepares an approval or denial report
- Medicaid headquarters submits report to provider who submits decision to SLP and family

Current AAC device providers

ASSISTIVE TECH, INC.

DYNAVOX SYSTEMS, LLC.

FORBES REHAB SERVICES, INC.

PRENTKE ROMICH CO.

WORDS +, INC.

WRIGHTWAY CONSULTING, INC.

QUESTIONS ?

