



## Technical Assistance Bulletin

**TO:** WV Birth to Three Payees, Practitioners, and Service Coordinators  
WV Birth to Three Regional Administrative Units

**FROM:** Pam Roush, Director  
WV Birth to Three

**DATE:** **May 22, 2008**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** **July 1, 2008**

**ISSUE:** **New Authorization Procedures for PT/PTAs and OT/COTAs**

Beginning July 1, 2008, authorizations for physical therapy and occupational therapy services will only be issued in the name of a Physical Therapist (PT) or Occupational Therapist (OT). This change is being made with input from enrolled physical therapists and occupational therapists over the past several months. A statewide email sent on March 5, 2008 also notified all enrolled physical therapists, occupational therapists and assistants that the changes would be effective in June.

All existing authorizations in the name of a Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) or Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) will be cancelled effective June 30, 2008, and reissued in the name of the supervising PT or OT effective July 1, 2008. If services are provided by an enrolled PTA or COTA, the **supervising** PT or OT will be responsible for reimbursing the PTA or COTA who performs the service. This will be a private transaction between those two parties, and WV Birth to Three will not be responsible for setting the rate of pay for a PTA or COTA, nor for assuring that the PTA or COTA is paid. This is the responsibility of the supervising OT or PT.

Effective July 1, 2008, when an IFSP team determines, after designing outcomes and strategies for a child and family, that physical therapy or occupational therapy service is needed in order to assist the child/family in making progress toward the outcomes, the team will determine the intensity and frequency of this service, just as any other service.

Below is an example of how this process would proceed for a physical therapy service. The same process would occur for an occupational therapy service.

- The SC will assist the family in selecting an enrolled PT to provide the service as identified on the IFSP.
- The service will be authorized in the name of the selected PT at the intensity/frequency as identified on the IFSP.

- If the selected PT has a PTA who works along with him/her, the PT will decide if it is appropriate for the PTA to assist with the strategies identified for this family. If so, the PT will let the family know that he/she works with an assistant. If the family objects to this, the Service Coordinator will have them select another PT. Assuming that the family has no objections, the PT and PTA can work together to provide the PT service as authorized on the IFSP. No additional time is added to the IFSP to account for the PTA. The PTA will simply be assisting to provide the physical therapy service as identified on the IFSP.

It will be the responsibility of the licensed Physical Therapist or Occupational Therapist to follow the requirements of their respective licensing boards regarding the roles and practices of the PTA or COTA. If licensing allows the PTA or COTA to represent the PT or OT during an IFSP meeting, then they will act accordingly. The licensed Physical Therapist and Occupational Therapist are also responsible for abiding by the requirements and position statements of their licensing boards regarding supervision.

PTAs and COTAs must be enrolled with the WV Birth to Three system, and must complete all enrollment and service documentation requirements. When the PTA or COTA provides a service, the service must be documented on the respective Service Activity Note, Correspondence/Phone Contact log, and/or Teaming Note. Service activity notes should be co-signed by the respective PT or OT.

If you have questions regarding this Technical Assistance Bulletin, please contact your regional Technical Assistance Specialist.