



DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT)

PURPOSE

Performance specifications are intended to enhance MassHealth Enrollee experience and outcomes by promoting transparency and consistency across Plans and providers. Performance specifications are expectations imposed on providers who contract for these specific and related services. Information contained in this document is based on publicly available information, Plan expectations, your contract, and MassHealth guidance. This information should be materially like any other MassHealth contracted Plan. Performance specifications, your provider manual, and other requirements can be found at providerexpress.com.

Providers contracted for this level of care or service are expected to comply with applicable regulations set forth in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, and all requirements of these service-specific performance specifications. In addition, providers of all contracted services are held accountable to the General Performance Specifications. Where there are differences between the service-specific and General Performance Specifications, the service-specific specifications take precedence.

OVERVIEW

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) is a structured outpatient treatment as defined by Marsha Linehan, PhD (Linehan, et. al., *Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder*, New York: Guilford Press, 1993), which combines strategies from behavioral, cognitive, and other supportive psychotherapies. DBT services encompass individual therapy, DBT skills group, therapeutic consultation to the Enrollee on the telephone, and the therapists' internal consultation meetings. Through an integrated treatment team approach to services, DBT seeks to enhance the quality of the Enrollee's life through group skills training and individual therapy with a dialectical approach of support and confrontation.

DBT is available for adults who meet the DSM-5 diagnosis for borderline personality disorder and who exhibit chronic para-suicidal behaviors.

DBT is also available for adolescents who meet three of the nine DSM-5 criteria for borderline personality disorder and who exhibit suicidal or self-injurious behaviors.

The following **Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)** performance specifications are a subset of the Outpatient Services performance specifications. As such, DBT providers agree to adhere to both the Outpatient Services performance specifications and to the DBT performance specifications contained within. Where there are differences between the Outpatient Services and DBT performance specifications, these DBT specifications take precedence.

SERVICE COMPONENTS

1. The DBT program ensures there is a designated DBT primary therapist for each Enrollee.
2. The DBT therapist follows the Linehan model in the provision of DBT services.
3. The scope of required service components provided in this level of care includes the following, offered to Enrollees on a weekly basis:
 - a) Individual therapy with a DBT-trained therapist
 - b) DBT skills training group
4. Telephonic, therapeutic consultation/support/coaching (24-hour) with the Enrollee.
5. The DBT program uses weekly internal consultation with individual and group therapists to review treatment and to facilitate DBT skill development.
6. When adolescents are treated, family members are involved in treatment and participate in skills group therapy sessions.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

1. The provider complies with the staffing requirements of the applicable licensing body, the staffing requirements in the Plan service-specific performance specifications, and the credentialing criteria outlined in the Plan Provider Manual, Volume I, as referenced at providerexpress.com.
2. The DBT program maintains sufficient staffing to deliver the service in accordance with the Linehan model.
3. The DBT program is comprised of a minimum of two DBT-credentialed therapists who oversee the provision of all DBT services.
4. There are sufficient staff to provide all components of service, including weekly individual therapy and group skills training, telephonic coaching, and crisis intervention as needed.
5. The skills training group is led by a DBT-credentialed therapist. The co-leader may be a master's-level therapist who has not met the DBT credentialing requirements.
6. DBT therapists have a demonstrated capacity to handle crises as they arise and make use of crisis prevention plans as needed.

SERVICE, COMMUNITY AND OTHER LINKAGES

None

PROCESS SPECIFICATIONS

None

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

1. The provider will develop and maintain a quality management plan that is consistent with their contractual responsibilities to Optum, and which utilizes appropriate measures to monitor, measure, and improve the activities and services it provides.
2. A continuous quality improvement process is utilized and may include outcome measures and satisfaction surveys to measure and improve the quality of care and services delivered to Enrollees, including youth and their families.
3. Clinical outcomes data must be made available to Optum upon request and must be consistent with the performance specifications of this service.
4. Providers must report any adverse incidents and other reportable events that occur to the relevant authorities.