



Medica Central Coverage Policy

Policy Name: Wilderness Therapy MP9723

Effective Date: 02/01/2026

Important Information – Please Read Before Using This Policy

These services may or may not be covered by all Medica Central plans. Coverage is subject to requirements in applicable federal or state laws. Please refer to the member's plan document for other specific coverage information. If there is a difference between this general information and the member's plan document, the member's plan document will be used to determine coverage. With respect to Medicare, Medicaid, and other government programs, this policy will apply unless these programs require different coverage.

Members may contact Medica Customer Service at the phone number listed on their member identification card to discuss their benefits more specifically. Providers with questions may call the Provider Service Center. Please use the Quick Reference Guide on the Provider Communications page for the appropriate phone number. <https://mo-central.medica.com/Providers/SSM-employee-health-plan-for-IL-MO-OK-providers>

Medica Central coverage policies are not medical advice. Members should consult with appropriate health care providers to obtain needed medical advice, care, and treatment.

This policy **applies to** the following group-sponsored plans headquartered in Minnesota and Wisconsin:

- Dean Health Plan by Medica
- Prevea 360 Health Plan

This policy **does not apply** if the member receives/received mental health/substance use disorder benefits from Behavioral Health/Medica Behavioral Health (Optum Behavioral Health).

Call the phone number on the back of the member identification card for further information.

Coverage Policy

Wilderness therapy (also known as adventure therapy, wilderness adventure therapy, nature-based therapy, nature-assisted therapy) is investigative and unproven and therefore **NOT COVERED**. There is insufficient reliable evidence in the form of high quality peer-reviewed medical literature to establish the safety and efficacy or effects on health care outcomes.

Description

Wilderness therapy is a mental or behavioral health intervention for children and adolescents with emotional, adjustment, addiction, and/or psychological problems. The intervention typically involves immersion in the wilderness or wilderness-like setting, group living with peers, the administration of individual and group therapy sessions, and educational/therapeutic curricula including backcountry travel and wilderness living skills. This type of therapy aims to remove children and adolescents from the negative influences and destructive patterns in their lives by placing them in a supportive environment. It has close ties to nature therapy and therapeutic recreation, and may offer an alternative to more traditional residential therapy programs or be used as an adjunctive therapeutic modality. There are several program models that further define the degree of utilization of the wilderness experience in providing treatment services for the adolescents. Program models may include but are not limited to the following: contained expedition



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programs, continuous flow expedition programs, base camp expedition programs and residential expedition programs. All such programs differentiate themselves from wilderness boot camps which rely heavily on punishments, confrontation and deprivation in order to gain compliance and obedience.

Though each program may draw from many therapeutic paradigms contributing to the uniqueness of their approach, common therapeutic factors are found: promotion of self-efficacy through task accomplishment; restructuring of the therapist-client relationship; promotion of group cohesion and development through group living.

FDA Approval

Wilderness therapy is a therapy and therefore is not regulated by the FDA.

Prior Authorization

Prior authorization is not applicable. Claims for this service are subject to retrospective review and denial of coverage, as investigative services are not eligible for reimbursement.

Coding Considerations

Use the current applicable CPT/HCPCS code(s) The following codes are included below for informational purposes only, and are subject to changes without notice. Inclusion or exclusion of a code does not constitute or imply member coverage of provider reimbursement.

CPT Codes:

- **T2036** – Therapeutic camping, overnight, waiver; each session
- **T2037** – Therapeutic camping, day, waiver; each session

Revenue Codes:

- **1006** - Behavioral Health Accommodations; Outdoor/Wilderness

	Committee/Source	Date(s)
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