

**Associated Billing Center's  
Newsletter****Volume 98****May 2025****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**

At **Associated Billing Center** we make it a steadfast practice not to comment on controversial political issues in the news. However, due to the significance of the current situation, we feel compelled to make an exception.

Much to our dismay, the Department of Education is stopping the payout of approximately \$1 billion in federal grants that were intended for school mental health services across the country. These grants were initially part of the 2022 Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which aimed to address the growing concerns about student mental health following the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. The funding was being used by school districts to hire an additional 14 thousand mental health professionals.

The Trump administration is citing concerns about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals within the grant proposals. The Education Department found certain proposals objectionable due to their emphasis on racial trauma, critical compassion perspectives, and training counselors to recognize systemic injustices. We are hopeful that the courts will reverse the decision.

*Mona***Education Box-You Need to Know****News & Notes****Medicare Telehealth Flexibilities  
Extended:**

- \*Many telehealth flexibilities, including those related to originating sites (where the patient is located) and the use of audio-only communication for mental health services, have been extended through September 30, 2025, by the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025.
- \*Patients can continue to receive Medicare telehealth services wherever they are located (including at home), if the provider is licensed in the state where the patient is located. (Psychologists can be licensed thru Psypact.)
- \*Audio-only telehealth is generally permitted for behavioral/mental health services when the patient is in their home.
- \*The in-person visit requirement for behavioral health services (initially scheduled for earlier in 2025) has been delayed until October 1, 2025.

**Private Insurance Coverage:**

Varies Widely: The most crucial point is that private insurance coverage for telehealth, including mental health, varies significantly by payer and plan. While many insurers increased coverage and flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic, you must check your specific plan's benefits to understand what's covered. **Associated Billing Center** verifies all telehealth benefits during benefit verifications.



### Patient Cancellations

High cancellation rates can significantly impact the financial health and overall efficiency of a mental health practice. Improving your patient cancellation rate requires a multi-pronged approach that addresses potential reasons for cancellations and encourages commitment to appointments. Here are several effective strategies:

**\*Appointment Reminders:** Implement automated reminder systems (text, email, phone calls) a few days and again a day before the scheduled appointment. Allow clients to confirm their attendance easily.

**\*Clear Cancellation Policy:** Have a well-defined and clearly communicated cancellation policy regarding the notice period required and any associated fees. Ensure clients understand this policy during their initial intake and appointment confirmation.

**\*Confirmation Calls/Emails:** For initial appointments or appointments made far in advance, a confirmation call or email a week prior can help solidify the commitment.

**\*Waitlists:** Maintain a waitlist for clients who can attend appointments on short notice, allowing you to fill cancelled slots when possible.

**\*Your Practice is Your Business:**

Difficulty in Forecasting Revenue: High cancellation rates make it challenging for the practice to accurately predict its income, making financial planning and budgeting more difficult.

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



\*My therapist told me to embrace my fears. So I hugged his bill.

\*Ok-this one is weak. Why did the client bring a ladder to therapy? They wanted to work on their high anxiety.

\* Why did the therapist bring a map to the session? They wanted to help the client navigate their feelings.

\* Therapy: Where you pay someone to listen to the things you wouldn't even tell Google.

\*Patient to Therapist: "I'm not sure what's more exhausting, having anxiety or pretending I don't."

\*Therapist: "And what do we say when we feel overwhelmed?"

Client: "Alexa, play ocean waves."

\* You might be a therapist if you've ever said, "Let's unpack that," more times than you've unpacked your actual suitcase.

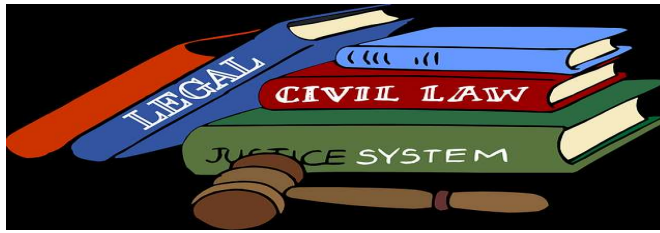


## Increased Scrutiny/Mental Health Parity

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



### Mental Health Practice Legal Compliance Reminders

- >Record Keeping: State laws dictate the requirements for maintaining client records, including the length of time records must be kept and the specific information that needs to be documented.
- >Employment Laws: If the practice employs other professionals, it must comply with state and federal employment laws, including those related to hiring, wages, discrimination and workplace safety.
- >HIPAA Compliance: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) sets federal standards for the privacy and security of Protected Health Information (PHI). Mental health practices, dealing with highly sensitive information, must have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure HIPAA compliance.
- >Why Liability Insurance is Crucial for Mental Health Practices: Protection Against Lawsuits: Mental health professionals can face various types of lawsuits, including allegations of malpractice, negligence, breach of confidentiality or other professional errors. Liability insurance helps cover the costs of legal defense, settlements and judgments. Professional Liability Insurance (Malpractice Insurance): This is the most crucial type of liability insurance for mental health professionals. It protects against claims of negligence, errors or omissions in the professional services if it results in harm to a client. Cyber Liability Insurance: With the increasing use of electronic health records (EHRs) and online communication, cyber liability insurance is becoming increasingly important. It helps cover costs associated with data breaches.
- >It's advisable to consult with an insurance professional who specializes in healthcare or professional liability to determine the specific coverage needs of your practice.

### What to Notify Insurance Companies About:

Claims Processing Delays: If your service address or other practice data (like NPI, CAQH, tax ID or even contact information) is outdated, insurance companies may reject claims because they can't verify the provider or the location where services were rendered.

\*Change of Service Address: This is perhaps the most critical. If you move your practice, even a different suite number within the same building, you must update this.

\*Changes in Practice Name: If your practice legally changes its name.

\*Changes in Tax ID or NPI: While less common, these are fundamental identifiers that must always be correct.

\*Changes in Billing Address: If your billing address is different from your service address and it changes.

\*Addition or Removal of Providers: If new providers join your practice or existing ones leave, their information needs to be updated with all payers.

**"Any questions please contact us. We Are Here to Help!"**



## 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 and 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 switch 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."

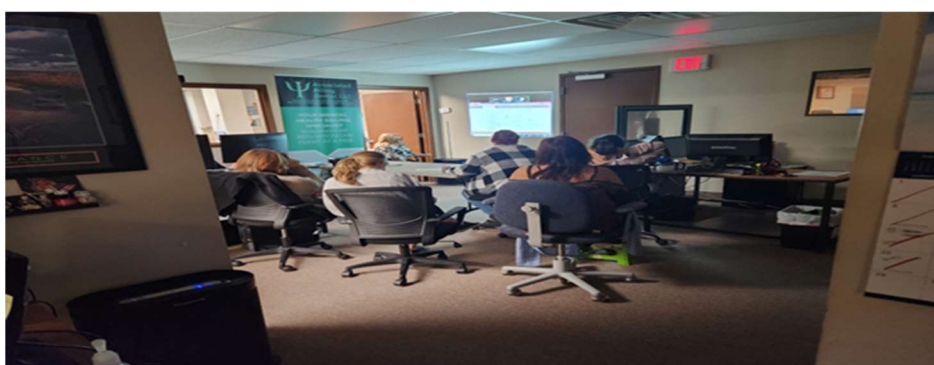
➤Lost Cash Leads to Scam Confusion: A Michigan State Police trooper tried to return \$5,000 in lost cash to its rightful owner but the owner initially thought the calls were a scam. It highlights the caution people have when receiving unexpected, good news.



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](http://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** 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**

**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.

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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".

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**Exclusively Serving Mental Health Professionals**