

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

Web: mentalhealthbillers.com

A Message From Mona



Effective Communication Skills

Absolutely, effective communication is the cornerstone of success for businesses in any industry. When businesses communicate well with their clients, several positive outcomes can be observed:

- +Clear and transparent communication helps meet customer expectations and leads to higher satisfaction levels. Addressing customer inquiries, concerns, and feedback in a timely and effective manner contributes to positive experiences.
- +Businesses that communicate openly and honestly build trust with their clients. Establishing credibility through transparent communication helps foster long-term relationships and customer loyalty.
- +Clear communication helps reduce misunderstandings and potential conflicts. Associated Billing Center, LLC prides itself on consistently striving to maintain excellent pathways of communications with our client. Never hesitate to call with a concern or comment. It's Important!



Mona

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

▪If you are seeing patients from states other than your location, you need to be licensed in that state. If you want to be in network, you need to be credentialed in the state where you are located (not where the patient is located). The federal COVID-19 PHE declaration ended on May 11, 2023.

▪On January 1, 2024, Amerigroup in New Jersey is changing its name to Wellpoint.

Important Reminder

▪ Benefits obtained in December were 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.

▪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 firm representing mental health providers nationwide seeking counsel in practice matters. Web: lilesparker.com
Speak with Robert Liles.

Deductibles Reset for the New Year

✔ **Deductibles contribute to the overall revenue of your mental health practice. By consistently collecting deductibles, the practice reduces the risk of unpaid bills and accounts receivable issues which can negatively impact cash flow.**

✔ **Mental Health practices often have contracts with insurance providers and payers. Collecting deductibles is a part of fulfilling these contractual obligations and ensuring that the practice remains in compliance with the terms of its agreements.**

✔ **Communicating your practice requirements clearly to patients is essential for maintaining transparency, managing expectations and ensuring a smooth experience for both the clients and your mental health practice. Clearly explain your deductible payment policy.**

Medicare Deductible News

The Medicare deductible for 2024 will be \$240. This represents a \$14 increase for your patients from 2023.

Employee EAP's Expanding

Per the World Economic Forum, employers see a \$4 ROI for every dollar spent on mental health care in the workplace. Research indicates that mental health practices will see an increase in EAP clients in 2024.



***The Rorschach Test**

A man goes to a mental health therapist and says, "Doc, I got a real problem. I can't stop thinking about sex." The therapist says, "Let's see what we can find out-and reaches for his ink blots."

The patient turns the picture upside down and says, "That's a man and a woman on a bed making love." Picture number two: The patient says, "That's a man and a women on a bed making love." The thrid ink blot is shown: The Patient responds : "That's a man and a woman on a bed making love."

The therapist responds:"Well, you do seem to be obsessed with sex."

"Me!?" demands the patient. "You're the one who keeps showing me dirty pictures!"

Source: bouldertherapist.com

*** A patient calls his therapist and says he needs to make an appointment. The therapist says, "What is your concern?" The patient responds, "I am perfectly normal, I just want to find out why."**

Source:Anonymous



YES, YOU ARE IN DEMAND

>Employment of relationship therapists, clinical social workers, mental health counselors and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners is projected to grow 23% from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the average for all occupations overall according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

>Beginning January 1, 2024, Medicare will expand coverage to include marriage and family therapists, as well as mental health counselors. According to Kaiser, this is a huge change for Medicare that has limited mental health coverage to services provided by psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers and psychiatric nurses. MFT's & MHC's makeup more than 40 percent of licensed mental health professionals.

Mental Health Practice News & Notes

Fee Schedule Optimization

> Reviewing your fee schedule yearly as business expenses change and insurance contract rates are adjusted is a sound business practice. Your fees ensure that you remain competitive in the marketplace while simultaneously maintaining the fiscal integrity of your practice. Fee review is applicable to private pay and insurance-based reimbursement clients.

Determining Factors When Reviewing Your Fee Schedule

> Consider your desired annual income, subtracting business expenses and contracted insurance rates. Stay aware of changes in CPT codes and determine whether your fees would be considered industry standards.

> When setting your fee schedule, it is very important to take into consideration the marketplace you serve. The economics/disposable income of your client base will vary widely when considering geographic location. Also, factor in whether you will be offering a sliding scale to those patients where the need exists. You can budget the dollar amount of expenditure that you want to designate for sliding scale purposes and stay within the guideline.

> Providers can always request a review of their contracted rates with insurance. Do your homework. Speak to your peers concerning their contractual agreements. Your first inquiry to insurance to obtain a review of reimbursement rates is to contact provider relations. If you have questions concerning fee review, give us a call. We're here to help!

> Establishing a productive working relationship with a reputable and knowledgeable Mental Health Billing Service will result in an absolute proven ROI (Return on Investment) and will exponentially improve your Revenue Cycle Management (we suggest **Associated Billing Center, LLC**). We can also consult on the essential components in determining a fee schedule.

Coordination of Benefits Request

> Upon the arrival of a new calendar year, many insurance companies request that their policy holders complete a coordination of benefits request. Responding to a COB request helps streamline the claims processing system. Providing accurate and timely information allows insurers to process claims more efficiently, *reducing delays* and ensuring that claims are handled appropriately. Some insurance policies may have specific requirements regarding COB and failure to comply could affect the patient's eligibility for coverage. In cases where a patient has both a primary and secondary insurance coverage, responding to a COB request helps clarify which insurance plan is responsible for covering the primary costs and which one acts as secondary. If your clients have any questions concerning a COB request, please have them give us a call. We are here to help!

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



*The American Psychiatric Association reports that focusing on Mental Health is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions for 2024. A Morning Council poll conducted for the APA indicates that the most popular resolutions were related to physical fitness (39%), finances (34%), mental health (28%) and diet (26%). Other resolution topics included spirituality, relationships, traveling, hobbies, organization, career and philanthropy. Nearly half (44%) of young adults aged 18 to 34 years said they planned to make a mental health-related New Year's resolution. Supply and demand becomes an issue for those planning on seeking mental health therapy in the New Year. According to recent data from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 47% of the U.S. population live in a mental health workforce shortage area, with some states requiring up to 700 more practitioners to remove this designation.




*Portland International Airport utilized therapy animals to ease weary travelers stress & exhaustion. You've heard of therapy dogs--introducing therapy llamas. Llamas Beni and Prince visited the airport over the holidays. The two 400 pound llamas made their way through the terminals looking to bring a momentary break from the hustle and bustle of holiday travel. The llamas were dressed in a reindeer theme with antler headbands, glittery halters with bells and poinsettia-adorned wreaths. Llamas are intelligent, social animals used in Animal-Assisted Intervention therapy to benefit humans' mental and physical health. The novelty factor is a big part of the appeal, along with the creatures' big-eyed, empathetic gaze. The exception to the rule. Llama therapy is certainly not for everyone. While llamas are gentle creatures that seldom "spit" at humans, some people find their large stature intimidating or get spooked at seeing livestock indoors.




*Your plane just landed after an exhausting flight. You head for the luggage carousel, jockeying for position to be able to easily grab your luggage as it approaches. Only one problem, your luggage is nowhere in sight and it is not approaching. As time passes your frustration mounts. Your patience is wearing thin, and your stress level is becoming more and more profound. What do you do? One British traveler came up with a novel idea and it was caught on video. The video begins with the irate passenger, who has not been named, screaming into the mouth of the carousel attempting to talk to baggage handlers behind the scenes. "Can you please hurry up?" he shouts before shockingly threatening to defecate on the conveyor belt. Fifteen minutes later and with no luggage in sight, that traveler climbs onto the conveyor belt before repeating his threat. Finally, luggage starts to appear and his bag is first to hit the belt. The bag is the size of a backpack. Other travelers ask the man why he didn't just throw it in the overhead compartment. His response, "never thought of that" and then he promptly headed for the restroom.



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.

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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**".

More About 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.

Happy & Healthy New Year. Thanks for being a part of the Associated Billing Center, LLC family.

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