

Level of Care Guidelines: UnitedHealthcare Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Instructions for Use](#)

[Provider Qualifications](#)

[Coverage Rationale/Limitations](#)

[Developmental Testing](#)

[References](#)

INTRODUCTION

These *Level of Care Guidelines* provide further guidance regarding provider qualifications, coverage rationale and limitations, and developmental testing.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

This Level of Care Guideline is used along with the American Psychological Association's Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Billing and Coding Guide to make coverage decisions as well as to inform discussions about evidence-based practices and discharge planning. When deciding coverage, the member's specific benefits must be referenced.

All reviewers must first identify member eligibility, the member-specific benefit plan coverage, and any federal or state regulatory requirements that supersede the member's benefits prior to using this guideline. In the event that the requested service or procedure is limited or excluded from the benefit, is defined differently or there is otherwise a conflict between this guideline and the member's specific benefit, the member's specific benefit supersedes this guideline. Other clinical criteria may apply.

This guideline is provided for informational purposes. It does not constitute medical advice.

PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS

Psychological Testing:

Psychological Test Evaluation Services is a set of formal procedures utilizing reliable and validated tests designed to measure areas of intellectual, cognitive emotional, and behavioral functioning, in addition to identifying psychopathology, personality style, interpersonal processes, and adaptive skills. Service activities can include test selection, review of records, consultation with referral source, integration of clinical data, clinical decision making, preparation of the testing report, and reviewing the results of testing with member and/or caregivers.

- The provider's professional training and licensure include any of the following:
 - A doctoral-level psychologist who is licensed to practice independently and demonstrates sufficient training and experience.
 - A masters-degreed behavioral health professional whose licensure specifically allows for provision of psychological testing services.
 - The masters-degreed provider has professional expertise in the types of tests/assessments being administered.
 - The masters-degreed provider is conducting test evaluation services in accordance with licensing standards and psychological testing professional and ethical standards.

Psychological Test Administration and Scoring is the formal process of administering reliable and validated tests selected by the doctoral-level psychologist or qualified masters-degreed provider according to standardized test manual instructions and scoring the respondents answers to test items.

- The provider's professional training and licensure include any of the following:
 - A doctoral-level psychologist who is licensed to practice independently and demonstrates sufficient training and experience.
 - A psychometrist or psychometrician who administers and scores psychological tests under the supervision of a licensed doctoral-level psychologist, and whose services are billed by the supervising psychologist.
 - The supervising psychologist must have face-to-face contact with the member at intake and during the feedback session.
 - The supervising psychologist is also responsible for final test interpretation, report writing, and final signature of approval.
 - A masters-degreed behavioral health professional whose licensure specifically allows for provision of psychological testing services.
 - The masters-degreed provider has professional expertise in the types of tests/assessments being administered.
 - The masters-degreed provider is conducting test administration and scoring in accordance with licensing standards and psychological testing professional and ethical standards.

Neuropsychological Testing:

Neuropsychological Test Evaluation Services is a set of formal procedures utilizing reliable and valid tests specifically focused on identifying the presence of brain damage, injury, or dysfunction, and any associated functional deficits. Service activities can include test selection, review of records, consultation with referral source, integration of clinical data, clinical decision making, preparation of the testing report, and reviewing the results of testing with member and/or caregivers.

- Neuropsychological testing is within the scope of the provider's professional training and licensure when the provider is any of the following:
 - A doctoral-level psychologist who is licensed to practice independently and demonstrates sufficient training and experience.
 - A credentialed psychiatrist who meets the following requirements:
 - Recognized certification in neurology through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology;
 - Accreditation in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry through the American Neuropsychiatric Association;
 - State medical licensure specifically allowing for the provision of neuropsychological testing service(s);
 - Evidence of professional training and expertise in the specific tests and/or assessment measures for which authorization is requested;
 - Physician and supervised psychometrician(s) adhere to the prevailing national professional and ethical standards regarding test administration, scoring, and interpretation.

Neuropsychological Test Administration and Scoring is the formal process of administering reliable and validated tests selected by the doctoral-level psychologist or qualified provider according to standardized test manual instructions and scoring the respondents answers to test items.

- Neuropsychological Test Administration and Scoring is within the scope of the provider's professional training and licensure when the provider is any of the following:
 - A doctoral-level psychologist who is licensed to practice independently and demonstrates sufficient training and experience.
 - A psychometrist or psychometrician who administers and scores psychological tests under the supervision of a licensed doctoral-level psychologist, and whose services are billed by the supervising psychologist.

Community Plan

- The supervising psychologist must have face-to-face contact with the member at intake and during the feedback session.
- The supervising psychologist is also responsible for final test interpretation, report writing, and final signature of approval.
- A credentialed psychiatrist who meets the following requirements:
 - Recognized certification in neurology through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology;
 - Accreditation in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry through the American Neuropsychiatric Association;
 - State medical licensure specifically allowing for the provision of neuropsychological testing service(s);
 - Evidence of professional training and expertise in the specific tests and/or assessment measures for which authorization is requested;
 - Physician and supervised psychometrician(s) adhere to the prevailing national professional and ethical standards regarding test administration, scoring, and interpretation.

Automated Testing and Result:

*Automated Testing and Result is primarily a method of screening for potentially clinically significant intellectual, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral symptoms or functional deficits that utilizes a **single** reliable and validated instrument that has fully automated administration, scoring and interpretation. Automated Testing may also be used to quickly estimate changes in clinical status over time either as a method of obtaining an objective measure of progress in treatment or periodic objective surveillance of known risk issues.*

- Automated Testing and Result is within the scope of the provider's professional training and licensure when the provider is any of the following:
 - A doctoral-level psychologist who is licensed to practice independently and demonstrates sufficient training and experience.
 - A masters-degreed behavioral health professional whose licensure specifically allows for provision of psychological testing services.
 - The masters-degreed provider has professional expertise in the types of tests/assessments being administered.
 - The masters-degreed provider is conducting test administration, scoring and interpretation in accordance with licensing standards and psychological testing professional and ethical standards.
 - A credentialed psychiatrist who meets the following requirements:
 - Recognized certification in neurology through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology;
 - Accreditation in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry through the American Neuropsychiatric Association;
 - State medical licensure specifically allowing for the provision of neuropsychological testing service(s);
 - Evidence of professional training and expertise in the specific tests and/or assessment measures for which authorization is requested;
 - Physician and supervised psychometrician(s) adhere to the prevailing national professional and ethical standards regarding test administration, scoring, and interpretation.

COVERAGE RATIONALE/LIMITATIONS

- Coverage indications, limitations and medical necessity for Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing are referenced in the American Psychological Association's Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing and Billing and Coding Guide.
- Neuropsychological testing is unproven and not medically necessary for the following:
 - Baseline neuropsychological testing in asymptomatic persons at risk for sport-related concussions
 - Computerized neuropsychological testing when used alone for evaluating concussions
 - Neuropsychological testing for the following diagnoses alone without other covered conditions as noted above:

Community Plan

- Headaches, including migraine headache;
- History of myocardial infarction;
- Intermittent explosive disorder.
- Computerized cognitive testing, such as Mindstreams® Cognitive Health Assessment, BrainCare™ and QbTest.

DEVELOPMENTAL TESTING, ASSESSMENT OF APHASIA, COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE TESTING

- Assessment of Aphasia (96105) is the evaluation of expressive and receptive speech and language function, language comprehension, speech production ability, spelling or writing with interpretation and report per hour. This procedure is often conducted by a speech language therapist. It is not considered a form of psychological testing and is not typically covered under the behavioral health benefit.
- Standardized cognitive performance testing (96125) is an occupational therapy assessment used to assess capacity to function in activities of daily living. It is not considered a form of psychological or neuropsychological testing and is not typically covered under the behavioral health benefit.
- Developmental Testing (96110, 96112, 96113, 96127) is an adjunct to the routine surveillance for developmental delays in young children. This procedure is often conducted by a developmental pediatrician, or a speech, language, physical or occupational therapist. It is not considered a form of psychological testing, and is not typically covered under the behavioral health benefit.

REFERENCES

American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology. *Neuropsychology model LCD* 2012. Retrieved from: https://theaacn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/neuropsychology_model_lcd-1.pdf.

American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology. Practice guidelines for neuropsychological assessment and consultation. *The Clinical Neuropsychologist* 2007; 21(2):209-231. 2007.

American Psychiatric Association. *Practice guidelines for the psychiatric evaluation of adults* (3rd ed.) 2016; Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.) 2013; Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

American Psychiatric Association. Guideline Watch: Practice guideline for the treatment of patients with alzheimer's disease and other dementias 2014; Arlington VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

American Psychological Association. Guidelines for the evaluation of dementia and age-related cognitive change. *American Psychologist* 2012; 67(1):1-9.

American Psychological Association. *Report of the task force on test user qualifications* 2000; Washington, DC: Author.

Bauer RM, Iverson GL, Cernich AN, Binder LM, Ruff RM, & Naugle RI. Computerized neuropsychological assessment devices: Joint position paper of the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology and the National Academy of Neuropsychology. *Clin Neuropsychol* 2012; 26(2):177-196.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. *Local coverage determination (LCD): Psychological and neuropsychological testing* 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/details/lcd-details.aspx?LCDId=34646>

American Medical Association, CPT 2019 Professional Edition, 2019.

Puente AE, Adams R, Barr WB, Bush SS, NAN Policy and Planning Committee, Ruff RM, Barth JT, Broshek D, Koffler SP, Reynolds C, Silver CH, Troster AI, & the National Academy of Neuropsychology. The use, education, training and supervision of neuropsychological test technicians (psychometrists) in clinical practice. Official statement of the National Academy of Neuropsychology. *Arch Clin Neuropsychol* 2006; 21(8):837-839.



[2021] Level of Care Guidelines
Psychological and Neuropsychological
Testing

Turner SM, DeMers ST, Fox HR, & Reed GM. APA's guidelines for test user qualifications: An executive summary. *American Psychologist* 2001; 56(12):1099-1113.