


Department of Health
Office of Health Professions and Facilities

Interpretive Statement

<i>Title:</i>	Vision Therapy Services Defined	<i>Number:</i> 14-001
<i>References:</i>	RCW 18.53.010(1)(c);	
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<i>Supersedes:</i>	N/A	
<i>Approved By:</i>		Chair, Board of Optometry

Summary:

Vision therapy, which includes neuro-visual processing rehabilitation services, is within the scope of practice of optometry in the State of Washington and is not determined or limited by private or public third-party coding systems.

Background and Analysis:

RCW 18.53.010 (1)(c) includes visual therapy within the definition of the scope of practice for optometrists in Washington State. The Washington State Board of Optometry (board) is not authorized to consider the appropriateness of private or public third-party insurance coding systems.

When used in this interpretive statement, the terms "visual therapy" and "vision therapy" have the same meaning.

The board provides the following guidance with regard to vision therapy services:

Vision therapy, which includes neuro-visual processing rehabilitation services, is within the scope of practice of optometry in the State of Washington. Such services include but are not necessarily limited to (a) therapeutic procedures to develop strength and endurance, range of motion and flexibility, or to achieve neuromuscular reeducation of movement, balance coordination, kinesthetic sense, posture, or proprioception for sitting and/or standing activities;

(b) development of cognitive skills to improve attention, memory, and problem solving and promote adaptive responses to environmental demands; (c) sensory integrative techniques to enhance sensory processing and promote adaptive responses to environmental demands; (d) developmental screening and testing; and (e) neurobehavioral status examinations.

The scope of optometric practice in Washington is defined by the legislature under RCW 18.53.010 to specifically include the provision of visual therapy. When used in this interpretive statement, the terms "visual therapy" and "vision therapy" have the same meaning. Vision therapy and neuro-visual processing rehabilitation services are not determined or limited by private or public third-party coding systems or sets, such as Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS), or any other system of organizing medical diagnostic and/or treatment services. The scope of optometric practice is not governed or constrained by the category or classification boundaries of such systems nor by their applicability to, or use by, any other category of health care provider.

Conclusion:

Vision therapy, which includes neuro-visual processing rehabilitation services, is within the scope of practice of optometry in the State of Washington and is not determined or limited by private or public third-party coding systems.