**Initial Evaluation**
Referral to therapy provider for first time service or referral to new therapy provider.
- Effective September 1, 2019, prior authorization is no longer required for in-network evaluations.

**Initial Treatment**
- Requests may be approved for up to 6 months at a time.
- Hearing screening results required for speech therapy treatment, completed within the last 6 months for patients from birth through 3 years of age, and within the last 12 months for members ages 3 and older in the form of:
  - Pure tone audiometry.
  - Audiology consult report.
  - Otoacoustic emissions (OAE) in screening mode for children.
- For children with underlying chronic medical conditions associated with developmental delay (ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, etc.), the request for a hearing screening may be waived with Medical Director approval.
- If hearing screening results are not provided, there is a 90-day approval process, per Medical Director review.
- Order requesting speech therapy treatment, signed and dated by the ordering provider within 60 days of the planned service start date.
- Completed Speech Therapy Evaluation Report and Plan of Care, signed and dated by the ordering provider within 60 days of submission for authorization.
- Evidence of current Texas Health Steps wellness checkup in the form of:
  - Copy of current wellness checkup.
  - Signed attestation of current wellness checkup.
  - If current wellness checkup information is not provided, there is a 90-day approval process, per Medical Director review.

**Extension of Initial Treatment**
- Completed prior authorization form.
- Completed Initial Speech Therapy Evaluation Report and Plan of Care, signed by the ordering provider.
- Speech Therapy Progress Reports, signed by the ordering provider that documents attendance, compliance with home exercise program and objective progress towards short-term goals.

**Re-evaluation**
- Included with ongoing treatment request – no additional documentation required.

**Ongoing Treatment**
- Requests may be approved for up to 6 months at a time.
- Completed prior authorization form.
- Order requesting speech therapy treatment, signed and dated by the ordering provider within 30 days of the planned service start date.
- Completed Speech Therapy Re-Evaluation Report and Plan of Care, signed and dated by the ordering provider within 60 days of submission for authorization.
- Evidence of current Texas Health Steps wellness checkup (previously submitted wellness checkup information will be applied if still current).

**Notes:**
Speech therapy for chronic conditions is not a benefit for members 21 years of age or older.

Stuttering - Speech therapy is not considered medically necessary for young children with natural disfluency (stuttering). Disfluency is a common condition in young children with onset after age 3 and is usually self-correcting by age six to seven. This is sometimes referred to as normal non-fluency and is not an indication for speech therapy.

Change of provider letter – Required if a provider or member discontinues therapy during an existing pre-authorized period and the member requests services through a new provider.