

## **Practice Guidelines for Healthcare Funders and Managers**

The ABA field is devoted to applying behavioral principles to treat a variety of issues in humans, including developmental disabilities and other behavioral problems. More profoundly, the ABA treatment has been proven to reduce problem behaviors effectively and improves skills in individuals diagnosed with autism. But to ensure that clients receive the most effective treatment possible, healthcare managers must be familiar with the clinical practice guidelines for ABA treatment. This summary will provide an overview of these guidelines.

One of the first things healthcare managers should know about ABA is that it is a highly specialized field. [Providers who offer ABA services](#) must have completed intensive training in the methodology and its associated principles. And secondly, ABA service providers must complete continuing education (CE) every two years to maintain their credentials. More specifically 20 hrs for continuing education every two years for (BCaBA) and 32 hrs of continuing education every two years for BCBA, BCBA-D. 4 hours of which must apply to professional ethics.

It's also mandatory for practitioners to be licensed or certified by the BACB to provide ABA services. The BACB is the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, a professional organization that sets the standards for practitioners in the field of ABA. [It's the certifying body for ABA practitioners.](#)

In the event of a complaint about an ABA provider (perhaps misconduct or credential issues), the BACB should be contacted. The BACB has a disciplinary

procedure to deal with complaints about certificates and other issues. This protects the public and ensures that only qualified practitioners provide ABA services.

It's also paramount that healthcare funders and managers recognize the core characteristics of ABA. They include the following: objective assessment and analysis of the client's behavior; Utilization of the principles and procedures of behavior analysis such that the client's health & independence are improved, and that the client together with the caregiver can understand the behavior-change process. Continuous assessment and data analysis and supervision to support the client is indispensable.

Regarding the treatment, ABA focuses on the client's individual needs and the treatment plan must be tailored to the individual client's needs. But model wise, there are two commonly used treatment models; Focused ABA and Comprehensive ABA. Focused ABA is a more targeted approach that focuses on specific skills or behaviors- usually recommended for children with acute needs such as self-injury, aggression, and noncompliance. [Comprehensive ABA](#) is a more holistic approach that covers all aspects of the child's life, including play and leisure skills, pre-academic skills, reduced interfering and independence skills. Both of these models can be carried out in everyday settings such as the home, community or even in a clinical setting. Treatment should not be withheld because a caregiver cannot be at the treatment location consistently.

A common question asked is what is the [assessment process](#). Well, the first step in any ABA program is a comprehensive assessment of the client's skills, behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses and any areas of need. The assessment can

be conducted directly or indirectly but should always be conducted by a qualified professional and may take 20 hours or longer. After the assessment, a summary of findings for each assessment is made along with graphs and tables, then a treatment plan is formulated with specific, measurable goals. These goals must be achievable and relevant to the client's needs.

It doesn't end there, the client's progress must be measured throughout treatment to determine if they are making sufficient progress towards their goals. If they are not, then the treatment plan is modified as necessary. Family members and other caregivers are also trained to ensure they can implement the ABA practices effectively and support the client.

Finally, when the client has achieved their goals and is ready to be discharged from treatment, a transition plan is put in place to ensure a smooth transition to the next phase of their life. A written report is also provided to the family or other caregivers, detailing the client's progress and any recommendations for continued care. This includes A description of the roles and responsibilities of all providers and effective dates for behavioral targets that must be achieved before the next phase of treatment.