

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

-Volume 48
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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

"Not in my lifetime!" I hear this response repeatedly when engaged in a conversation about the State of the State and the upcoming election. Mental Health America reports that, "For the one in five who already have mental health conditions-or the one in two who are at risk of developing them-we need to take personal, professional, and policy measures to address them."

Your practice could experience exponential growth in the future, particularly when it comes to telehealth and younger generations. These individuals are more accustomed to using apps for the delivery of purchases etc. and they now expect the same convenience when it comes to therapy. Yes, the digital evolution is making an impressive imprint on mental health therapy.

Many "industry" watchers predict some regulations will stay loosened. The Medicare originating site requirement could be dropped permanently. Some of the HIPAA enforcement rules could remain relaxed so that providers can continue to participate in telehealth while complying with the stated rules in effect.

We will keep a close watch on legislation allowing for telehealth to be practiced across state lines and to be reimbursed at the same rate as in-person therapy. Changes will be duly noted.

We need your help. **Associated Billing Center, LLC** is conducting a survey among our providers asking what your perception is when asking patients if they have a preference for telehealth versus in office therapy. Please send us your thoughts.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Best Regards,
Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



*** Telehealth Update ***
Keeping You Informed

Some people keep up with the Kardashians. **Associated Billing Center, LLC** keeps up with telehealth. The following information is current as of the effective date of the publication of this Newsletter. We will keep you informed of any changes as they occur. Telehealth effective end dates:

- Cigna 12/31
 - Aetna 12/31
 - Medicare Indefinitely
 - Empire 11/9
 - Anthem 9/30
 - UHC/Oxford 12/31 in network cost share waived
 - UHC/Oxford 10/22 out of network cost share waived
 - BCBS FEP (Federal) Indefinitely
 - Beacon Health Options Indefinitely (must use HIPAA compliant program)
 - Amerihealth NJ 12/4
 - Meritain 9/30
 - Tricare Follow Medicare Guidelines
 - BCBS of CA Indefinitely
 - Clover Indefinitely
 - Husky Indefinitely
 - Horizon BCBS of NJ 12/31
 - Horizon BCBS of NJ self pay up to the plan
 - Humana 12/31
- *Please be advised that some employer sponsored insurance plans (self-funded plans) can choose to opt out of the cost share waiving at any time.

Take Note:

Planning to move your office to a new location? It is urgent that you notify insurance ASAP. Once insurance has updated your address (and confirmed the change) we need to update your info on our end.

When submitting day sheets, in the column marked Patient Paid, please enter **actual amounts** received not the designated amount due.

Your Practice is your Business



Yes, you can help to nourish your patient's mental hygiene while also concentrating on your practice's financial health. The two are not mutually exclusive. Very few clinical graduate programs provide any business or financial management training. Being a good clinician is not enough. Maintaining an entrepreneurial spirit is not at odds with your calling to the profession of counseling.

Marketing your practice, including website development, advertising and creating a Newsletter, are areas worth exploring if any fit into your comfort zone.

Creating a digital presence is important. Utilizing the proper SEO (Search Engine Optimization) can lead to more "hits". Your practice needs a distinctive website to showcase your brand. Yes, you do have a brand. It is your style, your individual therapy skills and your panache. If you maintain social media skills, you can develop your own website inexpensively on many platforms (just remember to explore SEO).

Other marketing suggestions include advertising workshops or giving presentations at service organizations.

Mental health professionals often view the profit aspect as antithetical to providing care and healing. The reality is that one cannot survive without the other.

Assisting our clients in maintaining healthy practices is our objective.

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



◆ Mary was having a tough day and had stretched herself out on the couch to do a bit of what she thought to be well-deserved complaining and self-pitying. She moaned to her mom and brother, "Nobody loves me...the whole world hates me!" Her brother, busily occupied playing a game, hardly looked up at her and passed on this encouraging word: "That's not true, Mary. Some people don't even know you."

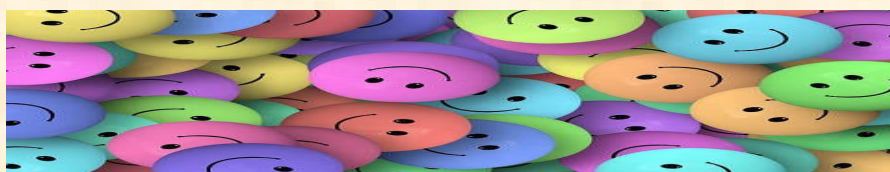
◆ A therapist was doing his normal rounds when he entered a patient's room. He found patient #1 sitting on the floor, pretending to saw a piece of wood in half. Patient #2 was hanging from the ceiling by his feet. The therapist asked Patient #1 what he was doing. The patient replied, "Can't you see I'm sawing this piece of wood in half?" The therapist then inquired of Patient #1 what Patient #2 was doing. Patient #1 replied, "Oh. He's my friend, but he's a little crazy. He thinks he's a light bulb." The therapist looks up and notices Patient #2 is going all red. The therapist tells Patient #1, "If he's your friend, you should get him down from there before he hurts himself." Patient #1 replies, "What? And work in the dark?"

Source: Free-funny-jokes.com

Bumper Stickers

- ◆ I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.
- ◆ I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.
- ◆ Honk if you love peace and quiet.
- ◆ Change is inevitable except from a vending machine.
- ◆ Everyone has a photographic memory. Some don't have film.

Source: bouldertherapist.com



Trick or Treating on Halloween

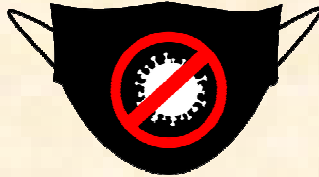
It may come to this: Crack open the ICD-10 manual and discover that a new diagnosis code has been established for parents dealing with the stress of not allowing their children to trick-or-treat this upcoming Halloween. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health says that door to door trick-or-treating is not allowed because it can be very difficult to maintain proper social distancing on porches and front doors especially in neighborhoods that are popular with trick or treaters. Gatherings or parties with non-household members are not permitted, even if held outdoors. County health officials suggest the following instead of trick-or-treating: Families can participate in online parties and contests for best costumes, pumpkin carving, car parades, Halloween movie nights if a drive-in theatre is available, Halloween themed meals at outdoor restaurants and decorating homes and yards with Halloween-themed ornaments. The CDC reports there are several factors to consider when planning an activity (check out cdc.gov). New safety guidelines from the CDC discourage Americans from taking part in traditional trick-or-treating, as it may be one of the riskiest traditions during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Try explaining that one to your kids. Good Luck!

Covid 19 & Mental Health

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released data revealing that one-third of Americans reported showing signs of clinical anxiety or depression as it relates to the Coronavirus pandemic, race relations, the economy and the upcoming Presidential election. Mental Health America reports it saw an increase of 19 percent in patients screening for clinical anxiety early on and that number continues to grow exponentially. The Washington Post says that the number of people calling a federal emergency hotline for those experiencing emotional distress went up by more than 1000 percent year over year. Nearly 20 percent of patients responding to a Kaiser Family Foundation survey said that the Covid-19 pandemic is having a "major impact" on their mental health. One mental health professional tells the Washington Post that mental health can be affected weeks, months or years after the pandemic is over.

Friends Versus Family

✓ Southern Methodist University Professor, Nathan Hudson, reports that people tend to be happier with friends than family. Hudson says research shows it's not the people as much as the activities that take place among friends. The Professor says the majority of time spent with friends is usually fun social events. Hudson says, "When we statistically controlled for activities, the mere presence of children, romantic partners and friends predicted similar levels of happiness." The Professor's research shows that the presence of friends, partners, or children makes people report higher levels of well being. The study concludes that we need to emphasize the planning of recreational time with our family, something that comes more natural when we are with friends.



✓ Some couples might refer to this as role playing-when one partner wears a mask while being intimate with the other. Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Theresa Tam, says there is more to consider than role playing here. Tam says that sex in a pandemic can be complicated especially when engaging with an individual outside your household. Dr. Tam says that sexual activity with new partners increases your chances of getting or passing Covid-19 through close contact like kissing. "Current evidence indicates there is a very low likelihood of contracting the novel corona virus through semen or vaginal fluids. However, sexual activity with new partners does increase your risk of getting or passing Covid-19 through close contact like kissing." The New York City Health Department advises that face masks make sex safer.





✓ The President of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Susan Myres, says she expects new divorce filings to increase somewhere between 10% and 25% in the second half of this year due to strained relationships caused by quarantines and Covid-19. More than 25 percent of adults say that they know a couple who will likely break up, separate or divorce when the pandemic ends according to an Ipsos poll conducted this summer. There is much concern after a report from the National Domestic Violence Hotline reported that calls increased 9% from mid-March to mid-May. Mental health therapists say that for some couples there is a stigma attached to seeking couples therapy. That stigma can quickly dissipate when couples realize the benefits of seeking and participating in counseling.

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