



ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE UPDATE

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

Transmittal Date - 11/03/2025

On October 1, 2025, Support Coordinators began using the new HCBS Needs Tool (HNT) at member planning meetings. [On Thursday, October 16, 2025, the Governor announced](#) that AHCCCS would do emergency rulemaking. This process included changes to the HNT and created a new process called Extraordinary Care Review for children under the age of 18.

On October 16, 2025, AHCCCS guidance stated that members under age 18:

- Would not be assessed for Attendant Care and Habilitation until the HNT was revised
- Would have their original hours reverted to match the last HCBS Needs Assessment tool completed prior to October 1, 2025
- Would be authorized for any additional assessed hours resulting from the use of the October 1 HNT.

An [email](#) was sent to members, and a [vendor announcement](#) was sent to all Qualified Vendors with this information on October 16, 2025.

On October 29, 2025, AHCCCS provided updated guidance for all DDD members under age 18. This guidance stated:

- Any assessments completed using the HNT after October 1, 2025, are considered invalid because the tool is invalid
- Additional hours assessed using the October 1, 2025, HNT may not be authorized. DDD must reinstate authorizations so that, during this interim period, members receive the hours of direct care services (attendant care) and habilitation they received prior to October 1, 2025.
- DDD Support Coordinators must complete an assessment using the HNT in place prior to October 1, 2025:
 - When a Health Care Decision Maker has concerns about the reinstatement of hours and prefers the hours/or service assessed from the 10/1 version of the HNT.
 - To reassess members under age 18 who were assessed for the first time using the invalid HNT after October 1, 2025.
 - When they identify members under age 18 who are newly eligible for ALTCS, have had a significant change in their condition, or whose health care decision maker requests an updated assessment.

All assessed hours for members under age 18 are subject to change once AHCCCS revises its HNT assessment policies and implements an updated HNT.

The Division is in the process of reinstating all authorizations in Focus that were changed as a result of

an assessment completed using the revised HNT after October 1, 2025. A dedicated team is working on this project to ensure it can be completed as quickly and accurately as possible. Qualified Vendors should reference authorizations for services in place prior to October 1, 2025, for Attendant Care and Habilitation services for members under age 18.

In the event that claims were submitted for October 2025 and the Qualified Vendor determines that different hours need to be billed, the Qualified Vendor should follow the claims replacement process. Since these services are subject to EVV policies, Qualified Vendors will need to ensure the EVV aggregator is also updated prior to billing.