

Updated Only for Logo and Branding

Provider Notice

To: All HealthChoices Providers
Date: July 22, 2003
Subject: MH 03 005 Medication Management and Psychotherapy as Stand Alone Services
Original Issue Name "Provider Info MH 03 005 Mental Health Update Medication Management and Psychotherapy as Stand Alone Services"

Included in this *Provider Info*:

Medication Management and Psychotherapy as Stand Alone Services

I. BACKGROUND

PerformCare is charged with managing medically necessary behavioral health services through a provider network, which has demonstrated quality as well as commitment to providing appropriate access to Members.

Multiple complaints have been voiced from County Case Managers, families, providers coordinating step down services and PerformCare Clinical Care Managers (CCM) regarding Provider imposed limitation on access to psychiatric services if outpatient psychotherapy is not required, wanted by the Member or is being provided by another practitioner. This Provider Info serves to clarify expectations relative to provision of psychiatric service.

II. EXPECTATION OF NETWORK PROVIDERS

There are instances where outpatient psychotherapy is not medically indicated for a Member. For instance, persons with autism spectrum disorder or severe or profound mental retardation will gain limited benefit from talk therapy; however medication therapy may be very appropriate. In addition, some Members may have successfully completed psychotherapy and do not wish to engage the process again. However, medication therapy remains appropriate. Finally, some Members may have an existing relationship with an independent practitioner for psychotherapy and is unwilling to change providers but requires medication management services.

While PerformCare recognizes that positive treatment outcomes require coordination of care between psychiatrist and outpatient therapist, and that such coordination is facilitated when services are provided concurrently by the same organization, **participation in outpatient psychotherapy or any other service may NOT be a requirement in order for a Member to access psychiatric services.** For example, a Provider may NOT refuse to accept a Member for medication management due to

lack of the individual's willingness or need for concurrent psychotherapy or any other service. A Provider may, and should, recommend additional services to the Member and to the CCM when appropriate.

Providers may request transfer of a Member to another provider per section II A (14) of the provider agreement if the Member is determined to be non-compliant or uncooperative regarding refusal to participate in psychotherapy if it is medically indicated. However, PerformCare expects that such a determination cannot be made prior to the Members participation in services.

IV. MONITORING STRATEGY

PerformCare will routinely survey BSUs, SCAs, and county administrative offices, CCM, ICM/RCs and others asking for their experience of providers mandating therapy and asking them to disclose Provider names. In addition, complaints from Members and PerformCare Clinical Care Managers will be monitored. As we become aware of instances where a provider is alleged to be mandating psychotherapy or other services in order for a Member to gain access to psychiatric services, PerformCare will be following up with the Provider specifically for the purpose of monitoring policy and procedure. Multiple reports or complaints will generate referral to the PerformCare Quality Improvement and Credentialing Committees.

In the upcoming months, PerformCare will also be completing quality audits of Member records. This may be another opportunity to identify areas of concern. Auditors will be reviewing clinical notes and treatment plans for appropriateness of treatment, progress toward therapeutic goals and overall quality of treatment.

Additional questions related to this information may be directed to your Provider Relations Representative at 888-772-8646. This and other important Provider Info's can be found on our website.