

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona

**SOCIAL WORK
BREAKS BARRIERS**

**MARCH IS
NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH**



National Social Work Month is observed in March across the United States. Its intended purpose is to celebrate Social Workers' continuing contributions to our society. These contributions are extremely important today given the economic and political challenges that so many individuals encounter.

The History of National Social Work Month

The concept was introduced by the National Association of Social Workers in 1963, sixty years ago, to generate public support and to heighten awareness of the social work profession. In 1984, the United States government formally recognized National Social Work Month in March. Past themes include HIV/AIDS, children in poverty, racial and ethnic harmony, and aging parents. It is projected that the number of social workers needed will grow 16% from 2016 to 2026.

You help relieve people's suffering, fight for social justice and improve lives and communities. It is my distinct pleasure to support my providers in these admirable endeavors. Thank you for what you do.



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

- When providing telehealth, Medicare requires the provider to live in the state where services are provided regardless of where the patient is located (unless you are licensed in the state where you are living).
- It has recently come to our attention that a provider's email was hacked. If this happens, please be sure to notify us as soon as possible. Even though **Associated Billing Center** emails are encrypted, I would not want patient information obtained by unsavory recipients.
- Planning on changing your place of service or mailing address? Notify us promptly so we can advise how to make the data change at insurance and prevent delays in claims processing.
- We serve the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner community. Codes for services rendered typically used for billing are Medical Evaluation & Management codes (E&M). NP can use typical mental health codes when they apply.
- For Credentialing we work closely with Kellie Goodroe/CEO, Affordable Physician Services. 765-692-0887. Kgoodroe@affordablephysicianservices.com. Inform Kellie that you are a client of ours. Any questions give us a call. We are here to help! **Associated Billing Center**, LLC utilizes the services of Liles/Parker, an attorney health care regulatory firm representing mental health providers nationwide seeking counsel in practice matters. Web: lilesparser.com speak with Robert Liles.

Stay In the Know-Your Mental Health Practice



A Reminder:

HHS Extends Public Health Emergency Act

The Biden Administration's plan is to end the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) on May 11, 2023. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 extended many of the telehealth flexibilities authorized during the COVID-19 public health emergency through December 31, 2024. The consensus is that most insurers will continue to cover telehealth post the PHE. We will keep you updated.

Keep This Number in Mind

The number 89 should be important to you in relation to your practice's online presence. 89 percent of prospective patients respond to positive reviews online when seeking a mental health therapist. Good reviews can be the deciding factor when a patient is seeking counseling. Here is another important number-80. Nearly 80 percent of patients look at online presence before narrowing their choices.

Your website should host content reflective of your passion, your skills, and your specialty areas. Don't go generic. Effective websites for mental health professionals should not "break the bank". Contact your professional state organization for suggestions on reputable, affordable designers. Keep it simple, informative, and relatable. Most importantly provide a simple "contact" mechanism for patients to schedule an appointment. Also, check with your web designer about local page rank.

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



- *It is reported that a mental health therapist offered this advice to a patient who was apprehensive about attending company meetings.
 - Never arrive on time or you will be stamped a beginner.
 - Don't say anything until the meeting is half over; this labels you as being wise. They will expect more from you.
 - Be as vague as possible; this prevents irritating the others.
 - When in doubt, suggest that a subcommittee be appointed.
 - Be the first to move for adjournment; this will make you popular. It's what everyone is waiting for.

Source: jokes4all.net

- *Freud: If it's not one thing, it's your mother.

Source: The Late Robin Williams

- *A patient sits down in a therapist's office and tells the provider, "I feel awful but I simply do not know what's troubling me." To which the therapist responds, "Go home, figure out what your problem is and then come back." To which the patient replies, "Would it help if I give myself a co-pay?"

Source: Anonymous



***A**ssociated **B**illing **C**enter continues our partnership with the National Association of Social Workers. For more than a decade we have contributed to the education of Social Workers in the area of practice management. NASW-NJ will be holding its Spring Conference in Atlantic City, NJ April 30th and May 1st. We are proud to be a part of this presentation. If you are planning on attending, please come see us! **A**ssociated **B**illing **C**enter also affiliates with the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association.

Yes-Your Practice is Your Brand

When you think of a brand you naturally associate the word with a consumer product. Your practice is a *consumer product*. Branding is the ongoing process of establishing an image or impression of your practice in your community. Effective branding can increase your referral numbers month to month. Your website, business card, logo, the name of your practice and yes, even the color palette in your marketing inclusively, contributes to your brand and your image.

Mental Health Practice News & Notes

A Message from the National Association of Social Workers

▪ The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) welcomes the release of the Social Work Interstate Compact Model Bill, which will expand opportunities for social workers to provide services in multiple states. "Our nation is contending with a shortage of mental health providers and an interstate compact will allow for practice mobility and remove barriers preventing social workers from providing care in multiple states, especially in areas that are underserved, geographically isolated, or lack specialty care," NASW CEO Anthony Estreet, PhD, MBA, MSW, LCSW-C, said "The compact will also improve the tedious, time-consuming and expensive process of social workers having to gain licensure in each state where they want to practice." Seven states must enact the Model Social Work Compact Bill before the Compact Commission is established. "NASW has been at the table, working tirelessly for over two years, to ensure that the interstate compact design and bill provisions meet the needs of social workers today and into the future," said Sarah Butts, the NASW's director of public policy.

▪ *Tracking Mental Telehealth's Future*

The Mental Telehealth market is forecasted to grow at a 14.9 percent rate through 2026. Kaiser Health News reports that many providers say they plan to continue offering teletherapy after the pandemic. Some states are making permanent the temporary pandemic rules that allow providers to be reimbursed at the same rates as for in-person visits, which is welcome news to therapists who take patients' insurance. Prior to the pandemic, almost 64 percent of therapists never used telehealth. The pandemic certainly changed our way of thinking about the utilization of telehealth. Results from a recent study show that well over 65 percent of patients are using telehealth or considering it as a venue for service.

▪ *Expanding Your Practice-Technique Suggestions on Gaining New Patients*

Associated **B**illing **C**enter has compiled the following suggestions that could help you to expand your practice. Always respond quickly to inquiries about your therapy offerings. A delay of much more than 24 hours is a turn off to most prospective new patients. Record a friendly and inviting voicemail message. First impressions are everything. Offer a brief consultation call. Most prospective patients want to feel that scheduling an appointment with you will be worth their time. Offer to keynote a speaking engagement at your local place of worship or local community organizations. Join an email therapist listserv in your area. Expand your referral relationships with your peers, as well as your doctors. Primary care physicians who are inclined to suggest mental health care to a patient will feel comfortable offering your name. Review your website to ensure that your SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is working at peak performance. Finally, invest in your professional organization directory. It is important that the message you include be meaningful, sincere and attractive to a wide audience. In this case, the audience is your prospective patient.

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



+The Golden Arches are not safe from the impact of inflation. Big Macs at many McDonald's locations have risen in price. The key word here is location. Prices vary depending on where you buy your sandwich. CashNetUSA reviewed Big Mac prices in all 50 states. The most expensive Big Mac in the United States can be found in Hawaii, \$5.31. Want to buy the iconic burger with two all beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun under \$4.00? Head to Mississippi where they sell, on average, for \$3.91. The cheapest Big Mac in the world can be found in Pakistan where it costs, on average, \$1.91. Though, when you add in the air fare, it's not such a good deal.



+Forget about Heaven. The headline reads: Humans Will Achieve Immortality in Eight Years. A former Google engineer predicts that humans will achieve immortality in eight years and 86 percent of his predictions have been correct. Ray Kurzweil recently appeared on an interview program discussing the expansion of genetics, nanotechnology and robotics which he believes will lead to age-reversing 'nanobots'. Our clearest explanation here: tiny robots will repair damaged cells and tissues that deteriorate as the body ages. We contacted several funeral homes to get their reaction. None expressed concern.

+How can you survive not being educated about the following? The dot over a lowercase i and j has a name. It's called a tittle, which is a noun meaning a tiny amount or part of something. McDonalds invented a sweet-tasting type of broccoli. The hashtag symbol has a fancy name. It's called an octothorp due to its eight points. American patriotism is about to take a hit on this one-Apple Pie isn't American. It was invented in England. Dog noses are like fingerprints. Each with its own identifying creases and markings. Flamingos bend their legs at the ankle, not the knee. Sloths can hold their breath longer than dolphins.

A Message from Aetna

Aetna® recognizes that high consumer demand for behavioral health services affects its behavioral health network. As part of our effort to support our providers and improve member access to care, Aetna allows supervisory billing for behavioral health care provided by qualified license-eligible behavioral health clinicians. Note that we will allow supervisory billing only for in-network behavioral health clinicians, supervisors, groups and facilities.


Qualified license-eligible clinicians: Have completed all educational requirements; are actively completing their clinical practice hours required for independent licensure; are actively receiving clinical supervision from a qualified supervisor at a frequency and duration commensurate with their caseload.

Associated Billing Center, LLC


Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals

Refer us to a colleague. We appreciate it!
Exclusively Serving Mental Health Practices

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 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 Family.
We never take your business for granted.***

MORE 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 our 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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