



# PROVIDER ALERT

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Alert (4) – 2005 – 3 – 14 – HCAL

## **Enhanced Outpatient Services Initiative – Effective April 1, 2005**

Community Care Behavioral Health is announcing an initiative to address readmissions to Inpatient Mental Health by promoting outpatient engagement of members prior to, and throughout the first month following hospital discharge.

Research suggests that member engagement by the outpatient professional that will deliver post-hospital follow-up care, who consistently builds upon the therapeutic relationship with the member during the first month following inpatient discharge significantly improves the rate of engagement in after care treatment and results in a decrease in subsequent inpatient utilization. In an effort to decrease Inpatient Mental Health readmission rates and improve upon the post discharge follow-up of members to outpatient services, Community Care has developed a plan to create financial incentives to providers for improving the rate and timeliness of outpatient services for members leaving inpatient care.

The following services have been developed to implement this initiative:

- A service has been developed that will allow outpatient clinicians to engage members while they are still in inpatient mental health care. This service will pay a rate of \$150.00 per service event. The service expectation is a minimum 30-minute face-to-face contact with the member and must be delivered by the clinician who will provide ongoing outpatient care following hospital discharge.
- A service has been developed that will reimburse the outpatient clinician a rate of \$100.00 per service unit for a 45-50 minute Individual Therapy service that is rendered within the first seven days following hospital discharge. In the event that outpatient engagement has begun on the inpatient unit, services must be provided by the same clinician that has rendered that outpatient engagement service (Day 1 = day of discharge).
- A service has been developed that will reimburse the outpatient clinician a rate of \$80.00 per service unit for a 45-50 minute Individual Therapy service that is rendered from days 8 through days 31 following hospital discharge. Service reimbursement is contingent on the first individual therapy service being provided within the first seven days following hospital discharge. The same clinician from engagement, if rendered on the inpatient unit, through the first 31 days of outpatient treatment must provide the service.
- A Physician (Psychiatrist) service has been developed to reimburse \$100.00 per 20-30 minute service unit if delivered within the first fourteen days following hospital discharge (Day 1 = day of discharge).
- A Physician (Psychiatrist) service has been developed to reimburse \$80.00 per 20-30 minute session for services delivered from days 15 through days 31 following hospital discharge. Service reimbursement is contingent on the first physician service being provided within the first fourteen days following hospital discharge. Physicians are not eligible to provide the initial outpatient engagement of the member while on the inpatient unit.

### Enhanced Outpatient Services Initiative – Effective April 1, 2005 (continued)

**Effective April 1, 2005, a new outpatient code structure has been added to the HealthChoices Allegheny County Fee Schedule that will allow for elevated rates of reimbursement for members being discharged from Inpatient Mental Health to ambulatory Outpatient services.**

In order to administer this initiative, Community Care plans to discretely authorize these services. They will not be permitted under the outpatient registration process. Following a 90-day implementation period, service utilization and the impact on Inpatient Mental Health readmission will be analyzed by Community Care to determine the overall effect of this initiative.

Please find enclosed in this packet the following information for your review:

- ✓ Training Announcement
- ✓ Frequently Asked Questions
- ✓ Enhanced Outpatient Authorization Request Form
- ✓ Duplicate Contract Amendments for your review, signature and return.
- ✓ Enhanced Outpatient Fee Schedule that applies to the services contracted under your HC Allegheny County Unified Agreement.

Providers are strongly encouraged to read all of the enclosed documentation and attend one of the scheduled trainings to ensure that a firm understanding of this new initiative.

If you have any questions, please call 1-888-251-2224 and ask to speak to your assigned Provider Relations Representative.

Thank you.