



**Department of Vermont Health Access**

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*Agency of Human Services*

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March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear Dr. Heidi Wilhelm, PT, DTP;

Thank you for contacting DVHA regarding prior authorization associated with Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy (PT/OT/ST) services for Vermont Medicaid members.

The prior authorization changes implemented in January 2023 were operationalized to support equity, reduce provider administrative burden, and ensure support best clinical practice. The changes resulted from a year-long project exploring opportunities to meet the above. We learned from providers that a major challenge was the disparate requirements from Insurers. We attempted to align those requirements.

As part of the process, DVHA posted the proposed changes for comments and didn't receive any indicating the changes would be unwelcome. You indicate in your letter that ascertaining information regarding other therapies that have been provided is challenging. DVHA recognizes challenges associated with care coordination but considers it best clinical practice in serving Vermont Medicaid members. The hope is that providers will consult with each other and develop appropriate treatment plans that meet each member's needs. Care coordination planning would allow for submission of PA requests, allowing additional services when necessary and avoid claim denials.

Please know that the team at DVHA assesses utilization data frequently to monitor trends to determine if additional utilization changes need to be made.

Finally, please understand that the DVHA did not change home health PA requirements for the services mentioned due to the comprehensive amount of oversight attributed to the use of current home health OASIS documentation requirements and frequent required reassessments.

Thank you for providing therapy services to Vermont Medicaid members and communicating your concerns to DVHA.

Sincerely,

DVHA Clinical Services Unit