



## Use of First Line Psychosocial Care for Children and Adolescents on Antipsychotics (APP)

### APP Measure Description<sup>1</sup>

Assesses the percentage of children and adolescents newly started on antipsychotic medications without a clinical indication who had documentation of psychosocial care as first-line treatment.

### Why is APP Important?<sup>1</sup>

Although antipsychotic medications may serve as effective treatment for a narrowly defined set of psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents, they are often prescribed for nonpsychotic conditions for which psychosocial interventions are considered first-line treatment.

Safer, first-line psychosocial interventions may be underutilized, and children and adolescents may unnecessarily incur the risks associated with antipsychotic medications.

### Best Practices

- ✓ When prescribed, antipsychotic medications should be part of a comprehensive, multi-modal plan for coordinated treatment that includes psychosocial care.
- ✓ Psychosocial care, which includes behavioral interventions, psychological therapies and skills training, among others, is the recommended first-line treatment option for children and adolescents diagnosed with nonpsychotic conditions such as attention-deficit disorder and disruptive behaviors.
- ✓ Periodically review the ongoing need for continued therapy with antipsychotic medications.
- ✓ Assess the need for Case Management and refer if necessary.
- ✓ Ensure progress notes are completed and accurate.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.ncqa.org/report-cards/health-plans/state-of-health-care-quality-report/measures-list/>

<sup>2</sup> Source: HEDIS MY 2025 Tech Specs Manual Vol. 2

Numerator Compliance<sup>2</sup>

Psychosocial care or residential behavioral health treatment in the 121-day period from 90 days prior to the IPSD through 30 days after the IPSD.

Index prescription start date (IPSD):  
The earliest prescription dispensing date for an antipsychotic medication where the date is in the intake period and there is a negative medication history.

Data Collection Method<sup>2</sup>

Administrative (Claims)



Trillium Percentages/NCQA National Averages<sup>1</sup>

APP	Measurement Year	Trillium	NCQA National Average
Total	2023	43.42	57.85
	2022	54.3	57.3

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