

RCW 41.05.170 Neurodevelopmental therapies—Employer-sponsored group contracts. (1) Each health plan offered to public employees and their covered dependents under this chapter which is not subject to the provisions of Title 48 RCW and is established or renewed on or after twelve months after July 23, 1989, shall include coverage for neurodevelopmental therapies for covered individuals age six and under.

(2) Benefits provided under this section shall cover the services of those authorized to deliver occupational therapy, speech therapy, and physical therapy. Benefits shall be payable only where the services have been delivered pursuant to the referral and periodic review of a holder of a license issued pursuant to chapter 18.71 or 18.57 RCW or where covered services have been rendered by such licensee. Nothing in this section shall preclude a self-funded plan authorized under this chapter from negotiating rates with qualified providers.

(3) Benefits provided under this section shall be for medically necessary services as determined by the self-funded plan authorized under this chapter. Benefits shall be payable for services for the maintenance of a covered individual in cases where significant deterioration in the patient's condition would result without the service. Benefits shall be payable to restore and improve function.

(4) It is the intent of this section that the state, as an employer providing comprehensive health coverage including the benefits required by this section, retains the authority to design and employ utilization and cost controls. Therefore, benefits delivered under this section may be subject to contractual provisions regarding deductible amounts and/or copayments established by the self-funded plan authorized under this chapter. Benefits provided under this section may be subject to standard waiting periods for preexisting conditions, and may be subject to the submission of written treatment plans.

(5) In recognition of the intent expressed in subsection (4) of this section, benefits provided under this section may be subject to contractual provisions establishing annual and/or lifetime benefit limits. Such limits may define the total dollar benefits available, or may limit the number of services delivered as established by the self-funded plan authorized under this chapter. [1989 c 345 § 4.]