



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



Associated Billing Center, LLC-Jamesburg, NJ

☎ "I just have one more question." "Mona, I am so sorry to bother you, I think I've asked you this before." A truly important reminder: Associated Billing Center is a supportive partner invested in the success of your practice, not just a transactional billing service. I encourage you to call us as often as necessary so that we can proactively address any billing or operational concerns. That is why we are here!

Recent conversations with our clients have included the following subject areas:

- Understanding specific insurance requirements or changes in payer policies.
- Setting up their billing systems and workflows efficiently to ensure a seamless transfer of data to Associated Billing Center's HIPAA compliant software.
- Ensuring compliance with billing regulations and avoiding potential audits.
- Answering operational questions related to streamlining administrative tasks.
- Clarifying any uncertainties quickly ensures claims are processed efficiently.

Billing is more than just numbers; it's about building relationships and providing peace of mind to our clients. It's the human connection.

Education Box-You Need to Know



News & Notes

▪ **Change of Address:**

If you are planning to change your address, etc., please notify us, CAQH the NPI Registry and all pertinent insurance companies. If the address on file doesn't match where services are rendered, claims can be rejected or delayed, leading to financial disruptions for your practice. Any questions? Please give us a call. That is why we are here.

▪ **Session Time Reminder:**

30-minute session: This is often billed using CPT code 90832 (Psychotherapy, 30 minutes with patient). The actual time range for this code is generally 16-37 minutes.

45-minute session: This is a very common session length and is billed using CPT code 90834 (Psychotherapy, 45 minutes with patient). The typical time range for this code is 38-52 minutes.

60-minute session: This is also frequently used, especially for more in-depth work or with clients who require more time. It is billed using CPT code 90837. The time range for this code is generally 53 minutes or more.

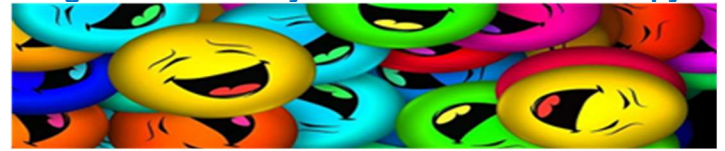
▪ **Reminder:** If you are licensed in another state other than your home state, please inform us and provide us with a copy of that license.



Considering Growing Your Practice

Associated Billing Center, LLC offers these suggestions to help you think through this possible transition.

- > What kind of group practice do you envision? Will it focus on a specific niche, offer a broad range of services, or have a particular therapeutic orientation?
- > What are your financial goals for the group practice? What level of profitability are you aiming for?
- > What legal structure will your group practice take? (e.g., LLC, S-Corp, partnership). Each has different implications for liability, taxes, and administrative requirements. Consulting with a legal professional is crucial here.
- > Will you hire employees or contract with other therapists? Each model has different legal and financial implications.
- > What will be your fee structure for the group practice? Will it be the same as your solo practice, or will you adjust it?
- > Supervision and Liability: If you are supervising other therapists, understand your responsibilities and potential liability.
- > Credentialing for new providers within the group. Associated Billing Center, LLC can offer advice in this area.



- *You are forewarned: this one is weak. What did the anxious tomato say to the calm cucumber? "Lettuce relax, we're in a real pickle!"
- *What did the client say to the therapist who was also a baker? "I'm having a lot of knead for you."
- * Why did the therapist install extra-large windows in their office? They wanted their clients to have a broader outlook.
- * How do you know a therapist is having a busy day? Their stress ball needs therapy.
- * A new therapist was so nervous, he started their first session by saying, "So, tell me about my problems."
- *Yet Another Weak One:
What do you call a sad strawberry? A blueberry!



Increased Scrutiny/Mental Health Parity

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) is receiving increased attention and enforcement. Payers are being pushed to ensure that coverage for mental health and substance use disorders are no more restrictive than coverage for physical health. This means fewer unfair denials based on discriminatory practices against mental health, such as blanket denials for certain diagnoses or limitations on therapy sessions not applied to physical health treatments.

Stronger Enforcement: Regulatory bodies and government agencies are taking an *increased active role* in enforcing the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) of 2008 and subsequent expansions. This means more audits, investigations and legal action against health plans that are found to be in violation.

Mental Health Practice News & Notes



MASTERING MENTAL HEALTH EMAIL HIPAA RULES

Mental Health related emails can be HIPAA compliant, but it requires specific measures and the use of appropriate email services. Here's a breakdown of what's needed: Key Requirements for HIPAA Compliant Email:

- >Encryption: The email service must encrypt emails both in transit (when being sent and received) and at rest (when stored on servers). This prevents unauthorized access to the content.
- >Business Associate Agreement (BAA): If you use a third-party email provider, you must have a signed BAA with them. This agreement ensures that the provider understands their responsibilities under HIPAA to protect Protected Health Information (PHI).
- >Access Controls: The email system should have mechanisms to ensure that only authorized individuals can access the emails. This includes features like strong passwords, user authentication, and audit logs.
- >Policies and Procedures: You need to establish clear policies and procedures for the use of email containing mental health information and train your staff on these policies.
- >Patient Consent: While using a HIPAA-compliant email provider helps with security, it's also best practice to obtain patient consent before sending PHI via email, advising them of any potential risks.
- >HIPAA Compliance:
Associated Billing Center, LLC utilizes the services of Hushmail. For many mental health professionals, especially smaller practices without dedicated IT staff, using a third-party email provider specifically designed for HIPAA compliance is the most straightforward solution. These providers offer built-in encryption, will sign BAAs and often have other features to support HIPAA compliance.
- >General Email Providers and HIPAA Compliance: Standard email services like Gmail, Yahoo, AOL and Hotmail are generally NOT HIPAA compliant in their free versions because they lack the necessary security measures and will not enter into a BAA.
HIPAA requires encryption unless you've documented why it's not feasible and you implement an approved alternative safeguard.

STORIES YOU SIMPLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT



You're naming your kid what? A new survey conducted by Mumsnet reports that one in 5 grandparents do not support the names chosen for their grandchildren. The top names hated by grandparents, according to the survey, include Aurora, Charlotte, Elijah, Finn, Jack, Lindsay, Noah, Sally and Tabitha. Let's break the discontent down for you. Complaints about their grandchild's names include that the name is ugly (28%), too weird (17%), too old-fashioned (11%), they disliked the spelling (6%) or it reminded them of someone they didn't like (11%). After learning the name of their new grandchild, 4 percent responded with silence, 9 percent simply said, "What?" and 8 percent said they told the parents they loved the name when they didn't. The top 3 girls names in 2025-Olivia, Amelia & Sophia. For the boys-Noah, Liam and Oliver.



➤And you thought the toilet had one unique purpose. Toilet bowl races typically involve teams or individuals who take actual toilet bowls (sometimes mounted on frames with wheels, sometimes the participants sit in them) and race them against each other. The specifics vary greatly depending on the event. Where and When They Happen: Virginia City, Nevada's "World Championship Outhouse Races": This is a famous annual event with a long history, reportedly starting as a protest against the banning of outdoor toilets. Teams build elaborate outhouses on wheels and race them through the town. Maple Park, Illinois' Fun Fest: Their Toilet Bowl Races involve teams of three, with pushers and a "driver" who switches at a halfway point.

The enduring appeal of toilet bowl races lies in their absurdity and the opportunity for creative expression and lighthearted competition. The "Vehicles": These range from basic toilet bowls with added wheels to elaborately decorated contraptions built around a toilet seat. A recent toilet bowl race winner was reportedly "Flush with Pride."

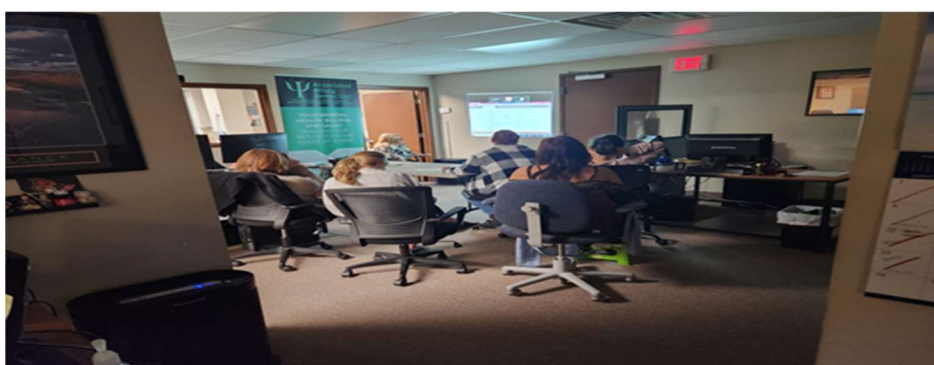
➤Lost Cash Leads to Scam Confusion: A Michigan State Police trooper tried to return \$5,000 in lost cash to its rightful owner, but the owner initially thought the calls were a scam. It highlights the caution people have when receiving unexpected, good news.



Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals Since 2001

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.



Several members of the **Associated Billing Center** team during a recent technology update meeting.

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Associated Billing Center, LLC is a proud member of:



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.



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.

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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.



A personal *testimonial* is invaluable when evaluating a billing service's credentials and its commitment to its clients.

> Hi Mona, you have No Idea how much I have and do appreciate all you and ABC have done for me from the very beginning = and that you continue to do for me. When I read that "you have me covered; don't worry"! I got tears in my eyes! You guys go so far "above and beyond"! I think ABC can also stand for the "Above and Beyond Company"!!!

Thanks! Thanks, and Thanks!

Bethann A. LCSW

>Mona, it is truly amazing. When you were pitching your services to me and trying to convince me to sign up you described the services of Associated Billing Center. Here is the amazing part. Your company actually followed through on all the commitments you made to me in a preliminary discussion. It is absolutely refreshing to find a mental health billing service that follows through on its advertised promises to potential clients.

Family Counseling Center

>Mona, I received a call from one of your providers telling me how great you guys are and how quickly you work to get any issues resolved. I am thrilled that she provided me with your information. My small group practice is running more smoothly and with less administrative difficulties than we recently experienced. And it's true! Whenever I call your company, I always get a live person answering the phone not a voice message. Mona, a great big thanks to you and your staff for doing such an efficient job. I did not get that with my previous billing service.

Ellen & Jim S. Ph.D. Group

>Finally. Finally. Finally. After searching the web for a dependable reputable mental health billing service, I actually discovered one that delivered on all of its promises during an introductory meeting. What I especially like is that when I call ABC, someone actually answers the phone. Mona and her staff are extremely accessible, knowledgeable and always helpful. Managing our group practice is now streamlined and much more efficient. It is a pleasure working with you.

Ellen W. Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

More Actual Client Testimonials

>You guys are great. I really mean it. I believe I am like most other groups and individual practices in that dealing with insurance companies is the least favorite part of our job. Your company takes the burden off me and does it so well, invariably coming back with the problem resolved. In addition to this invaluable work that you do, every one of you is also pleasant to deal with and efficient with my billing. Finally, I appreciate how flexible you are. You were open to working with me to develop forms and procedures that suited my practice.

Andy R. Ph.D.

>Mona, what can I say. I am breathing a lot easier these days. I truly think Associated Billing Center is reviving the definition of what true client service means. It is amazing that, whenever I call your company, a live person answers the phone, not a virtual assistant. You promised during our first meeting that my practice would increase revenues and that your staff would be there to support my group practice. You were right. I am no longer burdened with many of the administrative tasks I previously encountered. Thanks. I can, without reservation, recommend Associated Billing Center to individual and group practices. They're great!

Mark S. LCSW

>Working with Associated Billing Center has been a game-changer for our practice. Their team is knowledgeable, efficient, and always available to answer any questions. Billing can be overwhelming, but they make the process seamless, allowing us to focus on our clients rather than administrative tasks. I highly recommend their services to any mental health professional looking for reliable and professional billing support. Here's a bonus: Our revenue has been growing since our affiliation with Mona.

Ellen F. Ph.D. Owner of a Group Practice

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 two decades, will never be labeled as one of these impersonal "behemoths".

Associated Billing Center, LLC
Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals