



**COLORADO**

Department of Health Care  
Policy & Financing

## **Provider Frequently Asked Questions Outpatient Physical and Occupational Therapy**

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*July 2016*

**Will prior authorization requests that were approved prior to July 1, 2016 continue to be honored beyond the July 1st deadline for all patients? If so, once those run out, are an additional 48 units allotted?**

PARs approved before July 1, 2016, which extend beyond July 1, 2016, will be honored for all clients. This is referred to as "grandfathering" currently approved PARs.

Additional units beyond what the PAR authorizes will not be available unless the client is a child age 20 and under, or if fewer than 48 units had been used after July 1, 2016. Any remaining unit amount below the 48 unit maximum will be available without requiring a PAR.

Any units that are billed, regardless of whether a grandfathered PAR is on file, will be decremented against the 48 unit limit. A PAR simply allows the limit to be exceeded. Therefore an additional 48 units will not be allotted after the PAR expires.

**Are the 48 units a combination of PT and OT (not 48 units of PT AND 48 units of OT)?**

The 48 units are a combination of PT and OT. For example, a member may have 40 units of PT and 8 units of OT when their maximum is met.

**Is the 12-month period per calendar year, or does the 12 months start when therapy is initiated?**

Units will begin decrementing on the first date of service and will replenish on the 366th day from that first date of service. For example, if the member's first date of therapy is October 15, 2016, they will receive a new 48 units on October 16, 2017. The unit limit will not roll-over to accumulate more than a maximum 48 units at any time.

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**If a current patient has used 20 units of PT prior to July 1, would that patient just continue as needed up until a total of 48 units had been used (there would be a maximum of 28 units after July 1?)**

All members will receive a 'fresh' 48 units of available PT/OT on July 1, 2016. Units billed for dates of service prior to July 1, 2016, will not be counted against the 48 unit limit.

**Are PT, OT, and Speech Therapy (ST) combined in this 48 unit limit?**

Only PT and OT are part of the combined 48 unit limit. ST is not affected.

**Is there ever an opportunity for adults to get additional PT/OT units beyond the 48 units?**

Adults who are on the ACA Adult Medicaid benefit plan have additional access to Habilitative therapies. These are therapies to treat long-term, chronic conditions and to prevent against loss of ability. Habilitative PT/OT is limited to 48 units per 12 months, meaning those adults have access to 96 total units of PT/OT per 12 months. Habilitative therapies always required a PAR, for both children and adults.

Adults who are on the Standard Medicaid Plan are limited to 48 units of Rehabilitative therapy per 12 months. These members do not have Habilitative therapies covered.

Providers may use the web portal to query the status of the patient's Medicaid plan to determine if they are eligible for Habilitative therapies.

**Do any Waiver programs cover PT/OT?**

No. Waiver programs do not include PT/OT services.

**Does the 48 unit limit affect PT/OT delivered via Home Health, School Health Services, or Inpatient Hospital?**

No. The 48 unit limit is only for Outpatient PT/OT. Services accessed in settings other than Outpatient are not affected by this limit.

**How do I track my patient's remaining benefit amount?**

At this time, Health First Colorado members and providers are responsible for tracking the number of therapy hours used and to plan accordingly.



## For more information

- Reference the Outpatient PT/OT Billing Manual (CMS1500 Section)  
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/billing-manuals>
- Reference the Outpatient Physical and Occupational Therapy Benefit Coverage Standard <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/benefits-collaborative-approved-benefits-standards>
- Reference the June and July 2016 Provider Bulletins  
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/bulletins>

Stay up to date with bulletins for the latest policy information on the Outpatient PT/OT benefit.

## For more information

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