

# Medicaid in Education Alert

New York State Office of Health Insurance Programs (NYS OHIP)  
New York State Education Department (NYSED)  
Preschool/School Supportive Health Services Program (SSHSP)  
Medicaid in Education Units

Issue #13-08

**TO:** All SSHSP Medicaid Providers

**FROM:** NYS OHIP SSHSP & NYSED  
Medicaid in Education Units

**DATE:** July 24, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Update on Physical Therapist Qualifications for the  
Preschool/School Supportive Health Services Program  
(SSHSP)

Based on recent clarification received by the Department of Health from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), effective immediately, all physical therapists licensed in New York State and currently registered are qualified Medicaid providers. This means that services provided by New York State licensed physical therapists can be billed to the Medicaid program regardless of whether the physical therapist graduated from a physical therapy education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) or one determined to be substantially equivalent to physical therapist entry level education in the United States by a credentials evaluation organization approved by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) or its equivalent.

This update is the result of the 2012 changes to the federal Medicaid regulations that more closely aligned requirements with the Medicare program. Specifically, on July 16, 2012 the federal Medicaid regulation at 42 CFR § 440.110 was revised to reference the definition of a “qualified physical therapist” found in the Medicare regulation (42 CFR § 484.4). Further, the federal Medicare regulation at 42 CFR § 484.4 defines a qualified physical therapist as “a person who is licensed, if applicable, by the State in which practicing, unless licensure does not apply...” In addition, the Office of the Professions within the New York State Education Department has been recognized by APTA as a credentials evaluation organization for the purpose of reviewing physical therapy licensing applications and licensing physical therapists.

In essence, federal regulations provide that if the state has a physical therapist licensure program, and the person is licensed as a physical therapist in the state where he/she is practicing, then the person is a Medicaid qualified physical therapist. Because New York State has such a program, all New York State licensed and currently registered physical therapists are qualified physical therapy providers under the New York State Medicaid program, including SSHSP.

To summarize, NYS Medicaid qualified providers of physical therapy services in the School Supportive Health Services Program include:

- A New York State licensed and registered physical therapist qualified in accordance with the requirements of 42 CFR § 440.110(a) and with applicable state and federal law and regulations, acting within his or her scope of practice under New York State Law; or,
- A certified physical therapy assistant “under the direction of” (UDO) such a qualified licensed and registered physical therapist, acting within his or her scope of practice under New York State Law.

#### Retroactive Medicaid Claiming

Medicaid claims for SSHSP services rendered by New York State licensed physical therapists and certified physical therapy assistants working UDO New York State licensed physical therapists that were foreign trained (non-CAPTE accredited program graduates) may now be submitted to Medicaid for reimbursement. The reimbursable service must have been delivered within the last 22 months of claim submission and school districts and counties must have the required Medicaid documentation (i.e., physical therapy included in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP), written order, Medicaid qualified provider, and documentation of the session or evaluation) on file to support the claim.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Alert, please contact your local Regional Information Center representative or the NYS Education Department, Medicaid Unit at [medined@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:medined@mail.nysed.gov).