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|  | ***Educational Model*** | ***Medical Model*** |
| What are the legal requirements? | Governed by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 04), Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) are related services and therapist (under law) must outline how motor function inhibits special education and how services can improve participation in learning tasks. | Governed by State and Federal Licensure requirements and public and private funding requirements. |
| Who is able to receive services? | Related Services can be provided to ESE students age 3-21 years to ensure full participation in FAPE (Free and appropriate education). | Medically based therapy is provided at any age and has discipline specific goals that are meant to alleviate or cure specific underlying medical problems, due to a medical diagnosis and may not directly address educational performance or participation within the academic setting. |
| Who determines therapy specifics? | Determination of needs and amount of therapy is decided by a consensus of the IEP team (student, parent, teacher, therapist, staff, etc) and is based on the evaluations and data collection for the student. The IEP team must consider the school-based therapist recommendation.  \*The physician may be on the IEP team however referral alone does not indicated the need for educationally relevant therapy services. | Determination of medically based therapy need and duration of interventions is dependent on physician, therapist, and insurance companies. This is typically driven by a referral for services based upon an individual’s medical diagnosis and need. |
| Who pays for services? | Educationally relevant therapy is provided as a related service at no cost to the family as identified in IDEA. | Private pay, fee-for service, insurance, or government funding. |
| What are the therapy goals? | Goals of educationally relevant therapy must directly relate to school function, accessibility, and participation in the educational environment. | Goals for medical based therapy services are discipline specific and address medical diagnoses and concerns. This service model is traditionally focused on optimizing function. |
| Where is therapy performed? | Therapy services are performed at school and are based on educational need. Location is determined by the IEP team and written within the student’s IEP and can include the classroom, gym, playground, hallway, therapy room, cafeteria, etc. | Medically based therapy takes place in the hospitals, homes, rehab centers, clinics, or other outside facilities. |
| How is therapy provided? | Related Services can be provided through integrated/inclusive models (individual session and/or group sessions), staff training, program development, collaboration, group intervention, one-on-one treatments, or even consultation with IEP team members depending on educational need. | Direct one-on-one treatment or group sessions are scheduled and completed to accomplish pre-set goals. |
| Who determines discharge from services? | The IEP team can determine whether educationally relevant therapy services are no longer needed at any time based on the student’s educational needs. Discharge is driven by educational needs and educational programming, as therapy services are related services and not stand alone services. | Discharge from medical based therapy often happens when goals are met or insurance funds have been exhausted. |
| What are the documentation requirements? | Therapist documentation is related to student’s progress towards his/ her IEP goals and is written in language understandable to parents and other educational team members. It is compliant with federal, state, and local education agencies, as well as individual professional practice acts, and school based Medicaid guidelines (if applicable).  \*Under Florida State Physical Therapy Practice Rules, a written order from a medical provider is required within 30 days of initiating therapy or therapy services will be discontinued until the order is provided. | Medical based therapy documentation is required by payers and medical providers using medical terminology aligned with goal progress set by billing codes or specific locations of practice. |