

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

Volume 83
November 2023

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



Expressing gratitude fosters a sense of connection and strengthens relationships. When we appreciate and acknowledge others, it creates a positive atmosphere, deepens bonds and encourages reciprocity. Given today's extraordinary challenges, expressing gratitude where possible is more important than ever.

I am extremely thankful for my family and for our team at Associated Billing Center, LLC.--Barbara, Donna, Lucia, Jennifer, Sydney, Tally, Reyna & Gary. They are a group of caring and knowledgeable individuals who have been a vital component in the growth of our company. Yes, I am extremely thankful to them.

As 2024 quickly approaches, you can depend on Associated Billing Center to keep your mental health practice updated on any changes in billing regulations, insurance policies or industry standards crucial for accurate and compliant billing practices.

As we are quickly approaching the 85th edition of this Newsletter, please know that your story ideas and suggestions, as well as comments on our editorial content are always welcome.



Mona

Education Box-You Need To Know



News & Notes

- **Benefits being obtained at this time of the year are still for 2023. This does not mean the benefits will be the same for 2024. If your patient changes insurance companies or insurance plans within the same company, new benefits should be obtained. Remember, even if the company and plan remain the same, the deductibles, out of pocket and copay/coinsurance may change.**
- **The Medicare Deductible for 2024 will be \$240. This represents a \$14 increase for your patients from 2023.**
- **Effective December 1, 2023-Aetna will no longer pay for Mental Telehealth services conducted via audio only. Each session must include a video component.**
- **Please remember to notate on your day sheets if a session is via telehealth or in-office.**
- **For Credentialing, we work closely with Kellie Goodroe/CEO, Affordable Physician Services. Kgoodroe@affordablephysicianservices.com. Inform Kellie that you are a client of ours.**
- **Associated Billing Center, LLC utilizes the services of Liles/Parker, an attorney health care registry firm representing mental health providers nationwide seeking counsel in practice matters. Web: lilesparker.com Speak with Robert Liles.**

Ways to Get More Therapy Clients in Private Practice

Getting more therapy clients in private practice often involves a combination of marketing, networking and providing excellent service. Here are some strategies to help you attract more clients:

> Build an Online Presence:

Website: Create a professional website that includes information about your services, approach, credentials and contact details.

> Search Engine Optimization (SEO):

Optimize your website for search engines to increase its visibility. Use relevant keywords, create quality content and ensure that your site is mobile-friendly.

> Utilize Online Directories: List your practice in online therapy directories such as Psychology Today, LinkedIn or your professional association website. Many clients use these platforms to find therapists.

> Networking: Attend local networking events, conferences and workshops to connect with other professionals and community members. Building relationships can lead to referrals.

> This next one is extremely important:

Collaborate with Referral Sources. Establish relationships with doctors, psychiatrists, schools and community organizations. These professionals can refer clients to your practice.

Remember, your practice is your *brand*. Building an identifiable brand is important as it helps therapists differentiate themselves and establish credibility.



*** Patient to Therapist: What is the secret to a happy marriage? Therapist to Patient: It still remains a secret but with enough therapy we can draw our own conclusions.**

Source: Anonymous

*** As a therapist you know you are burnt out while watching the Wizard of Oz and you start to categorize the type of delusions that Dorothy had.**

Source: bouldertherapist.com

*** We openly admit that the following humor is feeble: What do you call a horse with good mental health? Stable.**

Source: upjoke.com

*** Basic Psychology: The psychology instructor had just finished a lecture on mental health and was giving an oral test. Speaking specifically about manic depression, she asked, "How would you diagnose a patient who walks back and forth screaming at the top of his lungs one minute, then sits in a chair weeping uncontrollably the next?" A young man in the rear raised his hand and answered, "A basketball coach?"**

Source: upjoke.com



Important Mental Health Practice Reminders

> If you are supervising a clinician for clinical hours, the clinician must be under the same credentials as you. Also, some insurances require a specific modifier. We need to know if you are supervising in order to submit claims correctly. The dates of service need to be on a sheet with the clinician's name and your name as supervisor. We also need the clinician's information for our records. Questions: Please call us. That is why we are here!

> Beginning in 2024, LPC (Licensed Professional Counselors) and LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists) will be able to bill for Medicare clients. If this is something you want to do, we suggest starting the credentialing process now so you'll be good to go in the New Year

Mental Health Practice News & Notes

Expanding Medicare Beneficiary Access to Behavioral Health Services

The American Psychological Association reports that the November 2023 release of the final rule on the 2024 Medicare fee schedule brings good news for psychologists and aims to increase access to behavioral health services. Psychologists and other mental health providers will see increases in the work values of codes for psychotherapy and behavioral health assessment. The increase in work values will apply to psychotherapy codes 90832, 90834, 90837, 90839, 90840, 90845, 90846, 90847, 90849, and 90853.

CMS did not adopt APA Services' recommendation to increase the work values for the psychological and neuropsychological testing codes, but said it welcomes feedback on the valuation of psychological and neuropsychological testing services and may consider updates in future rulemaking.

CMS will continue to allow providers to use their currently enrolled practice location instead of their home address when providing telehealth services from their home.

Charging for No-Shows & Late Cancel Fees

The decision of whether mental health practices should charge for no-shows or cancellations is often influenced by several factors including ethical considerations, the therapeutic relationship and the practical aspects of running a mental health practice. Here are some perspectives on this issue:

- > Charging for no-shows or late cancellations can help offset financial losses for the therapist or mental health practice.
- > Charging for missed appointments can reinforce the importance of commitment to therapy and respect for the therapist's time. It may encourage clients to take their appointments seriously.
- > It may be challenging for practitioners to sustain their practices without some form of compensation for missed appointments. A balance between flexibility and maintaining the financial stability of the practice is necessary.
- > Clearly communicating policies regarding cancellations and no-shows at the beginning of therapy can set expectations and boundaries. This transparency helps clients understand the importance of their commitment to the therapeutic process.

Ultimately, the decision to charge for no-shows or cancellations is a complex one that requires careful consideration of the specific circumstances and the values of the mental health practitioner. Some therapists choose to implement a sliding scale, provide a certain number of "free" missed appointments or work collaboratively with clients to address issues that may lead to cancellations. It's essential to find a balance that respects both the financial needs of the practice and the well-being of the clients.

Take Note: Just one canceled session each week can add up to over \$8,000 a year. To reduce cancellations and missed appointments, many of our clients have established a protocol whereby they email or text a patient reminder concerning their upcoming appointment.

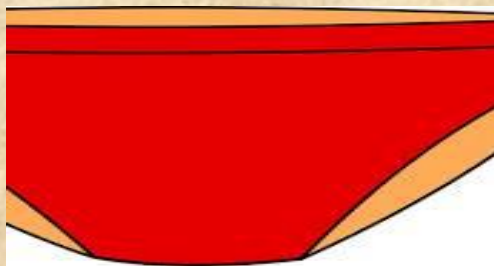
New Jersey Providers Take Note

Legislation (S2716) that would require the state to authorize Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) as independent mental health providers under Medicaid/NJ Family Care has been introduced in the State Senate. The National Association of Social Workers-NJ maintains that this legislative action will help increase access to needed mental health care for vulnerable individuals who are enrolled in NJ Family Care. Approval in the State Assembly is also required for the proposal to become law.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



*According to Empower's Financial Happiness report, 60% of Americans maintain that money can buy happiness after achieving a certain net worth. That net worth? Brace yourself-\$1.2 million dollars. Yet another sobering statistic: The report found that with record high credit card debt, a declining personal savings rate and more than half of adults living paycheck to paycheck, reaching that plateau could be challenging. Foundational work published by Princeton University's Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton had found that day-to-day happiness rose as annual income increased, but above \$75,000 it leveled off and happiness plateaued.




*Your mother always told you to change your underwear daily. If only this robbery suspect would have heeded her advice. The suspect's red briefs with a letter *R* on the top was captured on a video camera with the undies peeking out above the suspect's low-slung trousers. Video of the robbery at a tobacco shop in Queens, NY was distributed by the media. A tipster called in and identified the culprit (no-we cannot explain this). The suspect was arrested after another robbery recorded on camera displayed the infamous *R*. Yes, this is strange. That is why it's a Story You Simply Need to Know About.




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

Please check out our website: mentalhealthbillers.com for our News & Blog updates.

Like us on 

Connect with us on 

Follow us on 

Associated Billing Center, LLC is a proud member of:



***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!



Associated Billing Center, LLC values client feedback. 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.

An Important 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 in what you perceive to be in your best interest. We are proud that **Associated Billing Center** serving Mental Health Practices nationwide for more than a decade will never be labeled as one of these impersonal **"behemoths"**.

Associated Billing Center, LLC Additional Note

How often can you bill a psych eval? Typically, Medicare and Medicaid plans allow 90791 once per client per provider per year. Other insurance plans could allow as frequently as once per 6 months.

More About Associated Billing Center, LLC

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

The editorial content of this newsletter is not intended to be professional advice. It should be considered informational and a venue for entertainment. All photos credited to pixaby.com or dreamstime.com unless otherwise noted. Unauthorized use of content without permission is subject to civil liability under applicable law.