

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



There is a palpable air of excitement in our office this summer as **Associated Billing Center, LLC** embarks on our technology upgrades. The safety and security of your practice data is of paramount importance to us and this investment will afford us the opportunity to stay current with the highest industry standards in this arena. The upgrade also allows us to maintain the most efficient connectivity related issues in processing claims through our Mental Health billing clearinghouses. This upgrade will not require your practice to make any changes in the way you communicate with us and will not require any software investment from your office.

On a Personal Note:

Our marketing campaign stresses that **Associated Billing Center** is not one of the *behemoth, impersonal* billing companies that have entered the marketplace recently. We take pride in building a warm personal and business relationship with our clients. We truly value and prioritize the human aspect of business. We treat each client as an individual—no group think here. Building a personal connection goes a long way in establishing trust and rapport. We seek feedback regularly from you in order to ensure we are providing you with the service you expect. Thanks for being a part of our family!



Mona

Education Box-You Need To Know



News & Notes

- United Healthcare Student Resources is no longer waiving cost-share as of May 11, 2023 as it applies to copays, coinsurance and deductibles.
- **Reminder:** The in-person visit requirements before a patient may be eligible for mental telehealth therapy services is delayed through December 31, 2024.
- When you relocate, your information needs to be updated with each insurance company. If you're moving out of state, it is necessary to credential in that state. You will need to be licensed in that state as well. If insurance data bases are not updated, you will not be paid. Insurance does not move quickly. *Please give yourself enough time to have all of this completed.* The Credentialing Specialist we refer to can help with this. If you have any questions, please reach out to us.
- Oxford policies written in New Jersey will continue to offer cost-sharing until August 8, 2023.
- 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: lilesparker.com and speak with Robert Liles.

Stay In the Know-Your Mental Health Practice



Florida PSYPACT Update

>The PSYPACT Executive board has officially voted to welcome Florida to PSYPACT, effective July 1, 2023. The PSYPACT commission will begin accepting applications from Florida psychologists on the effective date. PSYPACT requires that a psychologist be licensed in their Home State but allows a psychologist to practice telepsychology in a Receiving State that is a member of the PSYPACT interstate compact. This allows the Home State to continue to regulate and allows the Receiving States and Distant States to know who is practicing in their state and in what capacity without requiring psychologists to obtain and maintain a license in every PSYPACT state.

> Temporary Medicare changes through December 31, 2024

*Medicare patients can receive telehealth services in their home. There are no geographic restrictions for originating site for non-behavioral/mental telehealth services.

*Some non-behavioral/mental telehealth services can be delivered using audio-only communication platforms.

*An in-person visit within six months of an initial behavioral/mental telehealth service, and annually thereafter, is not required.

*Telehealth services can be provided by all eligible Medicare providers.

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



*A therapist was conducting a group therapy session with four young mothers and their small children. "You all have obsessions," he observed. To the first mother he said, "You are obsessed with eating. You even named your daughter Candy." He turned to the second mom. "Your obsession is money. Again, it manifests itself in your child's name, Penny." He turned to the third mom. "Your obsession is alcohol and your child's name is Brandy." At this point, the fourth mother got up, took her little boy by the hand and whispered, "Come on sweetie, let's go home."

*A therapist returned from a conference in an Aspen lodge where all the therapists were permitted to ski for free. Her husband asked her how it went. She replied, "Fine, but I've never seen so many Freudians slips."

We hear the grunting and groaning and acknowledge this one was weak.

*What do mental health professionals say to each other when they meet? "You're fine, how am I".

Source: free-funny-jokes.com

*Patient to Therapist: "You've diagnosed me with multiple personalities. You should charge me the group rate."

Source: Anonymous



Promoting Mental Health Services to an Expanded Audience

The National Conference of State Legislatures reports that, beyond expanding mental health parity oversight, several states require health insurers to cover a broader range of behavioral and mental health services. At least four states—Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware and Massachusetts—have enacted legislation requiring private health plans to cover annual mental health wellness exams, similar to annual primary care visits, without patient cost-sharing. At least four states—Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Wyoming—enacted bills recently requiring private insurers to cover or reimburse for services provided through psychiatric collaborative care models. This integrated care model includes teams comprising primary care providers, psychiatric consultants and care managers coordinating a patient's behavioral health needs.

Mental Health Practice News & Notes

Maintaining a Dependable Revenue Cycle:

>Managing accounts receivables is crucial for the financial health of any business, including a mental health practice. It not only ensures a steady revenue stream but also contributes to the overall stability and success of your practice. **Associated Billing Center** offers the following key points to consider:

1. **Clear Payment Policies:** Establish clear payment policies from the beginning and communicate them to your patients. Clearly outline your fees, payment methods accepted and any billing or cancellation policies. This helps set expectations and reduces misunderstandings.
2. **Attempt to collect Copays, Coinsurance & Deductibles** due at each session. This helps to reduce the likelihood of accounts being labeled delinquent. Mental Health practice consultants report that accounts in delinquency are increasingly difficult to keep current.
3. **If your patient is behind in payments, engage **Associated Billing Center** to send statements.** We will send three statements to your patient from our office. When patients receive these statements, they often remit balances owed in a more expedited fashion. Monitor your accounts receivables regularly and follow up promptly on any overdue payments. We are here to help!

Online Reputation Management

>Let's look at the reality here: The USA has 302.35 million social media users as of 2023. That means 90% of the total US population uses social media actively. Facebook is the most popular social media platform in the U.S. with 74.2% of adults using it. Your practice's online reputation can instantaneously convince a prospective patient to seek counseling in your office or, just as quickly, turn a prospect away. Share testimonials or success stories from satisfied clients (with their consent) to demonstrate the positive impact of your services. These can help potential clients feel more confident in seeking your assistance. Actively engage with your audience by responding to comments, message, and inquiries in a timely and professional manner.

>If your patient has a question regarding insurance reimbursements or billing, we encourage them to call us directly. Each call is responded to with the utmost respect and professionalism. After all, **Associated Billing Center** is a direct reflection on your practice.

REMEMBER - YOUR PRACTICE IS YOUR BRAND. Building a strong brand in the mental health field is important as it helps therapists differentiate themselves and establish credibility. It allows potential clients to understand what they can expect from the therapist's services and whether they align with their specific needs and preferences.

Take Note:

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. We want to protect your practice from a code violation.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



*Health & nutrition experts forecast that by 2035 over half of the global population will be overweight or obese. At the same time, the average width of an airplane seat continues to shrink and has done so for decades. The ramifications are clear. An increasing number of passengers will likely be finding it difficult to fit into an airplane seat. Several airlines require “customers who require extra seating” to purchase that additional seat in advance. If there are empty seats in the cabin, several airlines will then refund the added charge. A passenger who required an additional seat complained, “People with smaller bodies get to pay one fare to get to their destination and we have to pay two fares, even though we’re getting the same experience. If anything, our experiences are a little bit more challenging.” For passengers who maintain the bravado to ask for a *seat belt extender*, there is worry that there will soon be an additional charge for those as well. You can’t blame those “extravagant” flight meals for weight gain anymore.



*A recent survey by One Poll finds that modern men are now just as likely as women to openly display a sensitive side. 71 percent of men confess to being emotionally in touch with how they feel compared to 82 percent of women. Here is an interesting poll stat: While 37 percent of men would consider being called “sensitive” a compliment, only 23 percent of women feel the same way. In fact, 24 percent of women in the survey would feel insulted if someone referred to them in this way. One stat that may not come as a surprise is the poll result finding 48 percent of respondents believe it’s more socially acceptable for women to show their sensitive side than men.

*Prognostication of this sort is not highly recommended. A mental health therapist recently admitted to the fraud department of an insurance company that he submitted billing based on his “gut” feeling on how many sessions a patient would require in the upcoming week. He also allowed his “gut” to determine the DX code and the length of the session required. Needless to say, his “gut” malfunctioned in offering him sound advice. The therapist is in the process of losing his license to practice, obviously something his “gut” did not forewarn him about.


+Additional Newsletter Note: Avoiding Common HIPAA Violations


One of the most overlooked breaches is the improper disposal of Protected Health Information. HIPAA regulations specify that all healthcare organizations, including telehealth organizations, need to have best practices for disposing of patient data. Best practices should include shredding on and off-site of protected patient information (never discard in a trash can), completing an office risk analysis identifying possible vulnerabilities and routinely communicating with your IT person concerning potential security flaws. Your practice should also maintain a Business Associate Agreement with third-party contractors. **Associated Billing Center** maintains such an agreement with each of our clients. If your office experiences a data breach, you are required to report any incidents as soon as they are discovered without unnecessary delay. The HIPAA Breach Notification Rule defines "unnecessary delay" as no later than 60 days. **Associated Billing Center** is prepared to answer any questions concerning your practice's HIPAA compliance.


HIPAA permits health care providers to disclose to other health providers any protected health information (PHI) contained in the medical record about an individual for treatment, case management and coordination of care and, with few exceptions, treats mental health information the same as other health information. The patient is required to sign a release form.

Associated Billing Center, LLC
Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals

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Please Refer us to a Colleague. It is always appreciated. "Word of Mouth" referrals are of paramount importance to the success and growth of a service sector business. Thank You!



Let's Talk

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.

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."

More About US-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 our State Department of Banking & Insurance. We work as your dedicated back office with the focus on improving your RCM (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.

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