NC INFANT TODDLER PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions for Physicians, Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners Related to Service Orders (SO)

Why is a Service Order necessary?

- Service order (SO) is required to document medical necessity for Infant Toddler Program (ITP) services
- SO is required for any specialized service provided by ITP (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy)
- An appropriate ICD-10 diagnosis for each service being provided is required
- A Physician, Physician Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner must sign and date the SO, which may come from the service provider who is or will be providing the service (either the Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) or ITP provider)
- Separately signed SO is required that is specific to the discipline providing the service, but all orders can be on the same form
- New SO is required to precede the start of a specialized service provided by ITP
- Current SO may be required every six months to continue any specialized service being provided by ITP
- New SO may be needed when there is a change to service provider agency to reflect the change

What are the benefits of services ordered and delivered by ITP?

- Ordered services ideally occur in the child's natural environment
- Services are delivered using a coaching interaction style, with parents/guardians present and engaged and taught how to practice and use skills at home
- Children have Early Intervention Service Coordinators (EISC) who are Infant, Toddler & Family (ITF) certified
- Access to Early Intervention Service Coordinator (EISC) who uses coaching in child's natural environment to support goals, outcomes and recommended services
- Parental rights are mandated in ITP policy and include timely evaluation and services, complaints, appeals and other protections
- Sliding fee scale can be applied with parental permission and billed at Medicaid rate

How can I get help with completing a Service Order for a child?

- The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), which includes the therapy evaluation, or therapy evaluation report should be sent by the CDSA staff or an ITP provider with the SO request to understand the medical or developmental need for the service
- CDSA and other ITP providers are available to answer any questions related to SO

Do I have to use the Service Order Form?

- It is best to use the ITP Service Order form and instructions

Why is it important to return the Service Order promptly?

- Child may experience delays in receiving necessary services
- Delay in obtaining the SO may jeopardize payment for the ITP provider
- CDSA may not be able to meet the federal 30-day timeline that requires that all services listed on the IFSP are to be provided within 30 days from the parent's signed consent

What are some suggested best practices?

- Please do not hold an SO to sign with others in the practice and then send back as a batch to the CDSA
- Please do not wait to sign an SO until the child has a well-child visit, which may take several months to schedule; CDSA staff recognize the importance of a medical home and well-child visits and can follow up with a family if the child has not been seen recently or regularly
- Any physician or advanced practice provider enrolled with NC Tracks in your practice can sign the SO; no need to wait until the child's assigned primary care physician is back in the office



the **earlier** you know,
the **better** they'll grow

NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Child and Family Well-Being
NC Infant-Toddler Program (NC ITP)

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