

## Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program Authorization Guideline

**Subject: Sensory and Auditory Integration Training and Facilitated  
Communication for Children**

**Unit: Health Services**

### Purpose

This authorization guideline is used in the decision-making process regarding requests for auditory integration training (AIT), facilitated communication (FC), and sensory integration (SI) therapy services.

**CMDP has determined Sensory Integration Training, Auditory Integration Training, and Facilitated Communication are not medically necessary services for children with autism or developmental delays.** Occupational therapy with the use of sensory-based therapies may be acceptable as one of the components of a comprehensive treatment plan. However, healthcare providers and caregivers should be informed that the amount of research regarding the effectiveness of sensory integration therapy is limited and inconclusive. CMDP will consider approving OT that has sensory components imbedded in the treatment plan as long as the overall treatment plan and therapeutic goals are functionally based. If the primary goal of OT Therapy is to address sensory issues with SI therapies, then CMDP cannot consider this as a "medically necessary" service.

This guideline does not represent a standard of care, nor is it intended to dictate an exclusive course of management. Since medical research, physician practice patterns, and health care technology are continuously evolving, please note that the information contained in this guideline may be updated.

### Background

#### **AAP – Committee on Children with Disabilities**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a policy statement regarding Auditory Integration Training and Facilitated Communication for Autism in August 1998. The policy states, “Both therapies (AIT and FC) seek to improve communication skills. Currently available information does not support the claims of proponents that these treatments are efficacious. Their use does not appear warranted at this time, except within research protocols.” The AAP published a statement of reaffirmation for this policy on May 1, 2006.

#### **AAP – Council on Children with Disabilities**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a paper regarding the Management of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in November 2007. The policy states: “The efficacy of SI therapy has not been demonstrated objectively. Available studies are plagued by methodological limitations.”

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**AAP – The Section on Complimentary and Integrative Medicine and Council on Children with Disabilities**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a policy statement regarding Sensory Integration Therapies for Children with Developmental and Behavioral Disorders in June 2012. The policy states, the amount of research regarding the effectiveness of sensory integration is limited and inconclusive.

**References:**

American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Children with Disabilities, Auditory Integration Training and Facilitated Communication for Autism. *Pediatrics* Vol. 102 No. 2 August 1998, pp. 431-433. A statement of reaffirmation for this policy was published on May 1, 2006.

American Academy of Pediatrics, The Council on Children With Disabilities, Management of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Pediatrics* Volume 120, Number 5, November 2007, pp. 1162-1182.

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Signature on File

Medical Director

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Date