

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

- Volume 60

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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



We're Celebrating the Big 60

Welcome to our 60th monthly edition of the **Associated Billing Center**, LLC Newsletter. Since its inception five years ago, there have been many innovations both in the Newsletter's physical presentation and in the information/entertainment editorial content philosophy.

The Newsletter is organized and written with a dual purpose in mind. First and foremost, it is to inform mental health professionals about the latest trends, coding, HIPAA requirements and suggestions for operating a profitable practice. Our intended purpose is to provide you with pertinent and timely information that will influence your decision-making process as it applies to the stability and future growth of your practice.

I spend a sizable portion of my day conversing with our providers. If you have been a client of **Associated Billing Center**, LLC for any length of time, you are aware of the importance I place on communication skills. Customer service seems to be on the decline in much of the service business sector. My team and I are committed to meeting the high expectations you have come to expect from us. Your calls are answered by a "live, breathing person" not a message center recording.

Sidenote: Millions of people with mental health conditions can now get booster shots. They became eligible after the CDC said mood disorders, including depression and schizophrenia are risk factors for covid-19. Of course, being vaccinated is a personal decision.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

- Many insurance companies are no longer issuing paper checks. A reminder, if you have not signed up for EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer), you will receive a virtual credit card. You will need a credit card reader to deposit this into your account and will be charged merchant fees (same as patient credit card payments).
- You can download the ICD 10 consult APP for continuous and up to date diagnosis codes. It is the ICD-10 CM expert code book at your fingertips.

Renegotiate Your Rate

- Providers do have the option of attempting to renegotiate their reimbursement rates with insurance. Ask us for advice concerning this activity.

Benefit Information Profile Page

- Please be sure to review our **Benefit Information Patient Profile Page** in its entirety upon receipt. It contains specific details pertaining to your client's policy as it relates to Telehealth and In-office therapy. Also, if there have been recent benefit changes regarding the structure of Telehealth as it pertains to an individual's policy, it will be noted here. If there are any questions, please call us. That's why we are here!

Transmitting Patient Data

- In compliance with HIPAA regulation, patient information should *only* be transmitted utilizing encrypted platforms. It is strongly advised not to use your phone for sending information.

Reminder

- Changes or updates to fee charges must be sent to us in writing before changes will be made.

Mental Health Telehealth Trends



When Covid-19 became interwoven into the fabric of our everyday existence, it was accompanied by the exponential growth of Mental Telehealth. Today, research indicates that Mental Telehealth is more than a fad or a trend. A recent national Press Ganey Survey reports that 89 percent of patients would recommend the modality of Telehealth to others.

While Telehealth will not comprise the majority of therapy sessions going forward, it could represent a sizable portion of your mental health practice. A recent report by McKinsey and Company suggests that telehealth's share of commercial claims jumped from .17% to 7.5% in the first year of the pandemic. The recent Telehealth surge was fueled by payment equity requirements implemented shortly after emergency declarations. Will payment equity become a permanent part of the Mental Telehealth landscape? This will be determined through payer policies, contract negotiations and lobbying efforts.

If your business plan includes growing your practice, the expanded use of Telehealth is at your disposal. And while we consistently report on patient convenience, providers can enjoy many perks including working from home and increased flexibility in scheduling. In addition, if you do not lease office space monthly, some operating expenses might be reduced.

The popularity of Mental Telehealth is not in doubt and neither is its durability. Evidence indicates a majority of patients derive expected benefits and find therapeutic efficacy equal to office visits (certainly not true for all patients).

Associated Billing Center, LLC is proficient in the application of the appropriate codes for claims processing. If you have any questions, just ask. That is what we are here for!

Important Reminder: Please make certain to note on your day sheets whether a visit was virtual or in person. The claim will be paid and processed accordingly.

Reminder: Your Practice is Your Business.

Mental Health Practice Notables/Accurate Record Keeping

There is a difference between *Progress Notes* and *Psychotherapy Notes*. Progress notes are written to justify necessity and should include treatment plans and any consultation notes. Psychotherapy notes are written to refresh the therapist's memory from session to session. In an audit, insurance companies generally require Progress notes. In addition, patient notes should reflect and support the ICD-10 diagnosis, as well as the CPT code.

*Tell a colleague about our **Associated Billing Center**, LLC Newsletter*

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



Mental Health Humor

- A new study shows procrastination is as harmful to mental health as alcohol abuse. To combat this, I've decided to form Procrastinators Anonymous. Please CONSIDER joining it. No rush!
- The psychology instructor had just finished a lecture on mental health and was giving an oral test. Speaking specifically about manic depression, she asked, "How would you diagnose a patient who walks back and forth screaming at the top of his lungs one minute, then sits in a chair weeping uncontrollably the next?" A young man in the rear raised his hand and answered, "A basketball coach?"
- While on a road trip, an elderly couple stopped at a roadside diner for lunch. After finishing the meal, they left the restaurant and resumed their trip. When leaving, the elderly woman unknowingly left her glasses on the table and she did not miss them until they had been driving for about forty minutes. All the way back, the elderly husband became the classic grouchy old man. He fussed and complained and scolded his wife relentlessly during the entire return drive. The more he chided her, the more agitated he became. He just wouldn't let up for a single minute.

To her relief, they finally arrived at the restaurant. As the woman got out of the car and hurried inside to retrieve her glasses, the old geezer yelled to her, "While you're in there, you might as well get my hat and the credit card!!!"

▪ My wife and I split up because of psychological reasons...She was Psycho and I was Logical.

Source: upjoke.co

▪ The patient's chief complaint is that he is overly demanding when making a request. The therapist told the patient to make himself comfortable and have a seat on the couch. To which the patient responded, "Don't you have a power recliner?"

Source: Gary R'nel



Mental Health Practice News & Notes



Stigma-Changes in Perception

A study by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America finds that 60% of U.S. adults aged 18-25 view seeking a mental health professional as a sign of strength, compared to only 35 percent of adults over 26. The Covid-19 pandemic has reduced the amount of Stigma many people felt about seeking therapy. In fact, employers are increasingly seeking to serve the mental health needs of their employees with 68% planning on increasing their mental health budgets toward EAP programs.

Mental Health Practice Volume

With the advent of Mental Telehealth, many practices have the option of expanding patient roster size. There will be a 10% increase in demand for mental health professionals by 2026. During this time, several thousand are anticipated to leave the profession through retirement and/or attrition. About 37% of the U.S. population, or 122 million Americans, are living in areas experiencing mental health professional shortages. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that 65.5% of people with SMI reported receiving treatment in the U.S. in a recent year while 34.5% did not. According to the Steinberg Institute in California, the situation is so dire now that two-thirds of all primary care providers in the U.S. say they have trouble finding mental health specialists to refer to their patients. *Two-thirds.*

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



✓According to a Gallup survey, tradition is alive and well in the roles men and women assume in the household. 58% of women do laundry, with a majority cleaning house and preparing meals. While women comprise nearly half of the U.S. workforce, they still fulfill a larger share of household responsibilities. Women are also the primary decision makers when it comes to home décor in 62% of households. Women are also much more likely to continue to care for children on a daily basis and shop for groceries. According to Gallup, the tasks that men and women share equally are paying bills and planning family activities. The *Virginia Slims* woman might react to these statistics by asking, "Have we truly come along way baby in all areas?"



✓SkySp Airlines is now giving its female flight attendants the option of wearing sneakers on the job instead of heels. The new uniform for women now includes white Nike sneakers and loose orange suit with trousers and a silk scarf. White T-shirts will replace blouses. The Ukrainian airline says it decided to make the change after collecting feedback from its flight attendants about the comfort and functionality of their uniform. The airline also plans to makeover male uniforms that will now feature a light suit, no vests, sneakers and a T-shirt.



✓The lightbulb continues to pop in the minds of an increasing number of high-profile celebrities and sports figures who are no longer allowing the Stigma that can affect the decision to treat mental health issues block them from getting help. The latest is Atlanta Falcons star, Calvin Ridely, who says he is stepping away from football to focus on his mental health. In recent years, stars like Sophie Turner, Chris Evans, Chrissy Teigen, Prince Harry and many others have spoken candidly about their struggles with mental illness. Notable sports figures who have shared their personal mental health challenges with the public include Simone Biles, Terry Bradshaw, Serena Williams and Michael Phelps among countless others.

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.

Thanks for being a part of our family. We Never take your business for granted.