



Associated Billing Center's

# Newsletter

Volume 80

July/August 2023

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

**Web: [mentalhealthbillers.com](http://mentalhealthbillers.com)**

### A Message From Mona



**Associated Billing Center, LLC-Jamesburg, NJ**  
I hope you have taken the time to enjoy this summer. If not, my advice is to get to it-we are about three weeks away from September. At **Associated Billing Center, LLC** this summer has been an exciting time. We have nearly completed our technology upgrades designed to maintain the integrity and security of your patient data. Our commitment to technological advancement is driven by our dedication to providing you with the best possible service.

### On Another Note

**Associated Billing Center** is staying abreast of any impending changes concerning the future of Mental Telehealth as it relates to commercial insurers, Medicare & Medicaid. The observed rapid growth in telehealth services for Mental Health grew exponentially from 39.4% in 2019 to 88.1% in 2022. Mental Telehealth has proven to be a significant and lasting advancement in the healthcare industry. Reminder: The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 extended most, but not all, of the telehealth waivers until December 31, 2024.

This Newsletter is our annual summer combined edition for July/August. If you have any specific topics or suggestions, please feel free to let us know. Enjoy the rest of your summer!

*Mona*

### Education Box-You Need To Know



#### News & Notes

▪ The PSYPACT Commission is now accepting applications from psychologists in South Carolina. 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. Email: [info@PSYPACT.org](mailto:info@PSYPACT.org)

JUST IN: The PSYPACT Commission is excited to welcome North Dakota, effective 8/1/23.

#### **▪Reminder:**

Oxford policies written in New Jersey will offer cost-sharing until August 8, 2023.

▪CPT Code 90785 is utilized to describe interactive complexity during therapy sessions with patients. This code is used to indicate that a patient's condition requires additional time and expertise from the mental health professional providing treatment. This additional time might be needed to address communication difficulties, complex behavioral or emotional issues, or other challenges that make treatment more complicated.

▪Your Patient's Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) Could Change.  
CMS sent letters to people on Medicare who may be affected by a recent data breach. Medicare mailed approximately 47,000 new ID cards to those affected. Ask your patient if they have received an updated Medicare ID. Please provide us with that number to avoid a disruption of payment so that we can continue to submit claims expeditiously.



### ***Quickie CPT Code Reminder***

90832 for 30 minutes, 90834 for 45 minutes, and 90837 for 60 minutes. There is a separate 90839 code for a 60-minute crisis psychotherapy session and this can be used in conjunction with the 90840 add-on code to indicate an additional 30 minutes. For family and group therapy, the CPT codes are specified by whether the group members are related and who is present in the room during the time of the appointment. For family psychotherapy where the patient is present the code is 90847 and for family therapy without the patient present the code is 90846. The CPT code for group therapy where the members are not family is 90853.

### ***Bill Passed in NJ Legislature:***

TRENTON – As part of ongoing efforts to address the mental health needs of New Jersey residents, Governor Phil Murphy has signed a bill (A-4755) to permit mental and behavioral health care providers to operate within emergency shelters that serve people experiencing homelessness.

### ***Florida Bans Offshore Health Record Storage***

Mental Health Providers may no longer store electronic health records offshore or rely on third party vendors who operate offshore and have access to patient data maintained in the United States. Also, several lawmakers are reviewing and advocating for legislation that would prevent billing companies from exporting patient data offshore for billing purposes without expressly disclosing the activity to their clients.



### ***\*Senior Memories***

Two elderly couples were enjoying friendly conversation when one of the men asked the other, "Fred, how was the memory clinic you went to last month?" "Outstanding, they taught us all the latest psychological techniques - visualization, association-it made a huge difference for me."

"That's great! What was the name of the clinic?" Fred went blank. He thought and thought but couldn't remember. Then a smile broke across his face and he asked, "What do you call that red flower with the long stem rose and thorns?"

"You mean a rose?"

"Yes, that's it!" He turned to his wife..."Rose, what was the name of that clinic?"

Source: bouldertheapist.com

***\*A patient complains that there is no couch in the therapist's office and because of that she does not want to remit her co-pay. The therapist promptly rectifies the matter. He goes to his car and finds his camping equipment in the trunk. He drags a blow up mattress into his office-pulls the cord, inflates it and promptly collects his full co-pay.***

Source: Anonymous



## ***Does America Need a Mental Health CZAR***

The U.S. does not have a designated position known as a "Mental Health CZAR." However, the concept of appointing a high-level official or expert to oversee mental health policies and initiatives is not entirely new. Some countries have created similar positions to address mental health issues more effectively. The idea behind having a Mental Health Czar is to elevate the importance of mental health in the public policy agenda and provide a central figure responsible for coordinating mental health related efforts across various government agencies and private organizations. This individual could advocate for increased funding, develop and implement national mental health strategies and raise awareness about mental health issues. Advocates maintain America needs a Mental Health CZAR on par with the Surgeon General.



## Mental Health Practice News & Notes

### *Mental Health Practices Now Giving Patients a Choice*

With the Covid-19 pandemic affecting fewer individuals, an increasing number of mental health practices are scheduling patient therapy sessions both in office and through telehealth. Recently, a client was discussing with Mona her plan to refurbish her office. Furnishing a mental health office requires careful consideration of the atmosphere you want to create. A welcoming, calming and supportive environment is essential. Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- >Color Scheme: Choose soothing and neutral colors for the walls, such as soft blues, greens, or warm earth tones. These colors can create a peaceful ambiance and promote relaxation.
- >Natural Light: If possible, maximize natural light by using sheer curtains or blinds that can be easily adjusted. Natural light can have a positive impact on mood and overall well-being.
- >Comfortable Furniture: Opt for comfortable and inviting furniture, including plush chairs, couches and cushions. Make sure the seating arrangements allow for both one-on-one conversations and group sessions.
- >Artwork and Decor: Choose artwork, wall hangings and decorations that are soothing and inspiring. Nature scenes, abstract art, or calming imagery can contribute to a relaxing environment. Avoid anything that could be triggering or overly stimulating.
- >Plants: Incorporating indoor plants can bring a touch of nature to the space and improve air quality. Choose low-maintenance plants that thrive indoors, such as succulents or peace lilies.
- >Soft Lighting: Use soft and adjustable lighting options, such as floor lamps, table lamps and dimmable overhead lights. Lighting can greatly impact the mood of the room.
- >Texture and Materials: Introduce textures that are tactile and comforting. Consider using soft rugs, throw blankets and textured wall panels to add warmth and dimension.
- >Inspirational Quotes: Display positive and uplifting quotes or affirmations that can encourage clients and promote a sense of empowerment.
- >Sensory Elements: Incorporate sensory elements like aromatherapy diffusers, soft music, or calming sounds to create a multisensory experience.
- >Interactive Items: Offer interactive tools such as stress balls, fidget toys, or coloring books for clients to use while waiting or during sessions.

\*\*\*\*\*

REMEMBER - YOUR PRACTICE IS YOUR BRAND. YOUR OFFICE 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



\*This is absolutely inexcusable and unacceptable. No, you cannot chalk this one up to “cultural norms”. The Criminal Section of the Court of Rome has found a school janitor not guilty of groping a student because the act lasted less than 10 seconds. The Court said it acquitted the 66-year-old man because the whole thing lasted “about five to ten seconds.” The then 17-year-old said she was climbing a staircase and felt the janitor’s hands touching her buttocks. During the trial, the janitor admitted that he had touched the student but that he had done it “as a joke.” An abundance of students and parents have taken to Instagram and TikTok to protest the decision. No word yet on whether the decision will be appealed.



\*More than 16 million Americans are living with a disease caused by smoking. For every person who dies because of smoking, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness. Truth Initiative, a non-profit focused on ending tobacco use, says most of the inhaling in America takes place in the South and Midwest. The group has designated the following states as charter members of what it labeled the “Tobacco Nation” a region that spans Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia. Overall, smoking prevalence is about 50% higher there than in the rest of the U.S. According to Truth Initiative, much of the disparity can be attributed to weaker local policy on tobacco prevention and cessation, particularly due to industry influence and lack of political will from decision makers. An abundance of ex-smokers say quitting smoking was the hardest thing they have ever done.

\*Climate change has become an even “hotter” topic this summer due to the massive heat waves across America. Now, global warming could be having an effect on America’s pastime. Baseball home runs appear to be getting a little extra help from climate change according to a new study. This is attributed to the fact that baseballs can more easily travel greater distances through air that is made thinner and less resistant by warmer conditions. A new study published in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society looked at some 60 years of baseball data and daily temperatures, finding that air made thinner by warmer conditions accounted for 1% of home runs on average from 2010-2019. Climate change non-believers attribute the increased home runs to stronger, more well-trained athletes.



## Additional Newsletter Note:

### Cigna Accused of Improperly Rejecting Claims


A federal lawsuit alleges that Cigna engaged algorithms to automatically reject thousands of patient claims without examining them individually. The class action suit maintains that Cigna Corp. and Cigna Health and Life Insurance rejected more than three hundred thousand claims over a two-month period last year. The suit claims that Cigna used an algorithm called PXDX to identify whether claims met certain criteria, spending an average of 1.2 seconds on each review. It is alleged that Cigna then sent those rejected claims to doctors who signed off on the denials.

Cigna responded that the lawsuit appears highly questionable and seems to be based entirely on a poorly reported article that skewed facts. The company says the process is used to speed up payments for common procedures through an industry standard review process similar to those used by other insurers for years.


### Associated Billing Center, LLC

Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals

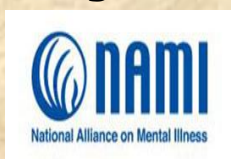
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***Please Refer us to a Colleague. It is always appreciated. "Word of Mouth" referrals are of paramount importance to the success and growth of a service sector business. Thank You!***

### ***Take Note:***

For credentialing, we work closely with Kellie Goodroe/CEO, Affordable Physician Services 765-692-0887. Inform Kellie that you are a client. [affordablephysicianservices.com](http://affordablephysicianservices.com) Any questions, give us a call!



**A**ssociated **B**illing **C**enter, LLC values client feedback. In fact, encouraging client feedback is one of the most critical areas of our operation. We take pride in the fact that our client retention rate is in the top percentile for our market sector. 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:***

The mental health billing sector has become extremely competitive and saturated since the onset of the pandemic. Most of these entities are impersonal corporate type organizations interested in volume. Many of these behemoths strip away your ability to manage your own practice (solo or group) in what you perceive to be in your best interest. We are proud that **A**ssociated **B**illing **C**enter-serving Mental Health Practices nationwide for more than a decade, will never be labeled as one of these impersonal "**behemoths**".

### ***More About US-Associated Billing Center, LLC***

**A**ssociated **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 RCM (Revenue Cycle Management) while allowing you to do what you do best – take care of your patients.

**Thanks for being part of our Associated Billing Center, LLC family.  
We Never Take Your Business for Granted. Never.**

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