

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

- Volume 55

- May 2021

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



I am extremely fortunate to be surrounded by a group of people who truly care deeply about each other and about the success of **Associated Billing Center, LLC**. Sydney, a recent addition to our team is now a college graduate. We are all proud of her accomplishments and the expertise she brings to our business. We hosted an office graduation party!

I have been inundated with provider calls asking me how other therapists are reacting to the recently published CDC guidelines concerning Covid-19 and masks.

My first response: Staying in compliance with state and local jurisdictions is of paramount importance. After that, the future of these guidelines becomes very personal and a matter of convenience. Robert Wachter, Chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of California says he would go maskless indoors under three conditions: If everyone in the room has been vaccinated, if any unvaccinated people are wearing masks or if the local COVID-19 rate is so low that it's unlikely that an unmasked, unvaccinated person might carry the virus.

Telehealth: Staying in the Know

81 percent of behavioral health providers began using telehealth for the first time during the pandemic. At least 70 percent of therapists I have spoken to plan on continuing to offer telehealth services post the pandemic. Some of my clients have actually added therapists to work specifically with telehealth appointments. When properly structured-providers can increase revenues.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



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.

-Patient Information should only be sent utilizing encrypted platforms.

-When submitting day sheets, please specify whether the therapy session was in office or virtual.

-Please remember all patient payments should be reported on your day sheet.

Keeping You Informed

If your patient has an Aetna Medicare Advantage plan, some patients will be issued new 12-digit ID cards. Please obtain new ID information from any patient receiving those new cards.

Remember when recording a patient's insurance information ID to include the Alpha Prefix.

You can still accept insurance and submit claims for your services if you are considered an out of network provider, as long as your patient has out of network benefits.

Billing for more than one therapy session per day, here is the *general* rule: If the practice has a psychiatrist and counselor on staff, the psychiatrist may perform one service and then a counselor may perform another and the insurer may reimburse for both. Some insurances may pay for an individual session and family therapy on the same day. Confirm insurance coverage with us if you are conducting multiple sessions in a given day. We are here to help!

Tips On How to Grow Your Practice



While most mental health professionals have received great clinical training, very few were offered courses in the **"Business of your Business"**. Yes, managing a successful practice does require the use and knowledge of fundamental business skills in order for it to be financially successful.

Mental Health professionals seeking to grow their practices can utilize the following suggestions where applicable:

- *Define an ideal client. You can create a niche clientele while still offering therapy for a broad range of mental health issues.
- *Create a website. This can be done inexpensively utilizing one of a multitude of website builder platforms. You need not be a technical wiz. But, take the time to research the messaging and keywords that would serve you best. Speak to your peers about how they created their website. A good way to drive traffic to your website is to become interactive on local social media platforms.
- *Networking. Become a member of your state's professional mental health provider organizations and create online directory profiles.
- *Create Workshops that specifically focus on well- defined issues. Potential patients sometimes feel less stigmatized by attending a group session with their peers facing similar circumstances. Advertise and market these workshops. Patients will benefit and the workshops will positively influence your annual revenue.
- *Cultivate Community Connections. Meeting with local clergy and educating them about your services can lead to new patient appointments and many referrals.
- *Create your own JD Power patient satisfaction survey. Intermittently use the phrase former NYC Mayor Ed Koch used effectively. "How my doing?"

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



Mental Hospital Interview

Dr. Leroy, the head therapist at the local mental hospital, is examining patients to see if they're cured and ready to re-enter society.

"So, Mr. Clark," he says to one of his patients, "I see by your chart that you've been recommended for dismissal. Do you have any idea what you might do once you're released?"

The patient thinks for a moment, then replies, "Well, I went to school for mechanical engineering. That's still a good field, good money there. But on the other hand, I thought I might write a book about my experience here in the hospital, what it's like to be a patient here. People might be interested in reading a book like that. In addition, I thought I might go back to college and study art history, which I've grown interested in lately."

Dr. Leroy nods and says, "Yes, those all sound like intriguing possibilities."

The patient replies, "And the best part is, in my spare time, I can go on being a teapot."

Source: bouldertherapist.com

Welcome to the Mental Health Hotline:

If you are obsessive-compulsive, press 1 repeatedly.
If you are co-dependent, ask someone to press 2 for you.
If you have multiple personalities, press 3, 4, 5 and 6.
If you are paranoid, we know who you are and what you want. Stay on the line so we can trace your call.
If you have low self-esteem, hang up. All our operators are too busy to talk to you.
If you have amnesia, press 8 and state your name, address, phone number, date of birth, credit card number and your grandmother's maiden name. Source: upjoke.com



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May/Mental Health Awareness Month

The National Alliance on Mental Illness along with several mental health advocacy groups designated the Month of May-Mental Health Awareness Month to reduce the stigma surrounding the disease and to provide confidence and comfort to those seeking therapy. 2021 Mental Health Statistics:

+1 in 5 Americans suffers from Mental Illness (NIMH)

+Anxiety disorders are the highest reported mental health issue in the U.S. with 42.5 million Americans claiming to suffer from the illness (Mental Health America).

+41 percent of Americans deal with untreated mental illness (Mental Health First Aid).

+1 in 4 American adults suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year (Johns Hopkins).

+40 million Americans suffer from anxiety (Anxiety and Depression Association of America).

+Mental health crises account for 6 million ER visits annually (CDC).

Over 115 million people in the United States live in designated Mental Health Professional shortage areas. These are areas in which the ratio of mental health professionals to residents is smaller than 1 per 30-thousand people.

Copays Play a Vital Role in Practice Proceeds

Copays greatly affect your year-end revenue number. 20% of most private practice revenue is derived from copays and yet many practices only collect about 60% at time of service. It is illegal to waive copays, coinsurance, and deductibles for patients. Waiving the collection of this portion is considered fraud because your office is claiming the wrong charge for services when insurance claims are created. Generally, both government and private insurers require that the practice make a good faith effort to collect copays (apart from the cases of special financial needs). It is vitally important to document hardship waivers if case of an audit.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



✓ Millennials are now being referred to as the "Tired Generation". A General Social Survey says that young adults are twice as likely to experience exhaustion compared to 20 years ago. There is another survey that backs up this consensus. The American Psychological Association reports that millennials are the most stressed-out generation. Major contributing factors include anxiety, sleep loss and mental exhaustion. Societal components contributing to this feeling of exhaustion include:

*Technology Overdose-A Pew Research study reports that 8 in 10 millennials say they sleep with a cell phone. Checking emails, playing games, listening to music and podcasts deprives many from a restful night's sleep. The brain has limited down time because it is inundated with information.

*The Hustle-and NO we are not talking the dance here. Due to the pandemic and increased economic and housing challenges, millennials are picking up Side Hustles in an attempt to keep up with obligations. Again, limited down time.

*The number one source of fatigue is stress caused by money worries. Many millennials feel they are under compensated for their work and saddled with huge amounts of student debt. The APA says that millennials are in fact the most stressed-out generation.

*The unexpected: There is a wide consensus that millennials are more intensely nostalgic than previous generations and that these feelings are setting in at a younger age.





✓ Female marines are not known as Wacs, Waves or Spars. They are known simply as Marines or in this case, pregnant Marines. The Corps is redesigning its physical training maternity uniform to address fit, comfort and appearance. Marine Corps Systems Command program manager Lucinda Stocks says, "The population of expectant Marines may be small, but developing these maternity uniforms is important for the future of the Marine Corps." Tabs will provide additional shape to an existing pleated design, providing the pregnant Marine the ability to adjust her shirt and tunic. A nursing shirt incorporates a cross-over design under a panel that allows for easy access for nursing or pumping. In addition, the Corps did not have properly fitted dress blues for the later stages of pregnancy. Sidebar: Enlisted personnel are issued their first uniforms free, they buy replacement items, but receive a clothing maintenance allowance.


✓ According to a Partnership for New York City survey, just 22 percent of Manhattan's largest employers will require all workers to return to the office full-time. 66 percent say they will adopt a hybrid model offering partial work weeks from home. 9 percent say they will not require employees to return to the office at all while 4 percent said the decision will ultimately be role-dependent. Numerous business schools are studying the affect on worker productivity, mental health and lifestyle post pandemic when considering a future course of action.

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!

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