



# BENEFIT NEWS

WVCH: Neuropsychological Testing Provider Education

February 4, 2019

## What is the difference between Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing?

Psychological evaluations can be an important part of a member’s treatment, when medically necessary. These evaluations are often performed to substantiate an Autism spectrum disorder diagnosis, or to clarify diagnosis when the clinical presentation is confusing and cannot be determined through the usual course of mental health treatment. They are also indicated when a member is not responding as expected to an evidence based treatment. A comprehensive psychological evaluation involves a clinical interview with a licensed psychologist, who will also administer validated psychometric instruments. These instruments may assess cognitive functioning, personality structure, as well as individualized assessments and rating scales to help answer the question posed by the referring provider. When the member is a child, parents are expected to participate in the process, and may be asked to fill out rating scales, along with teachers or other adults who know the child well. Its important to note that for ADHD, unless there are cognitive concerns, the standard of care is to start with a thorough mental health assessment by a mental health provider, not psychological testing, to clarify the diagnosis.



Providers seeking psychological testing will need to coordinate with Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network for approval and provider selection.

Neuropsychological assessments are indicated for patients who have been previously diagnosed with medical conditions such as epilepsy or stroke and require cognitive functioning testing for further diagnostic clarification can be beneficial. This testing can not diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder.

**WVCH does cover both types of testing. Pre Authorization is required.**

*“Knowing which tests are appropriate for my patient’s ensures I can provide them the right care, in the right setting.”*

*- WVCH Provider*

### Contracted Neuropsychological Testing Providers:

Dr. Laura Renteria—Dr. Laura Renteria PC

Phone: 971-330-7352

Pacific Psychology and Comprehensive Health Clinic at Pacific University

Contact: John Monahan

Phone: 503-352-2404

Dr Sunita Nijhawan-Legacy Child Development and Rehab

Phone: 503-413-4620

J Scott, PSYD-Legacy Rehabilitation Services

Phone: 503-413-7151

OHSU Neurology

Phone: 800-245-6478(adults) 888-346-0644(pediatric)

### In This Issue

- What testing can and cannot diagnose
- Our contracted providers
- What is Neuropsychological Testing? page 2
- Prescribing patterns



# BENEFIT NEWS

## What is a Neuropsychological Evaluation?

Also called a Neuropsychological Assessment and Neuropsychological Testing. Neuropsychological evaluations are conducted by a Clinical Neuropsychologist who is a licensed, doctoral-level psychologist who applies principles of assessment and intervention based upon the scientific study of human behavior as it relates to normal and abnormal functioning of the central nervous system. Neuropsychological evaluation is an evaluation of the brain-behavior relationship. It is the unique integration of genetic, developmental, and environmental history with formal test data to create a narrative report that tells the story of the patient and gives highly specialized recommendations. Formal testing assesses cognitive, personality, and functional areas through: Intellectual and Academic functioning, Executive functioning, memory - attention, short and long-term memory, visual and auditory memory, language and reading skills, Phonology, gross motor development - balance, hemispheric dominance, fine motor control and speed, L-R discrimination. Executive skills assessment includes: problem-solving, planning, organization, inhibition, attention, and spatial relations. Personality functioning is often evaluated to understand how the patient feels about themselves and interacts with the world around them. Collateral information and behavioral assessment is often sought from parents, educators, doctors, and therapists when appropriate. Often, these assessments are used to assess epilepsy, TBI, stroke, brain infection, concussion, cancer, brain tumor, premature birth, birth trauma, etc. Neuropsychological evaluations are considered a medical benefit (not mental health) and generally follow a medical referral pathway.

Resource Information provided by:  
Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network  
[www.pchpacificu.org](http://www.pchpacificu.org)

## Questions:

Contact WVCH Customer Service 503-584-2150

Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network 503-361-2778

Our website: [www.wvchealth.org](http://www.wvchealth.org)