

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

- Volume 72

- October 2022

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



It was terrific seeing so many of our clients at the recent New Jersey Psychological Association Fall Conference. Meeting "face to face" is nearly on the extinct species list with the proliferation of social media. Also, thanks to the many of you who expressed an interest in our service and have since become a part of the **Associated Billing Center** family.

I am always available to meet in person with our clients who are nearby to our office, or the option of a Zoom or Teams Meeting is always available. Regardless of the venue, I often message in our Newsletter about the importance of effective communication. Always remember to reach out the moment you have a question or concern. And yes, a "live person" will answer your call. No transfers --No message center.

On Another Note:

We are staying abreast of any impending changes to mental telehealth as they apply to your practice. We will inform you in a timely manner so that your Revenue Cycle Management (RCM) is not disrupted.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

- If you are changing your address, it must be updated at EVERY insurance company regardless of your network status. Claims cannot be submitted with the new address until you confirm that it has been updated in their system (claim system also). Checks will be mailed to an incorrect address if this activity is not performed.

- Announcement From ECHO Health, Inc. & PNC Healthcare on behalf of HUMANA
Mental Health Providers please note:
You will be enrolled for virtual credit card payments from Humana in November 2022 if you do not enroll in EFT.

Want to learn more about ERA/EFT and how to enroll? Visit Humana.com/epaymentinfo. If you choose to enroll in EFT/ERA, be sure to decline participation in the virtual card program by contacting ECHO Health, Inc. at 888.483.9212 as soon as possible.

- **Medicare Update:**

Medicare's deductible for 2023 will be \$226. This year it was \$233. You read right. It dropped!

- **Service References:**

Credentialing: We can recommend Kellie Goodroe/CEO, Affordable Physician Services, LLC 765-692-0887
Kgoodroe@affordablephysicianservices.com Let her know you are a client of ours.

Legal Advice:

Associated Billing Center, LLC utilizes the services of Liles/Parker, an attorney health care regulatory firm representing providers around the country seeking counsel in practice matters. Web: lilesparker.com Contact: Robert Liles

Stay In The Know-Your Mental Health Practice



Yes, you help to nourish your patient's mental hygiene while also focusing on your practice's financial health. The two are not mutually exclusive. Very few clinical graduate programs provide any business or fiscal management training. Being an effective 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 possibly 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 highlight your brand. It is your style, your individual therapy skills and your panache. If you possess a minimal amount of navigation skills concerning social media, you can develop your own website given the abundance of templates available.

Other marketing suggestions include creating personal group workshops or giving presentations at service organizations. We have heard from many providers who volunteer their time giving presentations being on the receiving end of additional clientele.

Too often, mental health professionals often view the profit aspect as antithetical to providing care and healing. The reality is that one cannot exist without the other. **Associated Billing Center** is always available for conversations concerning the management of your practice.

Remember, Your Practice is Your Business.

Renegotiating Your Rates

If you are an in-network provider, review your contract to look for any clauses that pertain to a request for a rate increase. You may even discover instructions for the process to make the request. Mental health providers request rate adjustments frequently so do not feel inhibited by taking such action. In addition, you can contact your insurance provider rep for guidance. Make your request reasonable based on availability of provider specialists in the area and patient demand. Speak with your colleagues who are willing to share their fee information and reasonably attempt to deduce what an acceptable rate increase request would be. Remember, insurance rates are influenced by location, specialty & demand.

Associated Billing Center can facilitate and help guide you through the request process. Also, non-par providers should review their current fees, taking into consideration the marketplace & demand.

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



***The Rorschach Test**

A man goes to a mental health therapist and says, "Doc, I got a real problem. I can't stop thinking about sex." The therapist says let's see what we can find out and introduces his inkblots to the patient.

The therapist turns the picture upside down and the patient responds, "That's a man and woman on a bed making love." The therapist continues to display several ink blots with the patient responding, "That's a man and a woman making love." The third ink blot is displayed for the patient to observe. The patient responds again, "That's a man and a woman making love."

The therapist says "Well, you do seem to be obsessed with sex." "Me?" demands the patient. "You're the one showing me the dirty pictures."

Source: bouldertherapist.com

***Think about this.** If we still had party lines on our phones many telemental health sessions could be billed as group therapy.

Source: Gary R'nel

***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. (Yes, in most quarters this still considered PC).

Source: free-funny-jokes.com



Mental Health Practice News & Notes

Reviewing the Basics

- Mental Health providers need to be aware that many commercial insurance companies and state Medicaid programs outsource their mental health claims to a third party. It is one of the reasons that, when **Associated Billing Center** conducts a Benefit Check, we always ask about carveouts and document our notes with reference numbers and the person to whom we spoke. This is to avoid a delay in claims processing and get you your money faster.
- In total, next year's CPT code set will see 393 editorial changes, including 225 new codes, 75 deletions, and 93 revisions. The code set will go into effect in October 2022. Providers can import the updated code set into their existing IT systems using the downloadable CPT 2023 Data File.
- For 2023, CMS proposed extending coverage for all interim telehealth services for five months after the “public health emergency” ends. The House of Representatives also voted 416–12 for a bipartisan bill that extends Medicare telehealth payment and regulatory flexibilities through the end of 2024. Two U.S. Senators introduced bipartisan legislation to extend current Medicare telehealth reimbursement waivers an additional two years following the end of the public health emergency. Telehealth will not completely replace in-person care, but models that combine virtual and in-person care to optimize health outcomes will proliferate.

Solo versus Group Practice

- If you are considering bringing on other practitioners and pursuing the idea of moving from a solo to a group practice, there are several arenas that will require your exploration. From a business perspective, if you are successfully managing your individual practice, you have many of the skills required to maintain a profitable revenue stream in a group setting. You need to consider the number of therapists in your group environment, office space, schedules, specialties, telehealth versus in office visits and the design of your business plan to help facilitate meeting your goals. You also need to decide whether independent contractors or employees would be a better fit. In addition, you need to consider the brand you have developed to date. In essence, just as a product on a shelf has a particular image and brand, so too does your practice. Will your group practice be identified as a specialty group or multidisciplinary? It is important to associate with providers who share your vision, empathy and work ethic.

If you decide to consider the idea of expansion (a very personal decision), congratulations. **Associated Billing Center**, LLC is here to support you. We have helped guide several of our clients through the process. We can facilitate credentialing changes for your practice, as well as execute information changes with insurance panels for in and selective out of network providers. While some of the necessary steps to becoming a group practice can look overwhelming, we can help to put your mind at ease and make the transition less complicated and less stressful. We Are Here to Help!

Note to Providers: Patient information should never be sent via text message. We will only respond via encrypted email. We will not respond utilizing text messaging. This is a HIPAA violation.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



> Tampa Bay Bucs QB, Tom Brady, joins a list of high-profile individuals who have helped to diminish the stigma that still exists for some people concerning accessing mental health therapy. Brady says that he has used both physical and mental health therapy to address his needs. Speaking on his podcast, "Let's Go!", he opened up about the intense amount of stress he has confronted over his 22-year NFL career. Controversy has swirled around Brady concerning his retirement plans and his relationship with Gisele Bündchen. Among celebrities who have come forward concerning their struggles with mental health: Chrissy Teigen, Demi Lovato, Steve Young, Donny Osmond, Michael Phelps, Dan Reynolds, Katy Perry, Selena Gomez & Jon Hamm.



> Stress related anxiety over money breaks down along demographic lines. According to a survey from Bankrate and Psych Central, nearly half of Americans say worry about money negatively affects their mental health. The largest group affected are millennials aged 26 to 41. Many are first having children or are insecure about their jobs or could be first time home buyers (the exorbitant prices of renting today also contributes greatly to money anxieties). Gen X, ages 42 to 57, come up next in the descending list of those most negatively impacted. Women, more than men, indicate that money significantly affects their mental health. One contributing factor here is that in 2021, women made about 80 cents for every dollar of male wages. Prior to the Biden administration forgiving some student loan debt, a majority of borrowers reported that their anxiety and depression issues were directly related to their debt.



> There has not been a union of strippers in the United States since the nation's only unionized strip club, the Lusty Lady in San Francisco, closed in 2013, according to Actors Equity. Dancers at the Star Garden Topless Dive Bar in Los Angeles are attempting to join the ranks of recent newly union represented employees at Amazon and Starbucks. The dancers maintain they've faced unsafe working conditions, including assault and harassment from customers. They maintain management has not taken their concerns seriously. The existential social pressure these individuals encounter can also take a toll on their mental health according to professionals. The dancers have filed a petition to unionize with the Actor's Equity Union.

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:



Newsletter Addendum



Associated Billing Center, LLC values client feedback. In fact, encouraging client feedback is one of the most important areas of our operation. We take pride in the fact that our client retention rate is in the top percentile for our business category. Please call us immediately if you have a question concerning your account. Your feedback helps to ensure that we are offering optimum service to our clients.

A Quick & Vitally Important Thought from Mona

“Effective communication is the key to enhanced personal and professional relationships. Maintaining the ability to communicate effectively is one of life’s most important skills. Communicating effectively with family, friends and business associates leads to an increasingly rewarding life.”

On Another Note:

“No, they are not mutually exclusive. You can manage a profitable mental health practice while being an empathetic clinician. In fact, quite literally, one cannot exist without the other.”

Thanks for being part of our Associated Billing Center, LLC family. We never take your business for granted.

About Us:

Associated **B**illing **C**enter, 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 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.

Mona Ruback/CSS

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