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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE
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OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES BULLETIN

ISSUE DATE:	EFFECTIVE DATE:	NUMBER:
July 9, 2010	August 1, 2010	OMHSAS-10-04

SUBJECT:
Psychological/Psychiatric/Clinical Re-Evaluations and Re-Authorizations for Behavioral Health Rehabilitation (BHR) Services

BY:
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Acting Deputy Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to all providers enrolled in the MA Program to render Behavioral Health Rehabilitation (BHR) services to Medical Assistance (MA) recipients under 21 years of age in both the fee-for-service and managed care delivery systems.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to inform providers that the Department of Public Welfare (Department) is revising the standard frequency of comprehensive evaluations to determine the need for BHR services, as well as, the maximum length of the authorization period that may be requested for such services, for MA recipients under 21 years of age, except for children and adolescents with behavioral health needs compounded by developmental disorders such as autistic disorder or other pervasive developmental disorder. For these MA recipients, this bulletin supersedes the sections addressing frequency of re-evaluations and authorizations published in MA Bulletin 01-94-01, 41-94-01, 48-94-01, 49-94-01, 50-94-01, effective January 1, 1994; and MA Bulletin 01-00-13, 29-00-04, 33-00-03, 41-00-01, 48-00-01, 49-00-04, 50-00-02, issued December 29, 2000, effective March 1, 2001; as well as those sections in the Procedures to Request Prior Authorization and Submit Claims for Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services Handbook (issued with MAB 08-04-06, effective January 1, 2005). The changes are effective for evaluations performed and requests for BHR services submitted on and after August 1, 2010, in both the fee-for-service and managed care delivery systems.

BACKGROUND:

MA recipients under 21 years of age with emotional or behavioral disturbances, as well as, mental illness or mental retardation are eligible to receive a wide range of medically necessary behavioral health services as alternatives to more restrictive residential and psychiatric inpatient services, whether or not the services are covered for adults. The Department has issued numerous MA bulletins that set forth the policies and procedures for nonresidential BHR services provided to MA recipients under the age of 21. Under the procedures set forth in each of those bulletins, a comprehensive psychological or psychiatric re-evaluation must be conducted at least every four months for services on the MA Program Fee Schedule and

evaluations at least every six months for services not on the MA Program Fee Schedule when services are requested after the initial authorization period.

DISCUSSION:

Families, clinicians, and advocates agree that documentation supporting the need for BHR services, whether for the initial request or for continuing service requests, must clearly and concisely describe the need for the services and the goals and objectives that the services are designed to address. In addition, the documentation must address the efficacy of the treatment being provided, goals to be achieved by the child, progress made toward goals or lack thereof, and gaps in treatment or unmet needs identified during the course of treatment which may require revision to the treatment plan and subsequent treatment. Stakeholders and the Department agree that the six month interval for evaluations has been working well for those medically necessary services that are not on the MA Program Fee Schedule and should also work well for those services on the MA Program Fee Schedule. For this reason, a comprehensive evaluation or re-evaluation by a psychiatrist, licensed psychologist, or physician will be required at the initiation of treatment. Thereafter, comprehensive re-evaluations and re-authorizations will be required once every 6 months, unless a family member or a treating professional believes that a re-evaluation is necessary prior to the expiration of a six month period in order to adequately address the child's needs.

PROCEDURE:

Effective August 1, 2010, except for children and adolescents with behavioral health needs compounded by developmental disorders such as autistic disorder or other pervasive developmental disorders who are still covered by the MA Bulletin 07-05-01, 08-05-04, 09-05-05, 11-05-03, 19-05-01, 31-05-05, issued June 24, 2005, effective August 1, 2005, evaluations may include a recommendation that BHR services be authorized for up to six months. The six month intervals also apply to the completion and submission of the treatment plan, plan of care, and if required, documentation of the Interagency Service Planning Team meeting. The frequency of the Interagency Service Planning Team meetings as outlined in MA Bulletin 01-01-05, 29-01-03, 33-01-03, 41-01-02, 48-01-02, 49-01-04, 50-01-03, issued June 1, 2001, effective July 1, 2001 remains in effect.

If the need for a Summer Therapeutic Activities Program is identified during the authorization period, an addendum, rather than a complete evaluation, may be used to request the service. When the need for a re-evaluation is identified by the treatment team, or requested by any member of the treatment team, before the end of the authorization period and the re-evaluation recommends that the same level of service continues to be needed, a re-authorization request is not required. If the re-evaluation recommends a new service or an increase in the level of service, a re-authorization request must be submitted.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 717-705-8289.