



Behavioral Health Department

Alameda County Health

Memo

Date: June 17, 2025

To: Acute Psychiatric Hospital Utilization Review Departments

From: Penny Bernhisel, LCSW, ACBHD Utilization Management Division Director

Subject: REVISED Concurrent Review and Authorization Process for Hospital Services

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of changes to ACBHD UM's prospective review process.

Background

Behavioral Health Information Notice (BHIN) 22-017 issued April 15, 2022, clarified guidance regarding concurrent prospective review standards for inpatient psychiatric hospitals.

Revisions to Concurrent Review

Alameda County Behavioral Health Department has modified our Utilization Management (UM) authorization request process to better align with BHIN 22-017. We are eliminating the "Preliminary denial" process that will allow ACBHD UM to return decisions faster and extend the time MD to MDs may consult. In addition to the formal appeal process we are adding an "Informal expediated appeal process" available while the client is still in the hospital. Changes include:

- New authorization request form to include specific number and type of days requested:
 - Admission requests: Up to 3 acute days
 - Continued/ongoing requests: Up to 5 acute days, up to 7 administrative days
- Decisions on concurrent authorization requests shall occur within 1 business day of receipt of a complete request
- Informal Expedited Appeal process within 1 business day of initial denial to allow for additional documentation to be considered
- Opportunities for clinical consultation including Peer Review from the time of admission until 1 business day after a denial is issued

Prospective review offers a unique opportunity for plan of care agreements to be reached through real-time two-way dialogue. Our goal is to work in partnership to ensure timely decisions and care coordination.

Action Required

Please submit the Inpatient Authorization Request Form with each authorization request.

Share this information with your Utilization Review teams, as appropriate.

Support

This memo and the Inpatient Authorization Request form may be electronically accessed through:

<https://bhcsproviders.acgov.org/providers/UM/UM.htm>

If you have any further questions please contact Alameda County Utilization Management (510) 567-8141.