

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



I am often asked what role do I believe telehealth will play in a successfully managed practice post pandemic. Very simply stated: A vital role. Of course, much will depend on legislation concerning utilization of the technology but research and empirical evidence suggests that mental telehealth is fast becoming a permanent fixture.

Some interesting stats on Telehealth:

- >In the first few months of the pandemic, patients who were somewhat skeptical about the efficacy of mental health teletherapy soon realized that the therapeutic value of the modality exceeded their expectations.
- >Telehealth across all specialties is expected to grow from \$80 Billion in 2020 to \$397 Billion in 2027.
- >70 percent of providers responding to a Tridium behavioral health study report they plan to continue offering telehealth services post-pandemic.
- >A report by McKinsey and Company finds that 24 percent of all patient encounters in the future could be done via telehealth. CMS and state legislatures are being lobbied to maintain pandemic-level payment.
- >Bain and Co. reports that there are very few practices that don't expect telehealth to supplement their work post the pandemic.

NOTE:

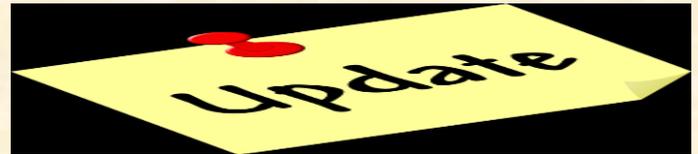
Moving forward, payments will be determined by government regulation, payer policies and contract negotiations. Telehealth is not for everyone. There are patients who still feel that the benefits of in-office therapy far exceed talking into a computer monitor.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



Associated Billing Center Reminders:

- Regardless of network status, remember to list all patient payments (copays/copayments/deductibles) on your day sheets.
- When submitting day sheets, please specify whether the therapy session was in office or virtual.
- Keep in mind that for patients with self-funded plans, the cost-share waivers do not apply.
- It is very important to ask your patients frequently if there is an impending change in their insurance.

Benefit Information Profile Page

- Benefit verifications are done as expeditiously as possible. Wait times at insurance companies have grown exponentially. We do not obtain benefits from online sources. When checking benefits, our team asks specific questions related to cost-sharing and Telehealth coverage. It is important that the information we gather is accurate and applies to an individual's mental health plan. Our goal is to confirm the patient's fiduciary responsibility to the provider for services rendered. If you need to have our [Benefit Information Profile Page](#) returned to you quickly for an emergency situation, please advise us and we will make every effort to get the benefits to you asap.

Mental Health Access Improvement ACT

- The Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2021 continues to build momentum in the Senate. If passed, the proposed legislation would allow mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists to bill Medicare for counseling services. Services provided by licensed clinical mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists are covered by all private insurers and nearly all state Medicaid programs. If you support the proposed legislation, contact your Congressional representative.

Mental Health Practice Knowledge



> Getting favorable reviews on line is an important component to expanding your client base. Positive reviews also help to improve search engine rankings. Ask your patients to post a review on line on a specific platform such as Google and/or Yelp. If a client posts a negative review, respond to it. Some platforms allow those who posted reviews to edit them. Surveys show that what matters most to patients when evaluating practice performance is the efficacy of therapy, convenience in scheduling appointments and the provider's timely response to patient inquiries concerning therapy and other matters. Your practice is your business. Consumer satisfaction is important to success.

> Mental health practitioners and/or their families need to think about strategy and legal requirements when closing a practice due to sudden illness. Be mindful of legal, ethical and professional obligations. State professional organizations are a great resource concerning provincial regulations and requirements. It may be necessary to obtain legal advice.

Patients need to be notified of the closure of the practice and informed about their treatment notes and availability. Different states may have different statutes regarding the notification of patients when a practice is closing. Administrative issues need to be addressed as well: The cancellation of malpractice insurance and professional memberships, as well as lease terminations. You may want to investigate *Tail Liability Coverage* with a broker. It gives the practice protection for claims that are reported after liability insurance ends. Also, outstanding patient balances need to be addressed. If the practice utilized the services of a mental health billing service this task will be much less complicated. Notify third party payers and deactivate NPIs.

Patients who need continued care should be provided with appropriate referrals. Reach out to a professional acquaintance for assistance in this area.

There is the possibility that you are thinking about selling the practice. Again, it is strongly suggested that you contact your state professional organization and an attorney and/or business broker for advice. There are many guidelines for calculating the net worth of a mental health practice.

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



▪ Why is psychoanalysis a lot quicker for a man than for a woman? Because when it's time to go back to childhood, a man is already there.

▪ **BUMPER STICKERS**

- I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.
- Everyone has a photographic memory. Some don't have film.
- When the chips are down, the buffalo is empty.
- Honk if you love peace and quiet.
- Despite the cost of living, it remains very popular.
- Change is inevitable. Except from a vending machine.
- Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Source: bouldertherapist.com

▪ What do you get when you cross a banana peel with a psychologist? A Freudian slip.

▪ A therapist is selling a video that teaches you how to test your dog's IQ. Here's how it works: If you spend \$12.99 for the video, your dog is smarter than you.

Source: upjoke.com

▪ Therapist to Internal Revenue agent on couch: "Nonsense! No way does everyone in the world hate you- everyone in the U.S. perhaps, but certainly not everyone in the world."

Source: free-funnyjokes.com

▪ The UK is officially changing its name in honor of mental health awareness. The new being "U.O.K."

▪ My mom wanted me to see the therapist for my mental health but the couch convinced me not to go.

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

▪ What do you call a meme that provokes intense happiness? Dope-a-meme.

Source: upjoke.com



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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



In conversation with many of our clients, the topic of how to maximize practice earnings is often discussed. The template for operating a successful practice includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- > Submitting your DOS (Dates of Service) in a timely manner and with scheduled regularity. This is imperative if you desire to maintain a consistent revenue stream. Also, stay abreast of timely filing dates.
- > Prioritize billable work. Employing a reputable mental health billing service (Suggestion: **Associated Billing Center, LLC**) to perform administrative and billing tasks can actually increase revenue by more than 20 percent. Spend your time in sessions.
- > Collect those copays and deductibles. We write often about this and the impact that this revenue has on end of year performance. The exception is for those patients with hardship waivers.
- > Establish your practice policies upfront. Design a template for when you will accept payments and inform patients immediately concerning your cancellation policy.
- > Be mindful of the impact telehealth can have on your yearly income. It is fully expected that many states legislative bodies will permit this methodology to continue beyond the Covid-19 pandemic. As previously reported, research shows that the rate of cancellations is dramatically reduced when telehealth is an option.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



✓ We will leave this study for you to analyze and then draw your own conclusions. The New York Post reports that researchers analyzed the cognitive performance of 672 children born in Rhode Island and found that babies born during the pandemic have pronouncedly lower IQs than those born before it. Researchers maintained that living the entirety of their lives in lockdown has negatively affected cognitive development. Lead study author and Brown University Professor of Pediatric Research, Sean Deoni, says not being exposed to the wider world as much as pre-pandemic children and instead spending their infancy with stressed adults has left them at a significant mental disadvantage. At the time of publication, the study was not peer reviewed.



✓ According to a LinkedIn survey, 66 percent of American workers experience what is being called the "Sunday Scaries" with the beginning of a new work week just hours away. Employees suffering from the Sunday Blues expressed feelings of stress and anxiousness. 41 percent of survey respondents reported their Sunday night unease was made directly worse by the ongoing pandemic. Young people (millennials & Gen Z generations) reported being the most impacted by the "Sunday Scaries" with 78 percent reporting work related stress. The Sunday Blues does not necessarily reflect worker dissatisfaction with their jobs. Instead, it may signal the need to plan an uplifting activity on Monday to accompany the start of the work week.



✓ **Trending: Getting the Covid-19 Vaccine could save you some bucks. Delta Airlines reports it is raising its employee health insurance contributions for the unvaccinated. Beginning in November, unvaccinated staff will pay up to \$200 a month more in premium contributions. Delta will also limit the number of sick days the unvaccinated are allowed to take as it relates to Covid. In addition, the unvaccinated will be required to take a weekly Covid test. The average hospital stay for Covid-19 has cost Delta \$50,000 per person according to the airline's CEO, Ed Bastain. He says the increased employee contribution will help to defray company Covid related expenses. A number of other companies including Google, Facebook and Wall Street firms have begun implementing Covid-19 related mandates in the workplace. Some employers are reluctant to do so for fear of losing employees.**

Associated Billing Center, LLC

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!

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

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Associated Billing Center, LLC is a proud member of:



Associated Billing Center, LLC

Associated Billing Center, LLC was established in 2001 to exclusively provide Mental Health Billing Services to individual and group practices. We are certified as a third-party biller by the NJ State Department of Banking & Insurance. We work as your dedicated back office with the focus on improving your Revenue Cycle Management while allowing you to do what you do best – take care of your patients.

We have recently moved to our newly expanded mental health billing office suite in Jamesburg, NJ. Our team is fully trained in the nuances of mental health billing and changes in rules as they occur. We are extremely proud of our team members who are truly dedicated to maintaining the integrity of our reputation in the marketplace.

We take tremendous pride in the fact that our client retention rate is among the highest in the industry. Our success is built upon the foundation of a genuine commitment to client service, an identifiable, tangible commitment that is more than just a promise – it's an action.