

# Informational Memo

## Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Service Utilization Review

**BAS Communication Number: BAW18-06**

**AUDIENCE:** Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Providers

**PURPOSE:** To explain the Service Utilization Review as part of the Annual Review Plan process.

### **BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:**

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As part of Annual Review Plan (ARP) development, Supports Coordinators (SCs) are required to perform a service utilization review prior to holding the ARP meeting. The goal of the service utilization review is to ensure the number of hours or units requested on the ISP match the number of hours services are actually being delivered to the participant as closely as possible. The intent of this review is not to limit services but rather to ensure a participant's ISP accurately reflects the participant's needs. The utilization review also ensures fiscal responsibility within the AAW since unused units at the end of the ISP year reflect unused waiver funding, which cannot be reallocated to other services or other participants.

The service utilization review is performed by looking at the number of units that have been utilized at the time of the review (this usually occurs around 90 days prior to the end of the plan year) to project the number of units that will likely be needed for the following plan year. This projection is based on a pre-determined percentage of 125%, which allows the services to remain at the current level being delivered, plus 25% to account for the last quarter that has not yet been billed at the time of review.

If the units for any service on the ARP exceed 125% of the current utilization, justification for the request must be submitted by the SC to BAS for review and approval. In cases where the participant is refusing needed services or frequently cancelling, the team may need to develop a reliable plan to reduce cancellations or resistance to services. Alternately, the team may agree to an alternative request. For example, if a participant has a weekly authorization of two (2) hours 1x/week but usually cancels once per month, the team may agree to change the service request to two (2) hours 3x/month.

This utilization review process has not been changed. However, to ensure participant understanding and agreement with requests, the Bureau of Autism Services (BAS) released a form titled the *Service Utilization Review Signature Form* to be used as part of the ARP process

starting on July 1, 2017. **It is the SC's responsibility to complete this form as part of the ARP process and to obtain the participant's signature on the form during the ARP meeting.**

It is expected that all providers continuously monitor actual utilization to ensure services are being delivered in accordance with what is authorized on a participant's ISP. **BAS recommends that providers document any reasons services are not being delivered as authorized, and be prepared to discuss any issues regarding service utilization with the SC throughout the plan year, as well as during ARP development.** Whenever possible, providers should ensure billing is up to date at the annual review or provide as close a calculation as possible of the actual units used to date.

Any questions regarding this memo or the *Service Utilization Review Signature Form* can be sent to [ra-odpautismwaiver@pa.gov](mailto:ra-odpautismwaiver@pa.gov) and including "Service Utilization Review question" in the subject line.