



Provider Bulletin 20-09 April 13, 2020 (Revised May 18, 2020)



Temporary Suspension of Utilization Review

Community Behavioral Health (CBH) appreciates the commitment of all providers to serve members during this difficult time. Behavioral health services are essential services for our members, and CBH expects our contracted behavioral health providers to continue to operate throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Many providers are shifting staff resources from administrative functions to direct patient care.

This Bulletin was revised on May 18, 2020 to provide clearer language about authorizations remaining open and active.

CBH recognizes that providers may lack the resources to respond to utilization review requests while responding to the challenges of COVID-19. Therefore, CBH is suspending utilization review, effective Saturday, April 11, 2020. Suspension of utilization review includes prior authorizations (with few exceptions noted below) and all continued stay requests. Discharge reviews will continue to be performed as usual, specific to the level of care. This action coincides with a transition in reimbursement from fee-for-service/Per Diem to an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) as specified in [CBH Bulletin 20-08](#).

CBH clinical staff will remain available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week via the Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) line at 215-413-7171. Assigned Clinical Care Managers (CCMs) will also remain available during regular business hours. Clinical management will support the following main objectives:

- Support member access to medically necessary behavioral health services
- Support our providers via resource identification and mutual problem solving
- Facilitate flow through levels of care with a focus on those with the highest behavioral health needs
- Reduce unnecessary utilization of emergency rooms, hospitals, and congregate care settings as feasible

Acute Services (AIP, APHP, CMIS, SAIP, Crisis Residence, Enhanced Staffing, Private Rooms)

- Contact the PES line or assigned CCM for the initial authorization number
- Initial review and concurrent review are suspended

- Providers must remain in contact with the assigned CCM to ensure that authorizations are open and active for individuals who are in treatment in these services
- Upon discharge review, the assigned CCM will ensure authorization reflects the length of stay

Substance Use Services (ASAM 2.5, 3.1, 3.5R, 3.5H, 3.7WM, 4, 4WM, RINT)

- Contact the PES line or assigned CCM for the initial authorization number
- Initial review and concurrent review are suspended
- Providers must remain in contact with the assigned CCM to ensure that authorizations are open and active for individuals who are in treatment at the facility
- Upon discharge review, the assigned CCM will ensure that authorization reflects the length of stay

Residential Treatment Facilities (RTF, RTFA, CRR-HH, EAC, AMHR, LTSR)

- Prior authorizations will remain; concurrent reviews will be suspended
- Authorizations will be extended as needed by the CCM to ensure they are open and active for individuals who are in treatment at the facility

Targeted Case Management

- Prior authorizations will remain; concurrent reviews will be suspended
- Providers must ensure that authorizations remain open and active for individuals who remain in treatment in these services

Community Based Services (BHRS, IBHS, ABA, FBS, FFT, MST-PSB)

- Current authorizations will be extended until August 30th, 2020 (all services except initial assessment and treatment); providers wishing to opt out of the extension must notify their provider representative by May 30, 2020
- Submit Written Order (BHRS, IBHS, ABA) or Referral Form and Evaluation (FBS) to the CBH secure web server or via fax to obtain an authorization number
- New written Orders for BHRS and IBHS should only be made for authorizations through the summer, not to exceed the first day of school

Out of Network (OON) Services

- Remain Fee-for-Service (FFS)
- Prior authorizations will remain; concurrent reviews will be suspended
- Providers must remain in contact with the assigned CCM to ensure that authorizations are open and active for individuals who are in treatment at the facility
- Upon discharge review, the assigned CCM will ensure that authorization reflects the length of stay

CBH will be evaluating the impact of this change to determine modifications needed. This Bulletin will remain in effect until further notice and is subject to further evaluation as the COVID-19 situation develops. CBH may reissue or revise this Bulletin as appropriate.

Please submit questions about this Bulletin to Dr. Chris Tjoa, Interim Chief Medical Officer, at chris.tjoa@phila.gov.