

Medical Coverage Policy | Prescription Digital Health Therapies for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder



EFFECTIVE DATE: 01 | 01 | 2022

POLICY LAST UPDATED: 09 | 01 | 2021

OVERVIEW

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by symptoms of hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattention, which are considered excessive for the person's age. Established treatments for ADHD in children include educational, environmental, psychological, and behavioral interventions, and medication. This review will assess whether a digital therapy in the form of a computer game can improve attention in children with ADHD.

MEDICAL CRITERIA

Not applicable

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Not applicable

POLICY STATEMENT

Medicare Advantage Plans

Prescription digital therapy for the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder is not covered as the evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

Commercial Products

Prescription digital therapy for the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder is considered not medically necessary as the evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

COVERAGE

Benefits may vary between groups and contracts. Please refer to the appropriate Benefit Booklet, Evidence of Coverage, or Subscriber Agreement for applicable not medically necessary/not covered benefits/coverage.

BACKGROUND

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a chronic condition characterized by core symptoms of hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattention, which are considered excessive for the person's age. Both the International Classification of Mental and Behavioral Disorders 10th edition (ICD-10) and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th edition (DSM-5) require that the symptoms are reported or observed in several settings and that the symptoms of ADHD affect psychological, social, and/or educational/occupational functioning. Prevalence estimates for ADHD vary from 7.2% to 15.5% of children.

For children younger than 17 years of age, the DSM-5 requires at least 6 symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity or at least 6 symptoms of inattention. The combined type requires a minimum of 6 symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity plus at least 6 symptoms of inattention. The symptoms must 1) occur often, 2) be present in more than 1 setting, 3) persist for at least 6 months, 4) be present before 12 years of age, 5) impair function in academic, social, or occupational activities, and 6) be excessive for the developmental level of the child

Treatment

Established treatments for ADHD in children include educational, environmental, psychological, and behavioral interventions, and medication. Almost two-thirds of children with ADHD take medication, and about one half receive behavioral treatment.

- Educational intervention involves discussion with parents about symptoms and access to services, environmental modifications such as seating arrangements, changes to lighting and noise, reducing distractions, and the benefit of having movement breaks and teaching assistants at school.
- Parent-child behavioral therapy teaches parenting techniques within the principles of behavior therapy. The therapy programs typically last 2 to 3 months and includes rewarding positive behavior, identifying unintentional reinforcement of negative behaviors, limiting choices, and using calm discipline.
- Medication with stimulants, such as methylphenidate, are considered first-line therapy for ADHD in school-age children. However, adverse effects of stimulants may include sleep disturbance, decreased appetite, and weight changes. Combination therapy with medication and behavioral interventions can improve both core ADHD symptoms and non-ADHD symptoms such as social skills and parent-child relations.

Regulatory Status

In April 2020, EndeavorRx (Akili Interactive Labs) received marketing clearance by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through the De Novo premarket review process (DEN200026). EndeavorRx is a prescription device that is indicated to “improve attention function as measured by computer-based testing in children ages 8-12 years old with primarily inattentive or combined type ADHD, who have a demonstrated attention issue. Patients who engage with EndeavorRx demonstrate improvements in a digitally assessed measure Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA) of sustained and selective attention and may not display benefits in typical behavioral symptoms, such as hyperactivity.” EndeavorRx is intended to be used as part of a therapeutic program that may include clinician-directed therapy, medication, and/or educational programs.

CODING

There is no specific code for this non-covered service.

RELATED POLICIES

None

PUBLISHED

Provider Update, November 2021

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