

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) is a comprehensive, multi-diagnostic, modularized behavioral intervention designed to treat both adults and children/adolescents with severe mental disorders and uncontrolled cognitive, emotional and behavior patterns, including suicidal and/or self-harming behaviors.

Philosophy and Treatment Approach

DBT is a cognitive-behavioral treatment approach with two key characteristics: a behavioral, problem-solving focus, blended with acceptance-based strategies, and an emphasis on dialectical processes. A “dialectical approach” is taken to treat patients with multiple disorders and to encourage flexibility in thought processes and behavioral styles used in the treatment strategies.

Comprehensive DBT addresses five components, or functions, of treatment:

1. Capability enhancement (skills training)
2. Motivational enhancement (individual behavioral treatment plans)
3. Generalization (access to therapist outside clinical setting, homework)
4. Structuring of the environment (programmatic emphasis on reinforcement of adaptive behaviors), and
5. Capability and motivational enhancement of therapists (therapist team consultation group).

DBT emphasizes balancing behavioral change, problem-solving, and emotional regulation with validation, mindfulness, and acceptance of clients. For guidelines and requirements regarding DBT, please refer to Chapter 2, Appendix E-11 of the Louisiana Medicaid [Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual](#).

Training

Training and resulting qualification to provide the DBT service under Louisiana Medicaid can be achieved in several ways, as outlined on pages 11-12 of Chapter Two of the [LDH Medicaid Services Manual](#):

1. DBT-Linehan Board of Certification

DBT-Linehan Board of Certification (DBT-LBC) is a nationally recognized source of qualification to provide DBT therapy certification. Training requirements for DBT-Linehan Board certification are a minimum of 40 DBT-specific didactic hours, 12 months of DBT team experience, clinical experience in DBT, skills training through homework assignments during training, a written exam, videos demonstrating DBT (submitted to certification body), and formal training in mindfulness. After training, passing a written exam is required for full certification.

Once the certification process has been completed by individual therapists, they are listed in a searchable database on the [DBT-Linehan website](#).

2. Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)-Sponsored DBT Training Program

Completion of an OBH-sponsored DBT training program is another method to achieve training and qualification to provide DBT therapy under Louisiana Medicaid. Provider agency teams who apply for and enter into an OBH-sponsored DBT training program will complete a training

process that will include a minimum of seven days of didactic training and 24 consultation calls, typically over a 9-12 month period. This training program will typically begin with several days of didactic training, followed as soon as possible by DBT service provision to clients with the support of weekly (which may later move to biweekly) consultation with the expert DBT trainer, followed by additional days of didactic training and continuing consultation calls.

3. **An additional option for achieving qualification to provide DBT under Louisiana Medicaid may be used by practitioner teams who have previously engaged in a non-OBH-sponsored DBT training program by their own arrangement**

For practitioner teams who have already completed DBT training, the team may seek OBH-approved DBT qualification by engaging in the steps noted in the manual for “OBH-approved DBT qualification.”

To achieve OBH-approved DBT qualification, practitioners who are members of the agency team must:

1. Submit documentation of didactic and consultative components of a completed DBT training program;
2. Complete videotape submission components; and
3. Achieve passing scores on the relevant scales assessing competency. Upon successful completion, the individual practitioner(s) on the team will receive documentation of completion of an OBH-approved DBT qualification.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Billing Guidance for Code H2021

DBT is a Medicaid-approved intervention with reimbursement rates being located on the Specialized Behavioral Health Fee Schedule.

- The appropriate license level modifier should be billed
- Behavioral Health Provider’s individual NPI number is entered in box 24J
- Expected allowable billing for H2021 will be 1 unit of each (individual/group DBT therapy) per member per week when performed
- The H2021 Code can only be billed by Licensed and Provisionally Licensed Mental Health Professionals and should be billed as listed on page 2 of billing guide
- No prior authorization is required for DBT services

| Code and Reimbursement Rates | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Code/Modifier | Description | Patient Age | Modifier AF | Modifier AH, SA or HP | Modifier AJ, HO or HF |
| H2021 | Individual DBT Session | 0+ | Psychiatrist DBT Total | APRN & Psychologist DBT Total | Other LMHP and PLMHP DBT Total |
| | | | \$200.00 | \$200.00 | \$200.00 |
| H2021, HQ | Group DBT Session | 0+ | \$177.68 | \$177.68 | \$177.68 |

Provider License Types

The Louisiana Department of Health recognizes the following provider types as Licensed Mental Health Professionals:

- Medical Psychologists
- Licensed Psychologists
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs)
- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs)
- Licensed Addiction Counselors (LACs)
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN)
- Provisionally Licensed Mental Health Providers

Note:

- APRNs must be a:
 - Nurse practitioner specialist in Adult Psychiatric & Mental Health and Family Psychiatric & Mental Health or a
 - Certified nurse specialists in Psychosocial, Gerontological Psychiatric Mental Health, Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health, and Child-Adolescent Mental Health and may practice to the extent that services are within the APRN's scope of practice.
- Provisionally Licensed Professional Counselor (PLPC), Provisionally Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (PLMFT), or Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) who deliver DBT services must be under regularly scheduled supervision in accordance with requirements established by the practitioner's professional licensing board.
 - Proof of the board approved supervision must be held by the provider agency employing these staff.
 - For the psychology intern, the supervisory plan is acceptable.
 - All providers must practice under the standards of their respective professions' Practice Acts with regard to licensure.

Questions?

- For billing guidance, please review the [Behavioral Health Billing](#) training presentation.
- For questions regarding DBT services, please email networkse@optum.com and one of our Medicaid behavioral health advocates will reach out to assist you
- For other questions you may contact:
 - Julie P. Sutton / 504-849-1573 / julie.sutton@uhc.com
 - Stacie Zerangue / 225-284-7744 / Stacie.zerangue@optum.com