

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

-Volume 45
-June, 2020

Building Our Reputation One Client at a Time

Reminder: Our New Mailing Address: Associated Billing Center, LLC-241 Forsgate Drive, Ste. 116, Jamesburg, NJ 08831

A Message From Mona

This month's **Associated Billing Center Newsletter** is our 45th edition. I want to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have responded to articles and contributed your thoughts to this on-line publication. Your feedback on our content is invaluable. We published our first Newsletter in September, 2016. Our intended purpose then, and now, remains the same; to inform and entertain.

A recent OnePoll survey shows that 20 percent of participants admit they have never felt more isolated than over the past three months with many saying that the Covid-19 isolation is the hardest part of this pandemic. One in five say they are not experiencing good relationships with their friends because no one has reached out to them since the pandemic began. 14 percent are afraid they have lost some friends forever due to not being able to see them in person. Nearly a quarter of those queried say that video calls have helped mitigate some of that loneliness. One in ten say they even feel more isolated when the call ends. Over half have said that they have not spoken to anyone about their feelings. So, exactly how are these individuals coping? Close to 40 percent have turned to comfort food and 25 percent are indulging in alcohol. Marijuana use would certainly be part of the equation.

Associated Billing Center, LLC is here to support our providers understand the changing landscape of Telehealth. A reminder: Your patients are always invited to contact us with questions. They are treated with the utmost dignity-after all we are a direct reflection of your practice.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Best Regards,
Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



** Telehealth Update **

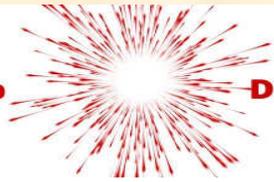
As of the publication of this Newsletter, this is updated information for Telehealth end dates. As you know, this is subject to change. **Associated Billing Center** will keep you updated as we receive updates. Cost sharing is based on the patient's plan.

Cigna 7/31
Aetna 9/30
Medicare indefinitely
Empire 9/13
Anthem 9/30
UHC/Oxford 9/30
BCBS FEP (Federal) indefinitely
Beacon Health Options indefinitely (must use HIPAA compliant program)
Amerihealth NJ 7/30
Meritain 9/30
Tricare 7/24
BCBS of CA indefinitely
Horizon BCBS of NJ 11/4

Telehealth & the Private Practice

Many providers find that with the advent of Telehealth there is reduced potential for "no-show" appointments. In person no-show rates can average as high as 20 percent (depending on practice policy) and are greatly reduced when Telehealth is utilized falling into the single digits. Many practices have expanded patient rosters because of the technology. Offering on demand Telehealth appointments can fill gaps in your appointment schedule. A McKinsey & Company survey reports that 57% view Telehealth more favorably than they did before Covid-19. Still, it remains a very personal decision for each patient concerning the efficacy of Telehealth versus an in-office session.

Keep



Distance

Therapist Office Etiquette

The Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization have developed guidelines for slowing the spread of Covid-19. These guidelines are applicable to mental health professionals who are already doing some in office therapy or contemplate doing so in the future. Most importantly-check your state and local guidelines on Covid-19 office practices.

- The waiting room should encourage social distancing. Reposition your seating.
- Increase ventilation. If possible, open some windows.
- Wear a mask when possible and have a supply readily available in your office for patients.
- Suggest to patients to arrive in your office no more than a few minutes before appointment time.
- It is a good idea to keep a hand sanitizer dispenser in the waiting room and in the therapy office.
- This may be somewhat counterintuitive to you or your patient's personality-but avoid hugging or handshaking.
- Clearly state your office policies concerning Covid-19 utilizing your website and an in-office handout.
- If you operate a group practice, educate your peers as to what your office guidelines are to ensure the safety of all.

Source: Gary R'nel

Laugh a Little or Maybe A Lot: It's Good Therapy



Marital Counseling Joke

A husband and wife came for counseling after 20 years of marriage. When asked what the problem was, the wife went into a passionate, painful tirade listing every problem they had ever had in the 20 years they had been married.

She went on and on and on: neglect, lack of intimacy, emptiness, loneliness, feeling unloved and unlovable, an entire laundry list of unmet needs she had endured over the course of their marriage.

Finally, after allowing this to go on for a sufficient length of time, the therapist got up, walked around the desk and, after asking the wife to stand, embraced and kissed her passionately as her husband watched with a raised eyebrow. The woman shut up and quietly sat down as though in a daze.

The therapist turned to the husband and said, "This is what your wife needs at least three times a week. Can you do this?"

The husband thought for a moment and replied, "Well, I can drop her off here on Mondays and Wednesdays, but on Fridays, I fish."

One out of every four people is suffering from some form of mental illness. Check three friends. If they are OK, then it's you.

Did you hear about the auto mechanic who went to a therapist and insisted on lying under the couch?

Source: free-funny-jokes.com



Does America Need a Mental Health CZAR

Many areas of concern are hotly debated among the candidates in the upcoming 2020 election. At the forefront of discussion is the future of the administration of healthcare in America. The conversation includes mental health therapy availability and affordability. Fact: The United States is experiencing a mental health eleventh hour. According to recent surveys, rates of depression, anxiety and opioid addiction are alarmingly high while suicide and hate crimes continue to plague American life. Several advocacy groups are messaging that America needs a Mental Health Czar serving in a similar capacity as the Surgeon General to offer expertise on policy proposals. The idea of a Mental Health Czar is not completely foreign. California appointed its first Mental Health Czar in 2019 to review mental health services and outcomes throughout the state. The Mental Health Czar could send the message that psychological well-being should always be on par with physical health in keeping with the phrase, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." The President would nominate the CZAR with the advice and consent of the Congress which puts political ideology into the equation. Source: Gary R'nel

Kaiser Family Foundation Statistics

According to a health tracking poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation nearly four in ten say that worry and stress related to the threat of the coronavirus has played a negative role in their mental health. Almost half of women were found more likely to say the fear of Covid-19 has negatively impacted their mental health compared with 33% of men. 46% of urban and 38% of suburban residents are more likely to say Covid-19 has had a negative impact on their mental health compared to 28% of rural areas. And, among adults who have experienced income or job loss due to the pandemic, 46% say this crisis has negatively impacted their mental health. Throw in the political landscape and watch the numbers grow exponentially. Source: Gary R'nel Kaiser Family Foundation

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



So Long--Farewell

✓ There seems to be one thing missing here-common sense. Costco has stopped selling its \$20 half sheet cake across the United States instead offering up the suggestion that you might like a 10-inch round cake. What is the motivating factor here? No, it's not poor sales of the sheet cake. Covid-19 is behind Costco's decision. With graduation season upon us Costco maintains that if you purchase a smaller cake you will invite less people to your party. This will help limit personal contact and create more space for social distancing. Question: Would you decide on the number of people you are inviting to a party based on the size of the cake you are able to purchase? Costco thinks so. Costco says it has no immediate plans to bring back the sheet cake and that the 10 inch round cake seems to be resonating with its members.



✓ Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, has secretly been volunteering to assist people with mental health challenges during Covid-19. He has been communicating with people who contact the United Kingdom's first 24/7 crisis text line-Shout. The Prince told Shout team members that he actually is on the platform volunteering. The organization was launched by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex following a multi-million dollar investment from the Royal Foundation. Prince William spoke openly last year about the loss of his mother, Princess Diana, and its affect on his mental health.

✓ A New Jersey man was ordering at Dunkin Donuts when the person in front of him was telling the cashier he was having a rough day and ordered a small coffee and a donut. When the gentleman behind him in line heard about his difficult day, he offered to buy his coffee and donut. The man promptly changed his order to a large coffee and two bagels with cream cheese expecting the tab to be picked up. The other gentleman refused saying he was taking advantage of him. What do you think? Send your response to gary@assocbillingctr.com

Source: Gary R'nel

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!

Please check out our website: mentalhealthbillers.com for our News & Blog updates.

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Mona Ruback