

Managing increased behavioral health demand

2/25/2021

Dear HPSM Behavioral Health Provider,

In San Mateo County, we are experiencing a significant increase in demand for behavioral health services among our members. HPSM wants to help you manage this increased demand while helping you practice at the top of your license. In the coming weeks we will be offering a training opportunity and a forum for discussing challenges with you. In the meantime, we are reaching out with some tips to address this challenge, and to ask for your help.

The challenge: Our wait list of HPSM members who are motivated for treatment and waiting to be matched with a behavioral health provider is significant and continues to increase. With behavioral health demand on the rise nationwide, many providers report it is difficult to accept new patients.

Four immediate opportunities to help:

1. To make sure that critical behavioral health needs are being met, we are asking all providers to look at HPSM caseloads to ensure that members continue to meet medical necessity:

Medical necessity criteria include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Treatment must be needed for diagnosis and treatment of an active mental health condition. Active mental health condition is causing mild to moderate dysfunction.
- b. Treatment is expected to improve symptoms or prevent symptoms and functioning from worsening.
- c. Member must be willing to participate.
- d. Youth under 21 have expanded criteria that include risk factors and prevention.

2. Transition members to other resources when appropriate

If any member no longer meets medical necessity, please terminate therapy so that you can accept new patients and help tackle the unmet need in our community. Terminating therapy does not mean a

member will be unsupported: if a member no longer meets therapy criteria, but needs ongoing supportive services or case management, please refer to one of the following:

- a. **Complex Case Management Referral** – download the referral form here: <https://www.hpsm.org/provider/resources/forms> and fax it to our HPSM team at the number indicated on the form.
- b. **The member's Primary Care Physician.** Don't forget to log into the HPSM Provider Portal at <https://www.hpsm.org/provider/portal> to confirm which Primary Care Physician a member is assigned to. It's important to keep the PCP in the loop on the member's care plan.
- c. **Refer to community groups and resources** such as AA, NA, or other resources listed here: <https://www.smchealth.org/bhrs/aod/recovery>.
- d. **CalHOPE Warm Line:** (833) 317-HOPE (4673)
- e. **Peer Run Warm Line:** 1-855-845-7415
- f. **Friendship Line (for seniors):** 1-888-670-1360

If members are experiencing an increase in symptoms or level of impairment, please call the BHRS ACCESS Call Center: 1-800-686-0101.

3. Consider group services

If you are able to offer groups, please utilize that option so that more members can be served.

4. As you are able to close out client cases, please continue to let us know of your availability:

Call us at 650-616-2580 or email us at HPSM_BH_Provider_Availability@hpsm.org.

A few other tips and reminders:

1. Coordination helps everyone. PCPs are an integral part of the care team. Codes 99366 and 99368 can be used for case conferences for those who are immediately involved in the recovery of the client.
2. Continue to login to the Provider Portal to make sure that a member's HPSM coverage is active and confirm their PCP assignment. This will ensure timely reimbursement and will aid in facilitating communication with PCPs.

We are working on creating additional training modules on San Mateo County resources, Provider Portal use, Treatment Planning with SMART goals, and preventing fraud, waste and abuse. More information will be forthcoming. Thank you for the important services you are providing and for your continued partnership in ensuring that HPSM members with the greatest need have access to services.

Sincerely,

The Health Plan of San Mateo