



Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) parent toolkit



This guide helps families and caregivers address the needs of TRICARE beneficiaries with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Facts about ASD

- ASD symptoms vary from person to person and no two individuals with ASD are the same.
- Individuals diagnosed with ASD may have other conditions such as intellectual disabilities, seizure disorders, psychiatric disorders, chromosomal abnormalities, eating disorders, sleep disorders, elimination disorders and destructive behavior (e.g., self-injury and aggression).
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is based on the sciences of learning and behavior to improve a person's ability to function in key areas affected by ASD.
- ABA services may be comprehensive (addressing many treatment targets in multiple areas) or may be focused on a limited number of treatment targets like severe problem behaviors and/or adjusting behaviors.



Family/Caregiver FAQs

Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) at a glance



TRICARE offers comprehensive health benefits and supplemental programs to address the needs of all TRICARE beneficiaries with an ASD diagnosis.

ACD benefits

The ACD covers ABA services and autism services coordination via the Autism Services Navigator (ASN) for all eligible beneficiaries with an ASD diagnosis. ABA services include an initial assessment, an individual Treatment Plan (TP), one-on-one ABA services, monitoring the beneficiary's progress and providing treatment advice to family members/caregivers. Participation of Active Duty Family Members (ADFM) in the ACD requires enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) and registration in Extended Care Health Option (ECHO).

Learn more about the ACD at TRICARE.mil/ACD

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)

The EFMP is provided by the sponsor's branch of service. The EFMP is designed to help ADFMs identify and access programs and services. In addition, families can receive assistance with navigating military and community systems of support.

Find out more about EFMP at installations.militaryonesource.mil

Extended Care Health Option (ECHO)

The ECHO benefit supplements the TRICARE Basic Program. The ECHO program gives eligible beneficiaries an additional financial resource for services and supplies.

To learn more about ECHO visit TRICARE.mil/ECHO

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Family/Caregiver FAQs

Topic: ECHO and EFMP

Must beneficiaries complete the ECHO registration process before receiving ECHO services?



No. Humana Military may grant ECHO-eligible beneficiaries a temporary, 90-day eligibility status while completing the process. During this time, the beneficiary can receive authorized ECHO benefits. To learn more about ECHO, visit TRICARE.mil/ECHO

How will beneficiaries know if they are eligible for the ECHO program?



In addition to contacting the sponsor/guardian by phone, Humana Military gives the sponsor/guardian written notice of the eligibility and adds information to the beneficiary's Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) record.

Under what circumstances might beneficiaries be determined no longer eligible for the ECHO program?

- The beneficiary has lost TRICARE eligibility
- The beneficiary no longer has a qualifying condition
- The beneficiary does not otherwise meet eligibility requirements of the ECHO program

Is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) a benefit under the ECHO program?



No. ABA is a covered benefit under the Autism Care Demonstration (ACD). ADFMs must register for the ECHO program to be considered eligible for the ACD.

Who is eligible for case management services?

ADFM's registered in the ECHO program are assigned a Humana Military ECHO case manager to assist with care coordination. Additionally, case management services may also be available for those non-active duty family members who meet case management criteria.

Beneficiaries new to the ACD on or after October 1, 2021 must enroll with an Autism Services Navigator (ASN). Your ASN will complete a full assessment to assist in coordination and support of services and access to care.

What are the steps to enroll in the EFMP?



ADFM's must obtain paperwork from the EFMP medical point of contact at their local military hospital or clinic. Find your service branch's EFMP representative by visiting installations.militaryonesource.mil

What are the steps to register for the ECHO program?

To learn about the ECHO registration process, visit TRICARE.mil/ECHO



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Family/Caregiver FAQs

Topic: ABA

What if a beneficiary is identified as ineligible for the ACD?



Humana Military works with the family to identify other appropriate treatments. Ineligibility for the ACD does not preclude eligible beneficiaries from receiving otherwise allowable services under TRICARE.

What are steps to participate in the ACD?



To qualify for the ACD, your dependent must be referred for ABA services and include a definitive diagnosis of ASD using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fifth Edition (DSM-5 or current edition) criteria by an approved ASD-diagnosing provider (Primary Care Manager (PCM) or specialized ASD-diagnosing provider).

The DSM criteria must be documented in a DHA-approved checklist in the referral. In addition, a validated assessment tool must confirm the ASD diagnosis. To learn about how to participate in the ACD, visit TRICARE.mil/ACD.

Am I assigned a case manager even if I am not enrolled in ECHO?

All beneficiaries new to the ACD after October 1, 2021, must be enrolled and participate with an ASN to qualify for the ACD.

What will my Autism Services Navigator (ASN) do for me?

As the guardian for an eligible beneficiary, you must collaborate with your ASN to complete a an initial assessment to review and identify needs or resources for the child and family assessment and a Comprehensive Care Plan (CCP).

Your CCP will allow your ASN to assist you in coordinating any services and support to improve access to care. Your ASN will serve as a single Point of Contact to assist with coordination of services, provide needed resources and facilitate continuity of care if and when you move, the sponsor retires or a provider becomes unavailable.

Where is treatment delivered?

ABA services may be delivered in a clinical or home setting.

Billing for services outside of the home or clinic are excluded. Any other setting must be approved by the Managed Care Support Contractor and must meet TRICARE policy. ABA in the school

setting must be rendered by the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). Services by an Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) in the school are no longer allowed. Certain community settings such as sporting events, camps and other settings as determined by Humana Military are also excluded. Any location not listed must be reviewed and approved by Humana Military.

How is progress monitored?



Outcome evaluations are completed and reported to help determine the effectiveness of care. For all beneficiaries participating in the ACD, outcome evaluations must be completed and reported using norm-referenced, valid and reliable evaluation tools. These measures are due at regular intervals to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of ABA and to determine other necessary goals not addressed. ABA services will not be authorized without the measures being submitted as required.

Who may be included in your ABA treatment team?



The treatment team may include providers involved in the child's care and the guardian(s). Factors such as the severity of the diagnosis and availability of providers/services will influence the shape of your treatment team. Treatment team members may include but are not limited to the family/caregiver, Primary Care Manager (PCM), specialized ASD-diagnosing provider, Autism Care Demonstration Corporate Services Provider (ACSP), Behavior Analyst and other providers.

What is the format for the ABA assessment?



Conducted by an authorized ABA supervisor, methods used include direct observation, the measurement and recording of behavior, parent/caregiver interview(s) and parent/caregiver rating scales.

How are ABA treatment goals and objectives determined?



Treatment goals and objectives are determined by the ABA treatment team and are based on multiple data sources (i.e., assessment results, family/caregiver and provider availability, other support services received, etc.). Goals must be clinically necessary and appropriate and target the core symptoms of ASD.

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Family/Caregiver FAQs

Topic: ABA


What are the evaluation tool requirements under the ACD?

What's required?	Form type	When?	Who can administer?
Pervasive Developmental Disorder Behavior Inventory (PDDBI): The PDDBI is an informant-based rating scale designed to assist in the assessment (for problem behaviors, social, language, and learning/memory skills) of children (2-18.5 years) who have been diagnosed with ASD.	Standard or Extended form (the Parent form is due at baseline and the Parent and Teacher form must be completed every six months thereafter)	Must be completed before receiving 1:1 ABA services and every six months thereafter	Authorized ABA supervisors
Social Responsiveness Scale, Second Edition (SRS-2): The SRS-2 identifies social impairment associated with ASD and quantifies its severity (2.5-99 years).	Parent form	Must be completed before receiving any 1:1 services and every year thereafter	Specialized ASD-diagnosing providers, TRICARE-authorized independent provider or BCBA/BCBA-D
Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Third Edition (Vineland-3): The Vineland-3 measures adaptive behavior for individuals diagnosed with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including ASD (birth-90 years).	Parent, interview or teacher form	Must be completed before receiving 1:1 ABA services and every year thereafter	Specialized ASD-diagnosing providers, TRICARE-authorized independent provider or BCBA/BCBA-D
The Parenting Stress Index (PSI) (0-12 years) or the Stress Index for Parents of Adolescents (SIPA) (11-19 years): The measure evaluates the parent system and identify issues that may lead to problems in the child or parent's behavior.	PSI: Short form SIPA: Profile form	Must be completed before receiving any 1:1 services and every six months thereafter.	Administered by a specialized ASD-diagnosing provider or a BCBA/BCBA-D

What if beneficiaries are unable to meet the necessary requirements for completing the outcome measures needed for authorization?

 Beneficiaries who do not meet the requirements will be assisted by the Autism Services Navigator, who will help resolve the testing issue. If the barriers cannot be resolved, ABA services will not be able to be authorized.

What do I do if my child is not progressing/benefitting from ABA services?

 If the family/caregiver is concerned that the child is not progressing/benefitting from ABA, they should address their concerns with the authorized ABA supervisor, the diagnosing provider and/or the ASN.



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Family/Caregiver FAQs

Topic: Treatment team

Who is authorized to make an ASD diagnosis and refer beneficiaries for ABA treatment?

Primary Care Managers (PCM) or specialized ASD-diagnosing providers. Referring providers must include the diagnostic criteria in a DHA approved checklist. The validated assessment tool used to diagnose ASD must also be submitted with the referral.

For beneficiaries first diagnosed with ASD at age eight years or older, and requesting ABA services, on or after October 1, 2021, a specialized ASD diagnosing provider evaluation (not a PCM) is required as part of the referral for ABA services.

What validated assessment tools are used to diagnose ASD?

Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers and Young Children (STAT), Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-Second Edition (ADOS-2), Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R), Childhood Autism Rating Scale-Second Edition (CARS-2), Gilliam Autism Rating Scale, Third Edition (GARS-3).

If a Primary Care Manager (PCM) makes a referral for ABA services is further testing or diagnosis required?



Yes, a validated assessment tool must be administered by an authorized provider to confirm the ASD diagnosis.

Who is authorized to provide ABA services?

An ABA supervisor, Assistant Behavior Analyst, Behavior Technician and/or ACSP.

Can beneficiaries see more than one authorized ABA supervisor?



Yes, however only one authorized ABA supervisor is approved to provide ABA services for a beneficiary at a time. When a primary authorized ABA supervisor seeks consultation from another authorized ABA supervisor, the primary authorized ABA supervisor will remain responsible for the TP and is the sole provider authorized to bill for ABA services.

Can beneficiaries choose an ABA supervisor?

Yes.

What if a Behavior Technician (BT) isn't a good fit?



If the family/caregiver determines the BT is not a good fit, they should present their concerns to the authorized ABA supervisor or clinic manager/supervisor.

When do parent training sessions begin?

Parent training may begin once the treatment plan is submitted to the Managed Care Support Contractor and treatment has been authorized. Your provider will be notified of the approved codes when all the required information has been reviewed and approved. Parent training should continue monthly to ensure interventions can be adequately implemented in the home. Your provider must complete parent sessions in order for ABA to be reauthorized. At the onset of treatment, parent training must occur within the first 30 days. Your provider must continue to conduct six sessions within your 6 month authorization period.

Caregiver resources and support

Humana Military's Autism Center of Excellence at [HumanaMilitary.com/autism](https://www.humanamilitary.com/autism) provides additional information for education, training and guidance.



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