

Clinical Operations Policy 602

Straight to Therapy Admissions Process

Effective Date: August 19, 2012

Supersedes Date: May 1, 2023

Review Date: May 2027

Policy: Patients wishing to be admitted to therapy without having an evaluation at the Memphis Speech and Hearing Center must submit the results of a complete speech/language evaluation. The evaluation must be administered by a certified speech-language pathologist and include test results with standard scores, if applicable. If the Patient is a child under the age of three years, the parent or guardian must submit the results of a hearing evaluation completed by a certified audiologist. Any Patient above the age of three years will undergo a hearing screening upon admission. All tests must be “current,” defined as: within six months for birth to four- year-old; twelve months for children above four years of age.

Procedure:

- I. Verbal request from patient/parent/caregiver or professional
 - a. When the request is received to bypass the evaluation and be directly enrolled into therapy, the business office personnel taking the call will do the following:
 - b. Describe the “Straight to Therapy” process.
 - c. Describe the Waiting List process.
 - d. Explain the nature of a student training program. Specifically, that student clinicians provide services under the supervision of a certified clinician.
 - e. Convey that the appropriate therapy programs are recommended only after all reports are reviewed by the clinical supervisor.
 - f. Inform the caller about Tennessee Early Intervention Services (TEIS) if the child is under age three.
 - g. Request all required documentation, as listed below:
 - i. A complete current speech/language evaluation administered by a certified speech/language pathologist. “Current” means within six months for children ages birth to four and twelve months for individuals four and above.
 - ii. A complete current (within six months) hearing evaluation administered by a certified audiologist if the child is under the age of three years.
 - h. Inform them that once a slot is available a physician’s referral is necessary if services are to be covered by insurance.
 - i. If asked, provide three resources of information regarding other therapy providers.
 - j. Obtain insurance provider information.
 - k. Report therapy fee schedule.
 - l. Intake Information
 - m. The designated business associate scans all information into EMR
 - n. Once reports and documentation are received, a reminder is sent to the reviewing SLP
 - o. Evaluation information is reviewed

- p. All straight to therapy requests will be managed by an assigned SLP, who will review the speech/language diagnostic report(s) and:
 - i. Determine if reports are complete and current.
 - ii. Determine if further testing will be required.
 - iii. Make recommendations/referrals as appropriate.
 - iv. If the child is under the age of three or the Patient has a significant hearing history the hearing diagnostic information is reviewed by an Audiologist faculty member and will:
 - 1. Determine if reports are complete and current.
 - 2. Determine if further testing will be required.
 - 3. Make recommendations/referrals as appropriate.
- q. If all information is complete, the reviewing SLP will request that the office associate contact the parent/Patient to inform them of the decision.
- r. Following the decision to proceed, the reviewing SLP will add the patient to the SLP Therapy Wait List located in the Team-MSHC Clinicians. The SLP will include the disorder(s), severity, recommendations, and recommended therapy program(s), and the evaluation date.
- s. If appropriate, more than one program should be considered when making the recommendation.
- t. The business associate will contact the Patient/parent to inform them that all paperwork has been received and that they have been placed on the request for services list (waiting list). They will also confirm:
 - i. the Patient/parent(s) name(s)
 - ii. address(es)
 - iii. contact numbers (multiple numbers are helpful)
 - iv. and insurance provider information.
 - v. They will also remind the (Patient or caregiver to notify MSHC if any contact information changes.
- u. If the Patient has specific questions regarding the recommendation or any other clinical process, they will be referred to the SLP in charge of the therapy program.
- v. If the information submitted for review is incomplete, the reviewing SLP will forward the file to the business associate to contact the parent/caregiver and request the missing data.

II. Scheduling the Patient

- a. The faculty member submits information in the Patient Management System that indicates the Patient is "Straight to Therapy".
- b. The business associate will enter the schedule and contact the insurance carrier for precertification if applicable.
- c. The responsible party who calls to schedule the therapy will advise the Patient to come early on the first day to complete the paperwork. Every effort will be made to provide the paperwork to the Patient before the appointment.

III. Patient check-in on the first therapy visit

- a. On the first therapy visit the Patient will sign-in and will follow procedures for the check-in of new Patients (Policy C-217).

- b. The student clinician and faculty member will review the updated information before the session. Additional testing, including a hearing screening, may be performed in the first session.