

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

- Volume 67

- May, 2022

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



While many of us are heartbroken over the loss of 19 children and two teachers at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, the pain and anguish that the parents of those children are experiencing is simply unimaginable. It also seems unimaginable, but possible, that Congress will again debate the issue of common-sense gun safety legislation and not produce a bill to sign at the end of the day. I have always refrained from expressing a political viewpoint in our Newsletter and, despite the depravity of this act, I will continue to abide by this self-imposed discipline. Having conveyed this viewpoint, I do hope that our lawmakers, our representatives, can find common ground to enact compromise legislation to help improve gun safety and save lives.

On Another Note:

In last month's Newsletter, I had mentioned how competitive the billing sector has become. I also stated that many of the newcomers are impersonal corporate type behemoths interested in volume-not in quality-with many of them operating satellite overseas offices without disclosing this in their marketing. Some are not in compliance with U.S. HIPAA regulations. While we exclusively serve mental health professionals nationwide, **Associated Billing Center** will always remain true to our dedication to client service on both a personal and professional level. Your relationship with us is never taken for granted.

STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

• Medicare Supplemental Providers

Upon receipt of an EOP/EOB with a paper check for a Medicare Supplemental plan, please forward to us so that we can apply payment to the correct date of service.

▪ Certain Oxford plans have extended telehealth cost share waiving through July 14, 2022. The original end date was September 10, 2021. Oxford is reprocessing applicable claims from September 10, 2021 forward. Oxford reports that it will pay the cost share portion to providers and that the provider needs to reimburse the patient.

• Provider Reminder:

If you make any changes (name, tax ID, address, NPI, etc.) it must be changed with every insurance company, NPI Registry and CAQH. When information does not match, claims will not get paid. If you need help, you can call the credentialing specialist included in each issue of our Newsletters.

▪ Horizon BCBS-NJ ended the cost share for telehealth on February 3, 2022. However, they were still paying it for some patients. Horizon will be recouping this money per the letter they sent to providers dated May 5, 2022.

▪ 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.

▪ **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



Mental Health Practice Patient Retention

There are many factors that contribute to a mental health practice's Patient Retention Rate (PRR). The following suggestions can be utilized to help retain those patients who would benefit from continuing therapy.

- > The patient does not feel comfortable with their therapist. Research shows that providers who query their clients during the first session concerning the "Comfort Zone" in the relationship have a higher level of patient retention.
- >The patient underestimates the required commitment. Therapists who set expectations up front have a higher success rate in retaining clients.
- >Limit patient waiting times in your office when possible. It starts the instant they walk in. If patients are uncomfortable in your waiting room, chances are they will not come back.
- >Flexible Scheduling when possible. This is where Telehealth can play a big role. Of course, this depends on how much of a patient load you wish to maintain.
- >When a patient misses a session, follow up with a quick message or phone call. Aggressively look to reschedule.
- >Reach-out when visits are overdue. According to a study published in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, one in five clients will drop out of psychotherapy before completing treatment. Emphasizing your patient's progress could help improve on this statistic. The study also reports that the overwhelming majority of those who drop out do so after just two sessions.
- >When a patient misses a session, follow up with a quick message or phone call. Aggressively look to reschedule.
- >Administer Patient Satisfaction Surveys if you are so inclined.

Remember, Your Practice is Your Business.



George Denis Patrick Carlin was an American comedian, actor, author and social critic. Regarded as one of the most important and influential stand-up comedians of all time, he was dubbed, "the dean of counterculture comedians". Here is a smattering of Carlin's most recognized quotes:

- *I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, Where's the self-help section? She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.
- *Some people see things that are and ask, 'Why?' Some people dream of things that never were and ask, 'Why not?' Some people have to go to work and don't have time for all that.
- *Some people have no idea what they're doing, and a lot of them are really good at it.
- *If the black box flight recorder is never damaged during a plane crash, why isn't the whole airplane made out of that stuff?
- *Have you ever noticed that anybody driving slower than you is an idiot and anyone going faster than you is a maniac?
- *Isn't making a smoking section in a restaurant like making a peeing section in a swimming pool?
Source: Direct Quotes from George Carlin
- *One of the best things you can do for your mental health is to stare at dried pieces of fruit. It's fantastic for raisin awareness.
- *The problem with treating mental health is that it's all in your head.
Source: upjoke.com



Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month began in the United States in 1949 and was started by the Mental Health America (MHA) organization (then known as the National Association for Mental Health). MHA's theme this year is *Back to Basics* with the goal of providing foundational knowledge about mental health and information about what people can do if mental health is a cause for concern. Mental Health America (MHA) – founded in 1909 – is the nation's leading community-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental illness and to promoting overall mental health. Associated *Billing Center* proudly supports Mental Health America and the National Alliance on Mental Illness annually.

Mental Health Practice News & Notes

Medicare Providers Watching Their Income Grow

The Center for Medicare Advocacy reports that from 2019 through 2020 the use of telehealth by Medicare beneficiaries increased over 6,000 percent with virtual care options poised to change our nation's healthcare landscape. Additional studies show that an increasing number of patients across all insurance platforms (as well as self-pay) are seeking out mental health behavioral therapy utilizing a telehealth platform.

Keeping Your Data Current

When insurance processes claims, they tend to look at the first address that comes up. If there are any old addresses from a previous employer or a previous location of yours, the claims may be incorrectly processed. Please be sure to remove all old addresses from all insurance companies.

Out of Network Providers/Fees

Some patients have out of network benefits. When a prospective patient calls your office to confirm whether you are in network with their insurance and you are not, we can confirm their out of network benefits if available. You do not want to surrender a potential client because the patient was not aware of this benefit. **Associated Billing Center** can balance bill the patient so your compensation equals your established fee.

Diversifying Your Revenue Stream

Market research by some of the nation's top accounting firms shows that mental health practices can help reduce some of the risk involved in accepting private pay patients only by selectively paneling with some insurance companies. The demand for mental health services increased exponentially with the advent of Covid-19 and many practices utilizing this hybrid method experienced an increase in revenue and growth. Consider becoming a Medicare and/or Medicaid Provider: Reimbursement rates have risen. One of the determining factors is "market baskets". As inflation rises, so too do the base payments for a wide variety of covered services. This is in addition to regular reimbursement increases.

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



>Goldman Sachs is offering a new perk for managing directors and partners — the two most senior and difficult-to-achieve ranks at the investment bank. Although most are not expected to take advantage of the offer, the bank is telling senior executives that a new flexible vacation policy will let them take time off "when needed without a fixed vacation day entitlement". Wall Street's elite often have the opposite problem of not using the vacation they are allotted for fear of negatively impacting their work ethic and image in this extremely competitive space.



wikipedia

> Elizabeth Jane Cochran (Nellie Bly) worked as a reporter for Joseph Pulitzer’s New York World. She was considered a pioneer in investigative journalism and cared a great deal about social ills. At considerable personal risk, she had herself committed to a mental institution so she could study first-hand how people with mental illnesses were treated. As a result of her ‘exposé’, the care of people with mental illnesses was reformed. The New York Journal recognized her as the “best reporter in America”. Cochran is recognized by the National Women’s Hall of Fame.




>The Big Tent is about to be erected again. This time there will be no animal acts in the show. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is expected to begin touring again in the fall of 2023. Field Entertainment says this will be a new variation of its traditional “Greatest Show on Earth”. Its creative team is now searching for acts around the world after a six-year hiatus. Kenneth Feld shut down the three-ring circus in 2017 after a 146-year run. Observers suggested at the time that years of animal rights protests against Ringling Bros. had led to a decline in ticket sales and the closing of the touring circus. The company also revealed a new logo (see above).


Associated Billing Center, LLC

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!

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Newsletter Addendum

Note To Providers

When submitting Day Sheets, only write the diagnosis if it is a new patient or you are changing the DX. If it remains the same, it is not necessary to enter anything in the "Notes" box.

Telehealth Licensing Refresher

When utilizing telehealth, the service is considered to be rendered at the physical location of the patient. The provider must adhere to the laws and regulations of the state where the provider is located. The provider must have a license, participate in a licensing compact or fall under a licensing exemption. The Public Health Emergency (PHE) was renewed on April 16, 2022 for another 90 days. In addition, recent federal legislation was passed that ensures continuation of most emergency telehealth expansions for 151 days post-PHE expiration to ensure a transition period. **Associated Billing Center, LLC** will stay abreast of all changes concerning telehealth reimbursement and regulations.

"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 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 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.

"Effective communication is the key to positive personal and business relationships. Possessing the ability to communicate effectively could possibly be one of life's most important skills."

Mona Ruback/CSS

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