

## **Fact Sheet**

### **Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)**

#### **For Co-Occurring Disorders**

#### **What is EPSDT?**

EPSDT is a federally mandated Medicaid (known as Medi-Cal in California) benefit for full-scope Medi-Cal beneficiaries under age 21. Under Title XIX, this benefit is funded with federal financial participation (FFP) funds that are matched with state and county dollars to provide medically necessary procedure or treatment services needed to correct or ameliorate a defect, physical illness, mental illness or a condition, even if the service or item is not otherwise included in the State's Medicaid Plan. (Source: Title 22, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Sections 51184; 51242; 51340; 51532)

Under a federal Freedom of Choice 1915 (b) Waiver, County Mental Health Plans (MHPs) are responsible for the provision of medically necessary EPSDT specialty mental health services for children or youth who meet the EPSDT and medical necessity criteria.

#### **Program Eligibility**

The EPSDT benefit provides a variety of services for children and adolescents from birth through age twenty who meet Medi-Cal eligibility and medical necessity requirements. Most children who meet Medi-Cal eligibility requirements are from families with annual incomes up to approximately 100% of the federal poverty level or have been removed from their homes and made dependents of the court. In order to receive services, The medical necessity criteria has three components: diagnosis; impairment and intervention. The criteria for full scope Medi-Cal eligible beneficiaries under the age of 21 is the same as for all other beneficiaries except if the beneficiary does not meet the impairment and intervention criteria. If they do not meet the Title 9 impairment/intervention criteria, they must meet the requirement in Title 22, Section 51340(e)(3) including the following: ) "The services are necessary to correct or ameliorate defects and physical and mental illnesses and conditions....." This means that EPSDT eligible children or youth must receive these services if they have an included diagnosis, their condition would not be responsive to physical healthcare based treatment, and the service will correct or ameliorate the diagnosed mental illness..

#### **Program Funding**

Medi-Cal specialty mental health services are funded with a mix of federal, state, and county funds. The federal Department of Health and Human Services determines the Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (approximately fifty percent) for the FFP in the cost of California's Medi-Cal services. For EPSDT specialty mental health services, counties must pay the fifty percent match, pursuant to Realignment I, until it reaches its adjusted fiscal-year 1994-95 baseline of expenditures for specialty mental health services (i.e., the EPSDT baseline). The State Department of Mental Health receives State General Funds to pay part of the fifty percent match for costs that exceed the EPSDT baseline. In 2002, in an effort to ensure that counties had an "incentive" to control costs, the Administration imposed an additional 10% county share of cost on growth in the EPSDT program thereby slightly reducing the State General Funds fifty percent match portion.

#### **Who Can Provide EPSDT Services?**

Services must be provided within the scope of practice of the person delivering service, if professional licensure is required for the service. Rehabilitative services must be provided under the direction of a Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA). The LPHA direction may include, but is not limited to being the person directly providing the service, acting as a clinical team leader, direct or functional supervision of service delivery, or approval of client plans. Individuals are not required to be physically present at the service site to exercise direction.

### **What mental health services are provided under EPSDT?**

The EPSDT benefit provides eligible children with access to a range of mental health services that include, but are not limited to:

- Individual Therapy
- Targeted Case Management
- Group Therapy
- Collateral Contacts
- Crisis Intervention/Stabilization
- Medication Support Services
- Day Treatment
- Day Rehabilitation
- Mental Health Assessment
- Rehabilitation
- Therapeutic Behavioral Services

### **Can mental health EPSDT Medi-Cal providers provide substance abuse interventions and bill such services to the local county's Mental Health Plan (MHP) EPSDT program?**

The California Department of Mental Health's letter to each county mental health director dated January 29, 2006, stated, "As specified in an amendment to the Interagency Agreement between DHS and DMH, counties will... 3) provide services for EPSDT beneficiaries dually diagnosed with mental health and substance abuse problems directed at the substance abuse component of the beneficiaries' needs if such treatment is consistent with and necessary to the attainment of the goals for mental health treatment and such services are not otherwise available."

### **Where Can I Find More Information?**

- California Department of Mental Health website:

<http://www.dmh.ca.gov/DMHDocs/default.asp>. and  
[http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Laws\\_and\\_Regulations/default.asp](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Laws_and_Regulations/default.asp).

- DMH Information Notice No.: 95-12, *Estimated Funding Request for the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program*. (Includes an *EPSDT Briefing Document* and a paper on EPSDT expansion opportunities.)  
<http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/DMHDocs/docs/notices95/95-12not.pdf>.
- DMH Letter No.: 96-05, *EPSDT Day Treatment Intensive Providers*.
- DMH Letter No.: 88-33, September 29, 1988, *Billing for Dually Diagnosed Clients*.
- DMH Letter No.: 99-03, *Therapeutic Behavioral Services*.
- County Mental Health Director: <http://www.cmhda.org/>.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services:  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidEarlyPeriodicScrn/>.
- California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, ADP #97-54 letter.
- State Office of Alcohol and Drug Programs, July 24, 1998, correspondence and ADP Bulletin 98-37, *Standard for Services Provided to the Dually Diagnosed*.
- California Department of Health Services, All County Welfare Directors Letter No.: 95-57.