

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

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Exclusively Serving Mental Health Practices Nationwide
Building Our Reputation One Client at a Time

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



The word *communication* has always played an important role in my personal and professional life. *Communication*: The sending or receiving of information or ideas; the imparting or exchanging of information.

With social media, texting and emailing now dominating so much of our lives, it is refreshing to remember that human beings once actually spoke to each other as the preeminent form of communication. One survey has shown that 74 percent of Millennials talk to others online more than in person.

About 3 billion people will use social media today, which means that 40% of the world uses social media for communication. 11% of adults reported preferring staying home on Facebook rather than going out on the weekend.

At **Associated Billing Center, LLC** we believe that texting and email are extremely useful ways to communicate. In addition, we take pride in the fact that a personal conversation with our clients in order to garner feedback and answer questions is also an extremely important tool. While some billing companies have skewed toward email and text heavily in communicating with their clients, we utilize both.

In our weekly meetings, we speak about the importance of effective communication. Our client retention rate is truthfully among the highest in the industry. We attribute that to your trust and confidence in our work ethic and the importance we place on effective communication.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



Keeping You Informed

-The public health emergency is being lifted in many states. Whether or not telehealth continues is policy driven. It is best to have your patient check with their insurance company to see if they will continue to have telehealth benefits. Expect legislative efforts to protect and expand access to mental/behavioral telehealth services. In addition, when the Public Health Emergency comes to an end, you should be collecting patient's copays, coinsurance, etc. at time of service.

Telehealth Reimbursement Permanency

-Several states are making permanent the temporary pandemic rules that allow providers to be reimbursed at the same rates as for in-person visits. Many payment questions will be determined through payer policies and contract negotiations.

-Oxford has extended cost share for NJ policies until September 10, 2021. NY ended on June 4, 2021 but there is a legislative attempt to extend cost sharing in the state.

-New York State-June 24, 2021, Governor Cuomo announced the end of the COVID State of Emergency. In terms of cost-sharing waiver, some carriers, e.g., Emblem, have already ceased the payment of the co-pays and it shifted back to patients.

-The post Covid-19 telehealth expansion bill has been approved by both houses of the NJ State Legislature. It awaits the Governor's signature. We will send updates on this as they occur.

Reminders

-When you receive an EOP/EOB in the mail, with or without a paper check, please forward a copy to us. Not all insurance companies allow us to receive them electronically. Without the EOP/EOB, we are unable to determine if you were paid correctly.

-Important: When submitting day sheets, please specify whether the therapy session was in office or virtual and remember to record all patient payments.

Achieving Your Mental Health Practice Goals



There are many actions to consider when attempting to streamline your practice and maintain its operating level at peak performance. The following are suggestions that may not be applicable to every office:

*Give patients the opportunity to schedule therapy sessions online. This could serve as a stimulus to those patients who may not be sufficiently motivated to call your office and schedule a therapy session. In addition, you could possibly reduce forgotten appointments by sending a text reminder about an upcoming session.

*Utilize secure and HIPAA compliant email messaging. This will eliminate some of the phone traffic and allow you to respond immediately to patient inquiries. (Hushmail is a great example).

*Elevating Client Experience. This truly is simple and important. Conduct your own JD Power informal survey of patient satisfaction. This is a most effective tool in supporting client retention.

*Stay abreast of branding and marketing opportunities in your local market. Let's explore this a bit further. There is a website called nextdoor.com in many neighborhoods. It has effectively taken the place of the local tabloids that previously were delivered to your doorstep weekly. This is a free to low-cost opportunity to digitally advertise in a very personal way and to familiarize the surrounding communities with your niche, as well as broad based services. Check it out.

*The following suggestion will only apply to your practice if you feel comfortable partaking in this activity. Some of our therapists follow-up with a text or email to patients who have left their practice within the past six to nine months. They simply ask if there is any further assistance they can provide while communicating the message that they hope they are doing well. It can be received by the patient as an expression of good will.

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



■The problem with treating mental health is that it's all in your head.

■Apparently people who exercise have been shown to recover better and be less at risk from mental health issues. So, who said you can't run away from your problems.

■I'm a mental health therapist helping people to be more at peace with their lives. Check out my Instagram! I'm a content creator.

■My mental health is like a rainbow. All over the spectrum.

■Recent research shows that horses tend to have much better mental health than other farm animals due to their stable environment.

■I have a weird mental health issue where I have to get out and pull my car every time I go through a tunnel. It's car-pull tunnel syndrome.

■Why can't you hear a psychiatrist go to the bathroom? Because the 'P' is silent.

■Little Jimmy is in first grade. All his artwork he has been bringing home from school is in black and brown. Fearing this may indicate a mental health problem, his parents take him to a therapist for evaluation. The therapist says, "First, I would like to see a sample of your art work" and hands him a sheet of paper and a new box of crayons.

"Oh, good." says Jimmy. "A whole box of crayons. All we have left at school are black and brown."

Source: upjoke.com/mental-health-jokes



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Thanks for your positive reaction to this monthly Newsletter. We very much look forward to your feedback and story suggestions.

Mental Health Practice Potpourri

Telehealth Positively Affects Practice Profitability

≥ According to several studies, some mental health practices experience no-show rates as high as 25 percent. The utilization of telehealth technology has greatly improved on that number with many practices reporting much reduced cancellations due to inadequate transportation or patients not feeling well enough to make the commute.

≥ **Associated Billing Center, LLC** takes pride in the manner in which we deal with patient inquires. We realize we are a direct reflection of your practice and take extra care to treat patients with dignity and respect when they call with a billing question. This removes you from the process of reviewing financial matters and allows you to do what you do best. Help others!

Diversify Your Income as a Therapist

≥ There are many opportunities to increase your income (if you are so inclined and have the time). Teach a class online or in person, become a consultant, contribute to a publication or blog, consider public speaking and yes, even authoring a book.

≥ Investing in a Virtual Part-Time home office is an option exercised by a number of mental health professionals. With telehealth sure to be an integral part of the future, therapists with the desire to add to their patient rosters can do so comfortably from the confines of their own home. Lots of mitigating factors here. This is a very personal choice.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



✓ The United States will now host two of the symbolic ladies. France sent a second, smaller Statue of Liberty. A mini replica of the French designed Statue reached the U.S. on July 1. The bronze sibling statue, nicknamed the "little sister", has been in France since its completion in 2009. On June 19th, the smaller sibling boarded a shipping vessel in Le Havre, a port in Normandy, bound for New York Harbor and was erected across from the original on Ellis Island. Both statues will stand facing one another from July 1-5, and then the smaller one will be taken to Washington, D.C., to be installed at the French ambassador's residence.



✓ The latest in Hybrid Work Schedules UK style. English accountancy giant PwC has told its 22,000 staff that they can choose when they start and finish their day as part of a plan to allow "greater flexibility for post-pandemic working." The flexible working day is one of three parts to a new framework. Another change allows people to continue working from home, with the expectation that the staff work with colleagues either in the office or at a client site, for an average of 40 to 60 percent of the time. The third change is to let staff work a half day on Fridays in July and August. Music streaming service Spotify says that it will allow its employees to work from anywhere going forward. That same philosophy does not hold true everywhere. Goldman Sachs CEO, David Solomon, recently called working from home an "aberration."



✓ Buying a used car is one thing. But what about purchasing a reconditioned pair of Nikes. Concerned about climate change and environmental degradation, Nike is launching a program that will give a second life to returned shoes. Nike Refurbished says it will make the shoes “like new” or “gently worn”. Shoes should be returned within a 60-day window. Once they’re placed back on store shelves, items will be marked with information about the renewed shoes and they will be priced based on style and condition. Nike Refurbished is launching 15 stores across the U.S. with plans for expansion. According to a ThredUp 2020 Resale Report, the secondhand market will reach \$64 billion by 2024. The company, along with Poshmark, both went public this year.

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!

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

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Addendum to the June, 2021 Newsletter

Northeast Corridor Out of State License Update Effective July 2, 2021

- New York: As of June 25th, Governor Cuomo allowed NY State’s Executive Orders to expire. This means, as of June 25th, New Jersey social workers are no longer allowed to treat clients via telehealth if they are physically located in New York at the time of service, unless they possess a New York license.
- Pennsylvania: Clinicians must contact the PA Board of Social Work for a temporary license waiver to see clients located in PA at the time of service. These licensing waivers are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2021, unless ended sooner.
- Connecticut: Connecticut continues to allow out-of-state licensed clinicians to treat clients located in CT without notifying their Board of Social Work. However, the emergency orders that allow this are scheduled to end on July 20th, unless extended by the Governor.
- Delaware: Out of state licensed clinicians are allowed to provide telehealth services to clients located in DE, without notifying the DE Board of Social Work until further notice provided by Governor John Carney. However, Delaware’s State of Emergency is predicted to be lifted on July 13th, which may change this allowance.