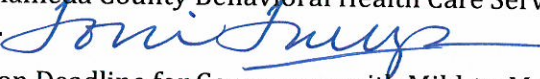




Provider Memo

Date: September 12, 2014
To: All County and Contracted Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Providers
From: Toni Tullys, Deputy Director 
RE: December 31, 2014 Transition Deadline for Consumers with Mild-to-Moderate Conditions

Please review my previous memo dated 5/5/14 regarding "Medi-Cal Coverage for Consumers with Mild-to-Moderate Conditions" which describes this new regulations. Behavioral Health Care Services – as a Mental Health Plan - is now mandated to serve only clients with Moderate-to-Severe conditions by January 1st, 2015. In other words, **all clients with Mild-to-Moderate conditions need to be transitioned out of Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) to their Managed Care Plan by December 31st, 2014.** As a result of this transition, there will be no reimbursement for any services rendered to clients assessed as having Mild-to-Moderate conditions after 12/31/14.

Please review the **revised** Behavioral Health Screening Forms (attached) with their algorithms to determine the appropriate level of care for your client. The screening forms have been revised to better serve youth (0 to 21 years old) who qualify for specialty mental health services under EPSDT criteria (see attached "Medical Necessity for Specialty Mental Health Services"). In addition, a line has been added at the bottom of the page for the clinician's signature, title and date.

If your client's condition or impairments fall within the Mild-to-Moderate range, please assist your client to transition out of SMHS no later than 12/31/14. These clients can be referred to their Managed Care Plan (MCP) or primary care provider (PCP) when additional mental health treatment is warranted.

If your client has **Alameda Alliance Medi-Cal** and you are interested in continuing to work with that consumer, please consider becoming a provider for Beacon Health Strategies. Beacon manages the mental health services for Alameda Alliance Medi-Cal consumers who have mild-to-moderate impairments. Beacon's Provider Relations department can be reached at 855-779-3825, ext. 5672 or providerinquiry@beaconhs.com

If your client's condition or impairments fall within the Moderate-to-Severe range, which meets medical necessity for SMHS, you can provide direct services. Please retain a copy of the completed screening form in the client's chart. This will be particularly important if the chart is audited in the future. If you are an:

- Organizational Provider responsible for your own intakes or any BHCS provider assessing an adult consumer 18-64, and the screening form indicates the consumer meets medical necessity with moderate-severe impairment, it is not necessary for you to send your screening form to ACCESS
- Network Provider seeking re-authorization from BHCS Authorization Services, you must send a signed copy of the screening form with your RES/RCR

Additionally, it is important that you **continue to utilize the revised Behavioral Health Screening Forms with their algorithms to "pre-screen" intake telephone calls or drop-ins.** If you determine that a client does not meet SMHS criteria with Moderate-to-Severe impairment, they should be referred back to their MCP or PCP. If the client meets the criteria for SMHS, a copy of the completed screening form should be kept with their chart.

**Provider Technical Assistance**

If you need assistance with the screening forms or are unsure if a client meets SMHS criteria, ACCESS Supervisors are available to consult with mental health providers. Jane Tzudiker (Child Team) can be reached at 510-346-1042 and Jon Stenson (Adult Team) can be reached at 510-346-1077.

Provider Meetings to Review “Medi-Cal Coverage for Consumers with Mild-to-Moderate Conditions”

Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services will be sponsoring two provider meetings in the next few weeks to discuss these changes and to answer your questions. Meetings will take place in the Gail Steele Room at 2000 Embarcadero Cove, Oakland on:

- September 25th from 2:00- 3:30 and
- October 3rd from 10:30-12:00

No RSVP is necessary. Frequently Asked Questions and Responses will be emailed to providers and posted on the AC Provider Website following these meetings.



Brief Guide to Expanded Medi-Cal Coverage for Consumers with Mild-to-Moderate Conditions

1. **What are the new Behavioral Health Benefits under Medi-Cal Expansion?** For Medi-Cal beneficiaries with Mild-to-Moderate conditions the Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs) expanded benefits include: individual and group therapy, psychiatric consultation, outpatient psychiatric services, psychological testing when clinically indicated to evaluate a mental health condition, and outpatient laboratory/medications/supplies and supplements.
2. **Who is providing these new benefits?** MCPs and primary care providers. The MCPs in Alameda County are **Alameda Alliance**, **Anthem Blue Cross** and **Kaiser**. Alameda Alliance has contracted with Beacon Health Strategies, who is responsible for managing all of Alameda Alliance's mental health services for consumers who do not meet the criteria for Specialty Mental Health Services.
3. **Are there any changes to the County Mental Health Plan (MHP) for Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS)?** Yes, the County MHP remains the carve-out for SMHS but under the Affordable Care Act we will only be serving clients with Moderate-to-Severe conditions. These are the individuals that the County has historically been responsible for and treated. The County also remains responsible for alcohol and substance use treatment.
4. **I am not sure if some of the clients/consumers I am currently serving meet SMHS criteria. What should I do?** As SMHS treatment goals are met, the need for continued services at the current level of care should be evaluated by the provider. Providers are expected to utilize the BHCS Screening Tools to determine if beneficiaries no longer meet SMHS criteria and should be referred to their MCP. Providers should continue to serve the client during the transition to the MCP and document as needed.
5. **What are the contact numbers for Medi-Cal MCPs?**
 - **Alameda Alliance/ Beacon:** (855) 856-0577
 - **Kaiser:** (510) 752-1075
 - **Anthem Blue Cross:** (888) 831-2246
6. **What happens when a Medi-Cal Beneficiary calls their MCP to request Mental Health (MH) services?**

The MCP will complete a telephone screening to determine the level of the MH condition. If mild to moderate criterion are met, they will do the following:

 - Alameda Alliance/Beacon Health Strategies: gives callers two to three names of providers in their network or refers them to their website for a full list of providers
 - Kaiser Medi-Cal: provides MH services at Kaiser clinics
 - Blue Cross Medi-Cal: directs callers to the website below from which they can choose a provider. If the caller does not have web access, caller will be given a few names of providers in Alameda County who are contracted with Anthem Blue Cross.
http://www.anthem.com/wps/portal/ca/culdesac?content_path=member/f3/s5/t1/pw_a115113.htm&label=Medi-Cal&rootLevel=0&name=ssb
7. **Who should we contact if the Medi-Cal Beneficiary's Managed Care Plan is unable to serve the beneficiary with mild-moderate conditions?**

Contact the Medi-Cal Managed Care Office of the Ombudsman @ 888-452-8609.