



# National Network Manual



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# Introduction

## Welcome

Thank you for becoming a part of our network. We are happy to welcome you and have you as a partner. Optum is dedicated to helping people live healthier lives and making the health system work better for everyone. We connect people to an extensive network of QUALITY providers and OFFER innovative tools that help members access care, at the right time, in the setting of their choice. Our focus is on driving better overall health outcomes for members while making the care they receive more affordable, improving the provider experience and generating insights that drive high-impact, integrated behavioral health services.

We encourage you to utilize our industry-leading website, *Provider Express* where you will find access to resources, relevant news, and conduct a variety of secure transactions at your preferred time and pace. We continuously expand our online functionality to better support your day-to-day operations, so be sure to check back regularly for updates.

Please take time to familiarize yourself with all aspects of the Network Manual. We've included an easy reference Resource Guide and FAQs to help get you started.

Optum is confident that together we can tackle the challenges facing the behavioral health industry and bring greater precision, speed, and ease to how people obtain behavioral health services. Your voice is important and we encourage you to reach out with feedback, ideas, or questions. We'd love to hear from you.



Tracy Davidson  
Senior Vice-President, Network  
Optum Behavioral Health



## About United Behavioral Health and Optum

United Behavioral Health (UBH) was officially formed on February 2, 1997, via the merger of U.S. Behavioral Health, Inc. (USBH) and United Behavioral Systems, Inc. (UBS). Our company is a wholly owned subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group. We have been operating under the brand Optum since 2012.

We are one of the nation's largest accredited managed behavioral health care organizations, supported by an extensive behavioral provider network of more than 210,000 Practitioners. We offer a comprehensive array of innovative and effective behavioral health care programs, as well as tools and additional support that inspire people to be invested in their own wellness.

Today, our customers include small businesses, Fortune 100 companies, school districts, health plans, and disability carriers. At the time of this publication, we support nearly 35 million members nationwide.

### Optum

Optum is a health services business dedicated to making the health system work better for everyone. We have aligned our businesses and are focused on helping ensure that people receive the right care at the right time from the best Practitioners.

Optum supports population health management solutions that address the physical, mental and financial needs of organizations and individuals. We provide health information and services to nearly 121 million Americans – educating them about their symptoms, conditions and treatments; helping them to navigate the system, finance their health care needs and stay on track with their health goals.

We serve people throughout the entire health system allowing us to bring a uniquely broad, yet experienced, perspective. We have the ability and scale to help our clients both envision and implement new approaches that drive meaningful, enduring and positive change.

Optum serves people throughout the entire continuum of healthcare, from promoting wellness and prevention, to servicing those that provide care, to delivering and managing prescription solutions, to being an industry-leader in healthcare research and technology.

## Mission and Vision

Our **Mission** is to help people live their lives to the fullest.

Our **Vision** is to be a constructive and transformational force in the health care system.

## Core Values

### Integrity

- Honor commitments
- Never compromise ethics

### Compassion

- Walk in the shoes of the people we serve and those with whom we work

### Relationships

- Build trust through collaboration

### Innovation

- Invent the future, learn from the past

### Performance

- Demonstrate excellence in everything we do

# Resource Guide

## Websites

### Provider Express

Our industry-leading Provider website [providerexpress.com](https://providerexpress.com) includes both public and secure pages. Public pages include general updates and useful information. Secure pages require registration. Both in-network and out-of-network individual Providers are eligible to register for secure access. Group practices and Facility Providers must be in network to register. The password-protected secure “Transactions” gives you access to Member and Provider specific information.

**To Register for Access:** Select the “First-time User” link in the upper right hand corner of the home page and follow the prompts.

### Secure Transactions

*Provider Express* offers a range of secure transactions including:

- Submit initial credentialing application and check status of initial credentialing
- Check eligibility and view benefit information, including authorization requirements
- Request authorization or complete notification for higher levels of care
- View authorization details
- Create and maintain “My Patients” list
- Submit professional claims and view claim status
- Make claim adjustment requests
- Make claim or clinical appeal requests
- Register for Optum Pay and Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)
- Update practice information:
  - Add NPI
  - Add Taxonomy Code(s)
  - Update languages spoken

- Update email address
- Update gender
- Add Medicaid/Medicare numbers
- Update non-attested expertise
- Update ethnicity
- Manage address locations, including practice, remit, 1099 and credentialing
- Update phone and fax numbers
- Availability status for accepting new patients
- Office conditions, including weekend or evening practice hours, wheelchair accessibility, public transportation, etc.
- Attest to provider directory information
- Send secure messages to a number of internal departments using the “Message Center”, without having to hold on the phone
- Admin-level users can add and manage other users’ access
- View performance and ALERT Online scorecards
- Obtain pre-populated Wellness Assessments
- Link to Clinician version of *liveandworkwell.com* to obtain patient education resources in English and Spanish (see “**Live and Work Well**” section below)

## Public Pages

The *Provider Express* home page includes “Quick Links” to our most frequently accessed pages, as well as recent news and updates:

- Access the latest information about ALERT
- Obtain ACE Clinicians program updates
- Obtain updates on Platinum Designation for facility–based programs
- Download standard forms here: “**Forms**”
- Access a variety of Behavioral Health Toolkits
- Review clinical guidelines, policies and manuals



- Locate current and archived issues of *Network Notes*, the Provider newsletter

## Training Page

Information includes webinar offerings and **Guided Tours** of secure transaction features such as: Claim Entry, Eligibility & Benefits and Message Center. The Guided Tours provide quick overviews of key transactions.

## Video Channel Page

View “how to” guides and walk-through videos that explain how to access and use many of the features available on *Provider Express* such as:

- Signing up for Electronic Payments & Statements
- Updating Your Practice Information
- Entering Claims on *Provider Express*
- Navigating Optum Webinar
- Becoming a Telemental Health Provider
- Claim Inquiries and Adjustments

## Live and Work Well

You may use this Member site to:

- Get patient behavioral health education information (Access Clinician version of site from *Provider Express* or at [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) by using Guest Access Code “Clinician”)
- Refer patients to appropriate benefit specific online resources:
  - Members may register and log in or use the anonymous access code assigned to their company/organization
  - There is an access code lookup tool

Our primary Member website makes it simple for Members to:

- Manage behavioral health benefits:
  - Check eligibility/benefits
  - Submit/track claims
  - View claim status
  - Submit out-of-network claims



- Request services
- Identify network Clinicians and Facilities
- Take self-assessments
- Send out caring, positive eCards
- Use computer based trainings:
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Stress
  - Alcohol & Drug Use
- Find articles on a variety of wellness and daily living topics
- Parent/Teen/Child integrated medical/behavioral information on adolescent health
- Locate community resources

Members can explore topics by category:

- **Personal life:** supportive information on caregiving, parenting, and relationships
- **Mind & body:** find a variety of helpful articles, videos and assessments on mental health and substance use concerns
- **Crisis support:** support for Members and their families, available 24/7

*Liveandworkwell.com* provides resources and patient education in English and Spanish. Website content varies according to Member benefit packages so advise Members to use the access code assigned to their company/organization for personalized information.

## Optum Pay

For the latest information on Optum Pay, go to: [optumhealthpaymentservices.com](https://optumhealthpaymentservices.com).

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services

- Upon completion of EAP services, you may refer for, or begin provision of, most routine outpatient services for clients whose benefits are administered by Optum
- The Statement of Understanding is a form that describes the scope and limitations of EAP services, signed by both you and the Member
- EAP Claim submission can be done through *Provider Express* secure “Transactions”

## Algorithms for Effective Reporting and Treatment (ALERT®)

The one-page Wellness Assessment (WA) is a reliable, confidential, Consumer-driven instrument used to help identify targeted risk factors in addition to establishing a baseline for tracking clinical change and outcomes. The WA is routinely administered at the beginning of the first session and then again at session three, four or five. The completed form is faxed to Optum. Detailed instructions and copies of the WA are available at *ProviderExpress*. Wellness Assessments are also available in Spanish.

- Adult Wellness Assessment – The adult seeking treatment completes this form
- Youth Wellness Assessment – The parent or guardian completes this form when the individual you are seeing is a minor

For questions and/or comments about ALERT, email us at: [ALERT\\_CNS\\_Ref@uhc.com](mailto:ALERT_CNS_Ref@uhc.com).

## Claims and Customer Service

Information for Claims and Customer Service issues can be found in the “Contact Us” section of *Provider Express*.

To ensure proper processing of claims, it is important to promptly contact Provider Relations if you change your Tax ID number. You may make changes to your practice address online. (see “**Secure Transactions**” section above)

## For Further Assistance

For general information and contractual questions, contact the Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Network Requirements

### **Who can I contact with specific questions or comments?**

For general information contact Provider Relations at **1-877-614-0484**. For contractual questions contact Outpatient Contracting at **1-877-614-0484** or your Facility Contract Manager.

### **What is a Payor?**

Our Payor definition is the entity or person that has the financial responsibility for funding payment of covered services on behalf of a Member, and that is authorized to access MH/SUD services in accordance with the Agreement.

### **How do Network Lease Partnerships work?**

Some patients may have access to the Optum network discounts through Network Lease Partners. All claims for Members accessing your services through these arrangements are processed, paid by and the responsibility of the Network Lease Partners and not Optum. Please submit claims directly to these Network Lease Partners for processing. Claims submission information is available on the Member's ID card.

### **Do I have to notify anyone if I change my name, address, telephone number, or Tax Identification Number?**

Yes. You are required to notify us within 10 calendar days, in writing, of any changes to your practice information, unless otherwise required by applicable state or federal law. This is especially important for accurate claims processing. We encourage you to make such changes by going to *Provider Express* to update your practice demographics.

### **As a contracted Facility, are we required to notify Optum in the event that we discontinue or change a program, service or location?**

Yes. You will need to contact your Facility Contract Manager to discuss the discontinuation or change to a program, service or location.

### **As a contracted Facility, would the addition of programs, services or locations require review of our current contract?**

Yes. Contact your Facility Contract Manager to initiate a review.

### **Can I be considered a participating Clinician at one practice location and non-participating at another?**

No, not if you are individually contracted with us. Your Agreement requires that you see all Members eligible to access this Agreement. It is not specific to a location or Tax Identification

Number (TIN). It is important to provide us with all practice locations and the TINs under which you submit claims.

If you are part of multiple group practices and also maintain a private practice, it is possible to be participating at one location and not at another, based on how you and/or your group(s) are contracted with us. Contact Provider Relations for assistance in evaluating your specific situation.

### **Since our Facility or Practice Group is contracted, does that mean all of our affiliated Clinicians are considered participating network Clinicians?**

No. Generally, only Clinicians credentialed with Optum are considered network Clinicians. The Optum network status of a Facility or Group does not guarantee that all Clinicians in practice there are network Clinicians. In situations where an Agency is credentialed by Optum, their affiliated Clinicians are not credentialed, but are considered participating under the Agency's Agreement.

When you add Clinicians to your Group/Facility, you should not assign clients to the Clinician until you confirm that they have been added to the network. Any claims submission for a rendering Clinician who has not been added to the network is subject to denial.

### **May I bill for Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder (MH/SUD) services that another Practitioner, intern or assistant provides to Optum Members in my office?**

No. You can bill only for services which you personally provide. Please follow the American Psychological Association (APA) *Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Billing and Coding Guide* regarding the use of psychometrists.

### **If my practice is filling up or if I am going to take a leave of absence from my practice, may I choose to be unavailable for new Optum referrals?**

Yes. You may request to be listed in our database as unavailable at one or more of your practice locations for a period of up to six months. You are required to update your availability on *Provider Express* or notify Provider Relations within 10 calendar days of your unavailable status for new referrals. Group practices and Facilities/Agencies that wish to be made unavailable should contact Provider Relations.

### **Are there procedures to follow if I withdraw from the Optum network?**

Yes. The terms and conditions for withdrawal from the network are outlined in your Provider Agreement. For additional details, or to initiate the process, contact Provider Relations or your Facility Contract Manager. Please also see information about Continuation of Services after Termination in the “**Network Requirements**” section of this manual.

## **Benefit Plans, Authorizations and Access to Care**

### **Should I routinely contact Optum regarding eligibility and benefits?**

Yes. You can inquire about eligibility and benefits at **Provider Express** or by calling the phone number on the Member's ID card. Services and/or conditions not covered under the Member's specific Benefit Plan are not eligible for payment. We comply with regulatory requirements related to coverage election periods and payment grace periods.

These requirements can lead to delays in our knowledge of a Member's eligibility status. As a result, the Member is the best source for timely information about eligibility, coverage changes and services used to date.

### **Can Members initiate authorization of benefits for routine outpatient MH/SUD services?**

Typically, authorization for routine outpatient services is not required. Members may contact Optum or use the Member website to obtain in-network referrals for most routine outpatient services.

### **Do any Benefit Plans require prior authorization for outpatient treatment?**

Most Benefit Plans do not require prior authorization for routine outpatient services. To inquire about a Member's Benefit Plan requirements, contact us through *Provider Express* or by calling the number on the Member's ID card.

### **What constitutes a "non-routine" outpatient service?**

Non-routine outpatient services include, but are not limited to, psychological testing and intensive outpatient care. These services typically still require authorization of benefits prior to providing those services. To obtain those authorizations, please call the number on the Member's ID card.

### **What if I see someone for an extended period due to an unforeseen crisis?**

For unforeseen crises for which there may be an unanticipated need for an extended office visit, you should use the crisis code 90839 to bill for the first 60 minutes of psychotherapy. Prior authorization is not required for crisis sessions.

### **Is the Wellness Assessment (WA) administered more than once?**

Yes. The WA is administered at the first session or in the second session if the Member presents in crisis during the first session. It is administered again preferably at the third visit, but may be given at either the fourth or fifth visit. The exact timing is at the Clinician's discretion.

### **Is there a way to ensure confidentiality with the WA for emancipated minors who are requesting services?**

Yes. In these circumstances, you should only complete the demographic sections located at the top of the WA and return it to Optum. Fill in the bubble labeled "MRef" for Member refusal. A follow-up assessment will not be sent to the adolescent's home.

### **Where can I get more information about ALERT and Wellness Assessments?**

Please refer to the "**Benefit Plans, Authorizations, EAP and Access to Care**" section of this manual or the **ALERT** information on *Provider Express*.

### **Can I make referrals directly to other Optum network Clinicians?**

You or the Member may use "Find a provider" on *Live and Work Well* or the "Clinician Directory" on *Provider Express* or call Optum to identify in-network Clinicians. Typically, authorization for routine outpatient services is not required. If referring a Member for non-routine outpatient services such

as psychological testing, intensive outpatient services, or other higher levels of care, prior authorization may be required.

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Procedures

### What is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

EAP is a health and wellness service provided by an employer. It is designed to provide assessment and referral, as well as a brief counseling intervention for Members and/or their families.

### How do I become an EAP provider?

Optum does not have a separate EAP network. All Optum-contracted therapists are allowed to provide and bill for EAP services. As a Clinician in the Optum network, you are expected to accept Members with an EAP benefit in compliance with your Agreement. There are limitations around the use of EAP benefits with psychiatrists.

### Do EAP services require prior authorization?

Yes. EAP benefits require prior authorization and an initial authorization may be obtained by the Member or by the Provider. Members may make the authorization request by phone, via the *myliveandworkwell* mobile application, or through [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com). Providers making an authorization request on behalf of Members should call the number on the back of the Member's ID card or obtain the EAP toll-free number from the Member. The Member will receive an EAP authorization letter and is instructed to bring that to their initial session.

### Do I need to obtain prior authorization for Members who transition from EAP to Optum MH/SUD benefits for routine psychotherapy services?

Upon completion of EAP services, you may refer for, or begin provision of, most routine MH/SUD outpatient services for clients whose MH/SUD benefits are administered by Optum. Typically, authorization for routine outpatient services is not required.

### Does use of EAP benefits change authorization or notification requirements for MH/SUD services?

No. You may inquire about benefit requirements through *Provider Express* or by calling the number on the Member's ID card.

### If a Member I am seeing through EAP benefits requires medication management services, is prior authorization of MH/SUD benefits required?

No. Medication management services under MH/SUD benefits do not require prior authorization.

### Should Members be given the Wellness Assessment (WA) at their initial EAP visit?

Yes. All Optum Members should be asked to complete the WA.

### **Am I required to give a Wellness Assessment (WA) to a Member transitioning from EAP benefits?**

Yes. All Optum Members should be offered the WA. If the Member reports having already completed a WA with the EAP Clinician, it is not necessary to complete an initial session WA. However, you should administer the WA at either session three, four, or five.

### **Do EAP benefits require a new authorization when a new benefit year begins?**

Yes. You will need to obtain a new EAP authorization when a new benefit year begins. Remember to ask the Member for a copy of the EAP authorization letter to note the expiration date of the authorization.

### **Is there a time frame in which I may seek a retrospective review of services that were provided but not previously authorized?**

Yes. On occasion, emergent or other unusual circumstances will interfere with the pre-authorization processes. In those cases, requests for a retrospective review of services must be submitted within 180 calendar days of the date(s) of service unless otherwise mandated by state law.

## **Treatment Philosophy**

### **Are the Optum Guidelines accessible online?**

**Guidelines/Policies & Manuals** are posted under “Quick Links” on the home page of *Provider Express*.

Links to **information regarding *The ASAM Criteria***<sup>®</sup>, developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under “Guidelines/Policies & Manuals” on *Provider Express*.

### **Am I expected to coordinate care with a Member’s primary care physician or other health care professionals?**

Yes. We require network Clinicians to pursue coordination of care with the Member’s primary physician as well as other treating medical or behavioral health Clinicians. A signed release of information should be maintained in the clinical record. In the event that a Member declines consent to the release of information, his or her refusal should be documented along with the reason for refusal. In either case, the education you provide regarding risks and benefits of coordinated care should be noted.

### **How can I learn more about Recovery & Resiliency?**

Optum considers Recovery & Resiliency to be important in the provision of behavioral health services. For more information see the **Recovery & Resiliency toolkit for Providers** on *Provider Express*.



## Confidentiality of Records

### Do HIPAA regulations allow me to exchange Protected Health Information (PHI) with Optum?

Yes. The HIPAA Privacy Rule permits Clinicians and Optum to exchange PHI, with certain protections and limits, for activities involving Treatment, Payment, and Operations (TPO). An individual's authorization for ROI is not required by HIPAA [in these cases] (though disclosures should be consistent with any other applicable federal or state privacy law).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Treatment, Payment, or Health Care Operations" as defined by HIPAA include: 1) Treatment – Coordination or management of health care and related services; 2) Payment purposes – The activities of a health plan to obtain premiums or fulfill responsibility for coverage and provision of benefits under the health plan; and 3) Health Care Operations – The activities of a health plan such as quality review, business management, customer service, and claims processing.

## Quality Management

### Does Optum audit Clinicians and Facilities?

Optum representatives conduct site visits at Clinician offices, Agencies such as Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs), Facilities, and Group Provider locations. On-site audits are routinely completed with CMHCs and Facilities without national accreditation. In addition, audits are completed to address specific quality of care issues or in response to Member complaints about the quality of the office or Facility environment. For additional information, please see the "Quality Management" section of this manual.

## Compensation and Claims

### Can Members be billed prior to claims submission?

No. Members are never to be charged in advance of the delivery of services with the exception of applicable co-payment. Members should be billed for deductibles and co-insurance after claims processing yields an Explanation of Benefits indicating Member responsibility.

### Is there one format to be used for diagnosis on claims?

Yes. Submit your claims using the industry-standard ICD code or successor as mapped to DSM defined conditions.

### Are there different methods or claim forms I should use when submitting claims to Optum?

Yes. See below:

**Electronic Claims:** Optum recommends electronic submission of claims for the most efficient claim processing. Network Clinicians and Group practices can submit MH/SUD and EAP claims electronically through *Provider Express* using the "claim entry" function. This and other secure transactions are accessed through a registered One Healthcare ID. To obtain a One Healthcare ID, go to "First-time User" on *Provider Express* and follow the prompts. In addition, any Clinician, Group practice or Facility Provider can submit claims electronically through an EDI clearinghouse using Payor ID #87726.

**Clinician Claim Forms:** Paper claims for MH/SUD or EAP outpatient services should be submitted to Optum using the Form 1500 claim form, the UB-04 claim form (for outpatient services rendered and contracted within a hospital setting), or their successor forms as based upon your Provider Agreement. All paper claims must be typewritten.

**Facility Claim Forms:** Paper claims should be submitted to Optum using the UB-04 claim form, or any successor forms as appropriate.

### **Do I need a National Provider Identifier (NPI) to submit claims?**

Yes. We require the billing Clinician to include accurate NPI and contact information on all claims, because this information is needed to process claims and communicate with Members.

### **With all of the different products that Optum manages, is there some easy way for me to determine where to send my claim?**

Yes. Claims submitted electronically through *Provider Express* are automatically routed to the appropriate claims office. You may also elect to submit electronically through an EDI vendor. EDI claims are also automatically routed to the correct claims offices. We pay claims for Members using a number of different claims systems. In order to assure prompt and accurate payment for claims submitted using the U.S. Postal Service, you should verify the mailing address for your claim by calling the number on the Member's ID card. Often, the claims payment address for a medical claim is different than the address for a behavioral health claim.

### **Do I have to submit my claims within a certain time frame in order for them to be paid?**

Yes. All information necessary to process claims must be received by Optum no more than 90 calendar days from the date of service, or as required by state or federal law, specific Member Benefit Plans or based upon the terms of your Provider Agreement.

### **Am I responsible for coordination of benefits?**

Yes. You are responsible for determining if other insurance coverage is in effect and for billing the primary insurance carrier first, and notifying Optum of your findings. Optum is required to process claims using industry-wide Coordination of Benefits (COB) standards and in accordance with benefit contracts and applicable state laws.

### **Can I bill a Member when treatment is not authorized, as required, but the Member elects to receive services?**

Yes. In the event that you seek prior authorization of benefits for behavioral health services or authorization for continued treatment when required, and Optum does not authorize the requested services, the Member may be billed under limited circumstances. For more detailed information, please review the billing for non-covered services in the "**Compensation and Claims**" section of this manual.

### **May I submit a claim to Optum for "no-shows"?**

No. However, the Member may be billed if a written statement explaining your billing policy for appointments not kept or cancelled is signed by the Member prior to such an occurrence. You may

bill the Member no more than your Optum contracted rate. Note that some Plans and government funded programs prohibit billing for no-shows under any circumstances.

### **May I submit a claim to Optum for telephone counseling or after-hours calls?**

Optum covers telephone counseling in some situations when clinically necessary and appropriate and in accordance with the Member's Benefit Plan. Telephone counseling must be pre-authorized by Optum.

### **May I balance bill the Member above what Optum pays me?**

No. You may not balance bill Members for services provided during eligible visits, which means you may not charge Members the difference between your billed usual and customary charges and the aggregate amount reimbursed by Optum and Member expenses.

### **Will Optum process claims retrospectively?**

In the event a Provider Agreement with Optum has not been executed timely or a commercially reasonable amount of time is not provided to align Optum systems with a Provider Agreement, Optum will not assign a retroactive effective date or pay claims retrospectively unless federal or state mandated. In addition, no interest or penalty otherwise required under applicable law will be due on any claim which was initially processed timely and accurately, but which requires reprocessing as a result of the untimely execution of a Provider Agreement or amendment; or the inability to align Optum systems in a commercially reasonable period of time.

## **Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA)**

### **Am I required to participate in all Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse programs?**

Yes. All FWA investigation activities are a required component of your Agreement. This includes, but is not limited to, providing medical records as requested and timely response to inquiries.

### **Do I have to complete Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse or Compliance training?**

All Providers and Affiliates working on Medicare Advantage, Part D or Medicaid programs must provide compliance program training and FWA training within 90 days of employment and annually thereafter (by the end of the year) to their employees and/or contractors. The training is subject to certain requirements, and may be obtained through any CMS approved source.

### **What should I do if I suspect Fraud, Waste or Abuse?**

Anytime there is a suspicion of Fraud, Waste or Abuse, please report it immediately. The faster we know about it, the faster we can intervene. We need your assistance to maximize success.

### **How do I contact the Optum Program and Network Integrity Department?**

**Telephone: 1-877-972-8844**

**Email: [optum.pni.tips@optum.com](mailto:optum.pni.tips@optum.com)**

**Mail:** Optum Program and Network Integrity Department  
PO Box 30535  
Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0535

Fax: 1-248-733-6379

General inquiries: [optum.pni.communications@optum.com](mailto:optum.pni.communications@optum.com)

Communications are confidential and may be anonymous.

### Where can I find more information about Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse?

More information is available on the [Fraud, Waste, Abuse, Error and Payment Integrity](#) page on *Provider Express*.

## Appeals

### Can I initiate the Appeals process if I disagree with the decision Optum made not to authorize services I have requested?

Yes. You may initiate the Appeals process with Optum. Urgent appeals should be pursued as quickly as possible following an adverse determination. For non-urgent appeals, Optum has established a 180-day time frame in which a Clinician or Member can request the appeal. These time frames apply unless otherwise mandated by applicable law.

### Are there different contacts for issues with claims processing or payment?

Yes. You may need to call different customer service numbers to request assistance for some Members.

We have several main customer service phone numbers (see the “**Resource Guide**” or “**Compensation and Claims Processing**” sections of this manual); however, it is best to call the phone number listed on the Provider Remittance Advice.

## Glossary of Terms

These definitions are general definitions applied for purposes of this manual. State law, certain Practitioner Agreements and individual benefit contracts define some of these terms differently. In such cases, the definitions contained in the applicable law or contract will supersede these definitions. In the definitions below, and throughout this manual, “we,” “us,” and “our” refer to Optum.

### Adverse Determination

See definition for “**Non-Coverage Determination**” below.

### Affiliate

Each and every entity or business concern with which we, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, either: owns or controls; (ii) is owned or controlled by; or (iii) is under common ownership or control.

### Agency

A non-facility based outpatient Provider meeting specific criteria. Examples include, but are not limited to, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC), State Licensed Outpatient Clinics, Community-based Service Agencies, and School Based Health Centers (SBHC).

### Agreement (may be referred to as Provider Agreement or Provider Participation Agreement)

A contract describing the terms and conditions of the contractual relationship between us and a Provider under which mental health and/or substance use disorder services are provided to Members.

### ALERT<sup>®</sup>

**AL**gorithms for **E**ffective **R**eporting and **T**reatment (ALERT) is an outcomes-based system using Member responses to a validated survey, in conjunction with claims data, for the identification of Members who are at moderate to high risk for poor clinical outcomes.

### Algorithm

A set of decision rules we apply to Member-specific data to determine whether there are any targeted clinical issues or risks.

## Appeal

A specific request to reverse a non-coverage (adverse) determination or potential restriction of benefit reimbursement.

## Authorization

The number of days or non-routine outpatient visits/units for which benefits have been applied as part of the Member Benefit Plan for payment (formerly known as Certification). Authorizations are not a guarantee of payment. Final determinations will be made based on Member eligibility and the terms and conditions of the Member's Benefit Plan at the time the service is delivered.

## Balance Billing

The practice of a Provider requesting payment from a Member for the difference between the UBH contracted rate and the Clinician or Facility's usual charge for that service.

## Behavioral Clinical Policies

The Behavioral Clinical Policies are used to determine whether a treatment or service is proven or unproven based on the published scientific evidence.

## Behavioral Health Care

Assessment and treatment of mental health and/or substance use disorders (MH/SUD).

## Care Advocate

An Optum employee who is a licensed clinical professional (e.g., nurse, doctor, psychologist, social worker, or professional counselor) who works with Members, health care professionals, physicians, and insurers to maximize benefits available under a Member's Benefit Plan. EAP Care Advocates are referred to as EAP Specialists.

## Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (CASII)

A standardized assessment tool developed by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) used to make medical necessity determinations and to provide level of service intensity for children and adolescents ages 6-18.

## Clean Claim

A UB-04 or a Form 1500 claim form, or its successor, submitted by a Facility or Clinician for MH/SUD health services rendered to a Member which accurately contains all the following information: Member's identifying information (name, date of birth, subscriber ID); Facility or Clinician information (name, address, tax ID); date(s) and place of service; valid ICD-9 code or its successor code; procedure narrative; valid CPT-4 or revenue code; services and supplies provided; Facility charges; and such other information or attachments that may be mutually agreed

upon by the parties in writing.

The primary avenue for Clinician claims submissions is electronically on *Provider Express*.

## Clinician

A licensed professional contracted to deliver behavioral health care services to Members (also known as a network Clinician, Provider, or Practitioner).

## Co-insurance

The portion of covered health care costs for which the Member is financially responsible, usually according to a fixed percentage. Co-insurance often is applied after a deductible requirement is met.

## Co-payment

A cost sharing arrangement in which a Member pays a specified charge for a specified service (e.g., \$20 for an office visit). The Member usually is responsible for payment at the time the health care is rendered. Typical co-payments are fixed or variable flat amounts for Clinician office visits, prescriptions or hospital services. Sometimes the term "co-payment" generically refers to both a flat dollar co-payment and co-insurance.

## Community-based Service Agency

Includes peer support group services and drop in centers (clubhouse model), and have a business license, and/or state license as applicable.

## Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)

An entity that meets all applicable licensing or certification requirements for CMHCs in the State in which it is located.

## Credentialing

This refers to the process by which a Provider is accepted into our network and by which that association is maintained on a regular basis.

## Deductible

The annual amount of charges for behavioral health care services, as provided in the Member's Benefit Plan, which the Member is required to pay prior to receiving any benefit payment under the Member's plan.



## EAP (Employee Assistance Program)

A health and wellness benefit provided by one's employer. EAP services are designed for brief intervention, assessment and referral. These services are short-term in nature.

## Early Childhood Service Intensity Instrument (ECSII)

A standardized assessment tool developed by the AACAP used to make medical necessity determinations and to provide level of service intensity for children ages 0-5.

## Emergency

A serious situation that arises suddenly and requires immediate care and treatment to avoid jeopardy to life or health. For appointment access standards, see “**Emergency — Life threatening**”, “**Emergency — Non-life threatening**” and “**Urgent**” below.

### Emergency — Life Threatening

A situation requiring immediate appointment availability in which there is imminent risk of harm or death to self or others due to a medical or psychiatric condition.

### Emergency — Non-life threatening

A situation requiring appointment availability within six hours in which immediate assessment or care is needed to stabilize a condition or situation, but there is no imminent risk of harm or death to self or others.

## Exclusions

Specific conditions or circumstances listed in the Member's Benefit Plan for which the policy or plan will not provide coverage reimbursement under any circumstances.

## Facility

An entity that provides inpatient, residential, or ambulatory services and has contracted to deliver behavioral health care services to Members (also known as a network Facility).

## Facility Contract Manager

An Optum professional dedicated to managing contractual relationships with hospitals and freestanding behavioral health programs and services for our network.

## Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)

A federally qualified health center is a type of Provider defined by the Medicare and Medicaid statutes. FQHCs include all organizations receiving grants under Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (PHS), certain tribal organizations, and FQHC Look-alikes. An FQHC Look-alike is an

organization that meets all of the eligibility requirements of an organization that receives a PHS Section 330 grant but does not receive grant funding.

## Fee Maximum

The maximum amount a participating Provider may be paid for a specific health care service provided to a Member under a specific contract. Reimbursement to Clinicians is based upon licensure rather than degree.

## FWAE (Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Error)

**Fraud:** Intentional misrepresentation or concealing facts to obtain something of value. The complete definition has three primary components:

- Intentional dishonest action or misrepresentation of fact
- Committed by a person or entity
- With knowledge that the dishonest action or misrepresentation could result in an inappropriate gain or benefit

**Waste:** Inaccurate payments for services, such as unintentional duplicate payments, and can include inappropriate utilization and/or inefficient use of resources.

**Abuse:** Practices that directly or indirectly result in unnecessary costs to health care benefit programs. This includes any Practice that results in the provision of services that:

- Are not medically necessary
- Do not meet professional recognized standards for health care
- Are not fairly priced

**Error:** Mistakes, inaccuracies or misunderstandings that can usually be identified and fixed quickly.

## Group Practice

A Group of individually credentialed Clinicians who participate in the network under a Group contract and share a single Tax Identification Number. The Group Practice site(s) is the location of Practice for at least the majority of each Clinician's clinical time. In addition, medical records for all patients treated at the Practice site are available to and shared by all Clinicians, as appropriate.

## Health Plan

A Health Maintenance Organization, Preferred Provider Organization, insured Plan, self-funded Plan, government Agency, or other entity that covers health care services. This term also is used to refer to a Plan of Benefits.

## HIPAA

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, by which a set of national standards are set for, among other topics, the protection of certain health care information. The standards address the use and disclosure of an individual's "Protected Health Information" (PHI) by organizations subject to the Privacy Rule ("covered entities"). These standards also include privacy rights for individuals to understand and control how their health information is used. For more information, please visit the Department of Health and Human Services website, [HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov).

## Identification (ID) Card

Any reference to "ID Card" includes a physical or a digital identification card.

## Independent Review Organization

An independent entity/individual retained by a private health plan, government Agency to review non-coverage (adverse) determinations (based on medical necessity) that have been appealed by, or on behalf of, a Member (also sometimes known as External Review Organizations).

## Least Restrictive Level of Care

The level of care at which the Member can be safely and effectively treated while maintaining maximum independence of living.

## Legal Entities

- United Behavioral Health (UBH)
- United Behavioral Health of New York, I.P.A., Inc. (UBHIPA)

## Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS)

A standardized level of care assessment tool developed by the American Association of Community Psychiatrists used to make medical necessity determinations and placement decisions for adults.

## Live and Work Well

A free website available to Members and their families that offers a variety of services, resources and wellness information. On [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com), one can explore hundreds of articles, videos, interactive self-help programs and other tools to help:

- Identify network referrals,
- Obtain authorizations and perform other secure transactions
- Cope with major life changes

- Balance work and life
- Manage stress, depression, anxiety and other conditions
- Connect with behavioral health and substance use disorder resources

## Medical Necessity

Generally, the evaluation of health care services to determine whether the services meet plan criteria for coverage: are medically appropriate and necessary to meet basic health needs; are consistent with the diagnosis or condition; are rendered in a cost-effective manner; and are consistent with national medical practice guidelines regarding type, frequency, and duration of treatment. This definition may vary according to Member Benefit Plans or state laws (also referred to as Clinical Necessity).

## Medicare Coverage Summaries

Our [Medicare Coverage Summaries](#) are intended to promote optimal clinical outcomes and consistency in the authorization of Medicare benefits by Care Advocacy staff and Peer Reviewers. Medicare Coverage Summaries offer the guidance found in the CMS National Coverage Determinations and Local Coverage Determinations.

## Member

An individual who meets all eligibility requirements and for whom premium payments for specified benefits of the contractual Agreement are paid. This person may also be referred to as a Plan Participant, Enrollee, Subscriber or Consumer.

## MH/SUD

Mental Health and/or Substance Use Disorder.

## Non-Coverage Determination (NCD)

A denial, reduction, or termination of coverage, or a failure to provide or make payment (in whole or in part) for a benefit, including any such denial based on the eligibility of a Member or beneficiary to participate in a plan; and a denial resulting from utilization review, the experimental or investigational nature of the service, or the lack of medical necessity or appropriateness of treatment. The term “Adverse Determination” is sometimes used to describe NCDs.

## Notification

A Benefit Plan requirement that Providers contact us when a Member accesses services. Notification, when required, should occur prior to the delivery of certain non-routine outpatient services and scheduled inpatient admissions, and as soon as reasonably possible for an emergency admission. Notification requirements include clinical information to determine benefit coverage.

## One Healthcare ID (replaced Optum ID as a name change only)

One Healthcare ID delivers a secure, centralized identity management solution that enables a single sign-on to all integrated applications. You register for a One Healthcare ID once and use that One Healthcare ID to access all of the associated applications seamlessly. You can access self-service tools to reset your password, recover your One Healthcare ID, and maintain your profile.

## Optum Pay (Electronic Fund Transfer)

Optum Pay: Optum Pay is the standard method for receiving payments and provider remittance advice (PRA) from Optum. Optum Pay delivers electronic payments and provides 835 files for health care providers or facilities.

## Outpatient Contract Manager

An Optum professional dedicated to managing contractual relationships with clinicians and groups providing outpatient services for our network.

## Payor

The entity or person that has the financial responsibility for funding payment of Covered Services on behalf of a Member who is authorized to access MH/SUD services in accordance with the Agreement.

## Prospective Program

Claim review completed before payment is made that may be denied due to a conflict with a reimbursement policy and/or when more information is needed before a claim can be processed. When more information is needed, a request for medical records will be sent to the Provider and/or Member, as appropriate.

## Provider Dispute

A contracted Provider's written notice to Optum disputing or requesting reconsideration of a claim (or group of claims) that has been denied, adjusted, or contested, and for which the Member has already received service, and for which the Member has no financial liability. Under your Agreement, one level of dispute is available (unless two levels of dispute are required by Payor or law). For more information, see the "**Appeals and Provider Dispute Resolution**" section of this manual.

## *Provider Express*

Optum website providing resources for Clinicians and Facilities. General information, manuals, forms and newsletters are available to both Clinicians and Facilities. A variety of secure, self-service transactions, including certification inquiry and claim entry, are available to Clinicians and Group Practices.

## **Provider Relations**

Consists of staff who provide services and information to Providers. In addition, they may act as liaisons with other departments such as Contracting, Care Advocacy, Account Management and Sales to contract and retain experienced mental health and substance use disorder treatment professionals.

## **Qualified Behavior Analyst/Specialist**

Generally, a Board Certified Behavior Analyst but may also include provider types designated by a specific state as eligible to serve as Applied Behavior Analysis supervisors.

## **Quality Assurance**

A formal set of activities to review and affect the quality of services provided. Quality Assurance includes assessment and corrective actions to remedy any deficiencies identified in the quality of direct patient services. Federal and state regulations typically require Health Plans to have Quality Assurance programs.

## **Quality Management**

A continuous process that identifies opportunities for improvement in health care delivery, tests solutions, and routinely monitors solutions for effectiveness.

## **Reimbursement Policies**

Policies related to reimbursement. These policies are made available online to both in- and out-of-network providers for reference.

## **Retrospective Program**

Review of claims after payment has been made and are subsequently identified as having potential for Fraud, Waste, Abuse and/or Error activity.

## **Routine Access**

A situation in which an assessment of care is required, with no urgency or potential risk of harm to self or others.

## **School Based Health Center (SBHC)**

Provides a comprehensive array of behavioral health services, including outpatient, case management and telehealth services.

## **State Licensed Outpatient Clinic (Non-CMHC)**

An organization that is licensed and/or accredited by a state entity to provide mental health and/or

substance use disorder services.

### **Telemental Health (virtual visits)**

The provision of behavioral health services by a behavioral health Provider via a secure two-way, real-time, interactive audio/video telecommunication system. These services may be referred to as Telemental Health or virtual visits.

### **Urgent Access**

A situation in which immediate care is not needed for stabilization, but if not addressed in a timely manner could escalate to an emergency situation. Availability should be within 48 hours or less or as mandated by state law.

### **Utilization Management (UM)**

The process of evaluating and determining the coverage for and the appropriateness of behavioral health services, as well as providing assistance to a clinician or patient in cooperation with other parties, to help ensure appropriate use of resources. UM includes prior authorization, concurrent review, retrospective review, discharge planning and case management.

### **Wellness Assessment (WA)**

A reliable, confidential, Member-driven instrument used to help identify targeted risk factors, in addition to establishing a baseline for tracking clinical change and outcomes.



# Network Requirements

## Clinical Network Development and Maintenance

Optum is responsible for arranging for the provision of a comprehensive spectrum of behavioral health services. In order to fulfill this responsibility, we administer a provider network including licensed qualified professionals in mental health and substance use disorders (MH/SUD). This network represents an array of clinical and cultural specialties and includes facility-based programs that offer a wide variety of services. The diversity of our network allows us to meet the clinical, cultural, linguistic and geographic needs of our Members.

## Participating Provider Agreement

Our Payor definition is the entity or person that has the financial responsibility for funding payment of covered services on behalf of a Member and that is authorized to access MH/SUD services in accordance with the Agreement.

Some patients may have access to the Optum network discounts through Network Lease Partners. All claims for Members accessing your services through these arrangements are processed, paid by, and the responsibility of the Network Lease Partners and not Optum. Please submit claims directly to these Network Lease Partners for processing. Claims submission information is available on the Member's ID card.

## Non-Discrimination

Optum does not deny or limit the participation of any Provider in the network, and/or otherwise discriminate against any Provider, based solely on any characteristic protected under state or federal discrimination laws.

Furthermore, Optum has never had a policy of terminating any Provider because the Provider or Provider representative: (1) advocated on behalf of a Member; (2) filed a complaint against Optum; (3) appealed a decision of Optum; or (4) requested a review of a termination decision or challenged a termination decision of Optum. Moreover, consistent with the terms of the Settlement Agreement entered into in *Holstein v. Magellan Behavioral Health*, Optum has adhered to this practice both before and since the Settlement Agreement was executed.

Optum has not, and will not, terminate any Provider from its network based on any of the four grounds enumerated above. Nothing in the Agreement should be read to contradict, or in any way modify, this long-standing policy and practice of Optum.

## CAQH - Clinician Credentialing and Recredentialing

Optum uses [CAQH ProView®](#), to obtain the data needed for credentialing and recredentialing of

our network Clinicians, and many Clinicians who are contracted with us through a group practice, unless otherwise required by law. The CAQH web-based credentialing tool streamlines the credentialing process by enabling you to complete your credentialing application online.

This free service for healthcare professionals is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The online application allows you to save your work and return later to finish the process. Once completed, CAQH stores the application online and enables you to make updates to your information, as needed. By keeping your CAQH information current, future recredentialing is quick and easy.

Once your application is completed with CAQH, Optum may use Aperture, a National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) certified Credentials Verification Organization (CVO), to review the application packet for completeness and collect any missing or incomplete information.

## Clinician Credentialing

The Clinician credentialing process is used for clinicians who are individually contracted and for many Clinicians who are contracted with us through a group practice. Optum credentials Clinicians according to rigorous criteria that reflect professional and community standards, as well as applicable laws and regulations. These criteria include, but are not limited to, satisfaction of the following standards:

- Independent licensure or certification in your state(s) of practice, except as required by applicable state law
- License is in good standing and free from restriction and/or without probationary status
- Board Certification or completed psychiatric residency for physicians
- Current certification through the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) for prescribing Clinicians in each state in which they practice and unrestricted controlled substance certificate (CDS) if applicable in the state
- Professional Liability Coverage: a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence/\$1 million aggregate for master's-level and doctoral-level Clinicians, and a minimum of \$1 million /\$3 million for physicians (exceptions to these required insurance amounts may be made as required by applicable state law)
- Free from any exclusion from any state or federal government program
- Attest to your areas of clinical specialty and appropriate training supporting the identified specialties.

**Disclosure of Ownership** – form may be a mandated requirement for specific state Medicaid plans. If applicable, must be collected as part of new recruitment or continued participation process.

For a more specific list of criteria, please refer to the [Credentialing Plan](#).

You will be asked to sign a release of information granting Optum and its agents access to

information pertaining to your professional standing. This is required for primary verification and/or review of records from any professional society, hospital, insurance company, present or past employer, or other entity, institution, or organization that may have information pertaining to your professional standing. Obtaining and reviewing this information is necessary to complete the credentialing process. Failure to provide such a release will preclude completion of your credentialing and prevent your participation in the network.

Optum has specific requirements for identified specialty areas. A comprehensive list of specialty areas is available on the [Clinician Expertise/Specialty Attestation](#) form, which can be found in the “Optum Forms - Administrative section” under “Forms” at [Provider Express](#). If you request recognition of a specialty area, an attestation statement may be required documenting the specific criteria met for the identified specialty. Current competency of a designated specialty may be randomly audited to ensure that network Clinicians remain active and up-to-date in their specialty field attestations.

The Credentialing Plan addresses the requirements for participation, continued participation (maintaining unrestricted license, cooperating with complaints investigation, etc.), and information regarding disciplinary action up to and including termination of participation in the network. The [Credentialing Plan](#) is available at [Provider Express](#), or you may request that a paper copy be mailed to you by contacting Provider Relations.

## Clinician Recredentialing

In accordance with our commitment to the highest quality of clinical treatment, we recredential Clinicians every 36 months unless state law or client policies require a different recredentialing cycle. During recredentialing, we will access your information through your CAQH application, unless otherwise required by law. In addition, you will be required to provide your current copy of:

- Federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) certificate (if applicable) for each state in which you practice
- Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS) certificate (if applicable)
- Professional liability insurance
- Curriculum vitae, if required by state

You may also be asked to:

- Sign a release of information granting access to information pertaining to your professional standing. This is required for primary verification and/or review of records from any professional society, hospital, insurance company, present or past employer, or other entity, institution, or organization that does or may have information pertaining to your professional standing. Failure to provide such a release will preclude completion of your recredentialing and prevent your continued participation in the network.

You are required to provide a copy of all professional documents whenever they renew or change.

## Delegation of Credentialing in Groups

For contracted Group practices that meet specific criteria, Optum may negotiate a Delegation Agreement that would allow the Group to credential the providers within their Group and report their credentialing and recredentialing activities to Optum. Optum conducts oversight of Delegated Group activities and retains final approval of all credentialing and recredentialing decisions. If your Group is interested in pursuing a Delegation Agreement, contact Provider Relations for more information.

## Facility/Agency Credentialing and Recredentialing

Optum follows the guidelines of NCQA for credentialing and recredentialing unless otherwise required by law. As part of the credentialing and recredentialing process, Facilities and Agencies are required to submit documentation supporting their professional and community standing and defining their program offerings. This documentation includes, but is not limited to:

- Current copies of all licenses required by your state for the services you offer
- Current copy of accreditation certificate and/or letter from each accrediting body
- General and professional liability insurance certificates

For Facilities:

- With an acute inpatient component, professional/general liability \$5 million/\$5 million minimum coverage
- Without an acute inpatient component, professional liability \$1 million/\$3 million minimum coverage
- Comprehensive general liability \$1 million/\$3 million minimum coverage

For Agencies:

- Professional liability \$1 million/\$3 million minimum coverage
- Comprehensive general liability \$1 million/\$3 million minimum coverage
- Peer Run Organization \$1 million/\$1 million minimum coverage (professional liability); \$1 million/\$1 million minimum coverage (general liability)
- W-9 forms
- Staff roster, including attending physicians, if applicable
- Daily program schedules
- Program description
- Facility Billing Information Form

**Disclosure of Ownership** – form may be a mandated requirement for specific state Medicaid plans. If applicable, must be collected as part of new recruitment or continued participation process.

In the event that your Facility/Agency is not accredited by an entity recognized by Optum, an on-site Audit will be required prior to credentialing and again prior to recredentialing. (Refer to “**Audits of Sites and Records**” in the Quality Management section of this manual for more information).

The Credentialing Plan addresses the requirements for participation, continued participation (maintaining unrestricted license, cooperating with complaints investigation, etc.), and information regarding disciplinary action up to and including termination of participation in the network. The **Credentialing Plan** is available at **Provider Express**, or you may request that a paper copy be mailed to you by contacting your Facility Contract Manager.

**Roster Maintenance** – Credentialed Agencies that are contractually required to provide a roster of their independently licensed Clinicians must maintain the accuracy of that roster, including timely reporting of the addition of new clinicians and removal of clinicians who have left the Agency. Roster management can be completed through “My Practice Info” on *Provider Express* or by submitting the “Agency Roster Update Form” to Provider Relations. The “Agency Roster Update Form” can be found in the “Optum Forms – Administrative” section under “Forms” on *Provider Express*.

## Credentialing and Recredentialing Rights and Responsibilities

As an applicant to the Optum network, or as a network Provider in the process of recredentialing, you are entitled to:

- Be informed of your rights
- Be informed of credentialing or recredentialing status upon request
- Review information submitted to support your credentialing or recredentialing application, excluding personal or professional references, internal Optum documents, or other information that is peer-review protected or restricted by law
- Make corrections to erroneous information identified by Optum in review of credentialing or recredentialing application

In addition to the above rights, you have the responsibility to submit any corrections to your credentialing or recredentialing application in writing within 10 business days of your notification by Optum.

## Board Certified Behavior Analyst and Applied Behavior Analysis Agencies

The Optum network includes two provider types that provide behavioral health treatment, specifically Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Intensive Behavior Therapies (IBT) in the treatment of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Qualified Behavior Analysts/Specialists are eligible to apply for participation in this unique Applied Behavior Analysis Network. Behavior Analyst/Specialist applicants must demonstrate expertise by meeting the minimum requirement of six months supervised experience or training in the treatment of ASD, in addition to active Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) certification from the national Behavior Analyst Certification Board and/or state license in those states that license behavior analysts/specialists.

Applied Behavior Analysis organizations (ABA Agencies), which use a staff model including an individual Behavior Analyst/Specialist or independently licensed behavioral health Clinician acting in a supervisory capacity to paraprofessional staff, are also eligible to apply for participation in this ABA network. ABA Agency applicants must demonstrate expertise by meeting the minimum requirement for their supervisors of six months supervised experience or training in the treatment of ASD and active BCBA certification and/or applicable licensure, as well as the successful completion of an Agency medical record and site review.

## Express Access Network

The Optum Express Access Network includes credentialed Providers who offer routine MH/SUD appointments within 5 business days. Participation in the Express Access Network requires submission of an attestation, which can be found under “Express Access Network” in the “Clinical Resources” section on *Provider Express*.

### Requirements for participation in the Express Access Network

**Member Access to Care.** Express Access Providers shall ensure that Members have timely and reasonable access to MHSA Services and shall at all times be reasonably available to Members as is appropriate. Express Access Providers agree to offer routine appointments within five (5) business days. If you, as an Express Access Provider, are unavailable when Members call, you must respond to the Member within 24 hours. Express Access Providers shall arrange for an answering machine or service that provides the office hours and emergency information and must be capable of receiving messages 24 hours a day.

**Non-Compliance.** Express Access Provider understands and agrees that should Optum receive a substantiated Member complaint, it will be reviewed thoroughly and may result in removal from the Express Access program. Notification of program removal is not assured, but a Provider removed from the program can re-submit a new attestation to be reconsidered for participation.

In addition, Optum may use a "Secret Shopper" program to periodically monitor appointment access and availability.

Either party may terminate or suspend participation with thirty (30) days advance written notice to the other party. Termination or suspension of services does not automatically terminate or suspend your existing UBH/UBHIPA Provider Agreement.

All other terms and conditions as outlined in your existing UBH/UBHIPA Provider Agreement remain in full force and effect.



## Telemental Health (virtual visits)

The Optum network includes credentialed Providers who offer Telemental Health (virtual visit) services. Telemental Health can be delivered in a variety of settings and can include such services as initial evaluations, ongoing treatment, and medication management. All Providers who wish to be considered for this service must attest to meeting our requirements for providing telemental health services. Providers can attest to providing telemental health via the Network Participation Request Form (NPRF) at time of initial credentialing, or if you are already a participating Provider with Optum, you can complete an attestation within the secure Transactions area of *Provider Express*. You must be a registered user of *Provider Express* to complete this online attestation.

Providers with prescriptive authority must document their prescriptive authority requirements individually for each state in which they are licensed to prescribe or dispense prescriptions in accordance with applicable laws, rules and regulations.

Providers offering virtual visits must be licensed in the state where the Member is located at the time of service. In addition, Providers must comply with all licensing laws and telehealth regulations in the jurisdiction(s) where the Provider is licensed and where the Member is receiving treatment, including but not limited to specific telehealth documentation requirements, informed consent to treat via telehealth requirements and other telehealth-specific laws and regulations.

Additional information regarding virtual visits can be found on *Provider Express* under “**Clinical Resources**” on the Optum Telemental Health Platform (virtual visits) page.

## Written Notification of Status Changes

You are required to notify us in writing within 10 calendar days, unless otherwise required by state or federal law, of any changes to:

- The status of the practice, including changes in practice location, billing address, or telephone or fax number
- Changes in Facility, Agency, or Group ownership
- The status of professional licensure and/or certification such as revocation, suspension, restriction, probation, termination, reprimand, inactive status, voluntary relinquishment, debarment from any government program, monitoring or any other adverse action
- The status of professional liability insurance
- Potential legal standing (any malpractice action or notice of licensing board complaint filing)
- The Tax Identification Number (TIN) used for claims filing
- The programs you offer (services you provide must continue to meet our credentialing criteria)

Registered users of **Provider Express**, except Facilities, are strongly encouraged to use the

“My Practice Info” function to update this information. Otherwise, Clinicians and Group Practices as well as Facilities should submit changes in writing, using email, fax or mail, to Provider Relations or your Facility Contract Manager.

In accordance with CMS regulations, Optum is required to contact all Providers quarterly, telephonically and in writing, to validate key Provider information. In addition, we comply with state requirements. It is important that participating Clinicians, Groups, Agencies and Facilities return all correspondence, in a timely manner, related to these update requests. Failure to do so may result in being placed on unavailable status or termination if the materials are not returned.

## Practice Locations and Contract Status

### Individually Contracted Clinician

Your Agreement is between you and UBH. It is an agreement to see all Members eligible to access this Agreement. Your Agreement with UBH is not specific to a single location or Tax Identification Number (TIN). It is important to provide us with all practice locations and the TIN(s) under which you may bill to facilitate proper reimbursement.

### Clinicians Participating Under a Group Agreement

The Agreement is between the Group Practice and UBH. It is an agreement to see all Members eligible to access this Agreement at all locations affiliated with the Group. The Group must provide us with all practice locations and TIN(s) under which you may bill to facilitate proper reimbursement. Additional Group TINs may require a contract amendment.

### Facility/Agency Agreement

The Agreement is between the Facility/Agency and UBH. It is an agreement to see all Members eligible to access this Agreement. The Agreement with UBH is specific to a single TIN, but may include multiple practice locations. It is important to provide us with all practice locations and the TIN under which you may bill to facilitate proper reimbursement.

## Provider Initiated Unavailable Status

Individual Clinicians may request to be made unavailable for new referrals at one or more of your practice locations for up to six months. You are required to notify Provider Relations within 10 calendar days, unless otherwise required by state or federal law, of your unavailable status for new referrals. You may make this notification through secure “Transactions” on **Provider Express**, or by contacting Provider Relations. You will be sent a letter confirming that your request has been processed.

When you have been on unavailable status for five consecutive months, we will send you a letter reminding you that you will be returned to active status within 30 calendar days. You may contact Provider Relations to request an extension of your unavailable status.

Should you decide that you want to return to active status sooner than expected; you may update your status on **Provider Express** or notify Provider Relations.



Some common reasons for requesting unavailable status are: extended illness, vacation or leave plans, and lack of available appointments. Please note that while on unavailable status, your Agreement remains in effect.

Group Practices and Facilities/Agencies that wish to be made unavailable should contact Provider Relations.

## On-Call and After-Hours Coverage

You must provide or arrange for the provision of assistance to Members in emergency situations 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You should inform Members about your hours of operation and how to reach you after-hours in case of an emergency. In addition, any after-hours message or answering service must provide instructions to the Members regarding what to do in an emergency situation. When you are not available, coverage for emergencies should be arranged with another participating Clinician.

## Psychological Assistants and Interns

In accordance with the Agreement, the services you bill must be provided directly by you for all Members. Participating Clinicians may not submit claims in their name for treatment services that were provided by a psychological assistant, nurse practitioner, intern, or another Clinician. For information regarding test administration by a psychometrician please refer to the “*APA Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Billing and Coding Guide*” on *Provider Express*. This guide also addresses other procedures related to testing and report writing. You can also contact the appropriate Care Advocacy Center for assistance with such questions.

## Physician Assistants and Residents in Facility Settings

Attending physicians must provide services directly to all Members. In general, attending physicians may not submit claims in their name for treatment or psycho-diagnostic services that were provided by a resident, physician assistant or intern. We expect network physicians to be assigned as the attending doctor.

## Termination or Restriction of Network Participation

A Provider’s participation with Optum can end for a variety of reasons. Both parties have the right to terminate the Agreement upon written notice, pursuant to the terms of the Agreement.

If you need clarification on how to terminate your Agreement, you may contact Provider Relations or your Facility Contract Manager.

In some cases, you may be eligible to request an appeal of an Optum initiated termination or restriction of your participation. If you are eligible for an appeal, we will notify you of this in writing within 10 calendar days of the adverse action. The written request for appeal must be received by Optum within 30 calendar days of the date on the letter which notified you of any adverse action decision. Failure to request the appeal within this timeframe constitutes a waiver of all rights to appeal and acceptance of the adverse action.

The appeal process includes a formal hearing before at least three Clinicians, appointed by

Optum. The Appeal Committee members are not in direct economic competition with you, and have not acted as accuser, investigator, fact-finder, or initial decision-maker in the matter. You may be represented by a person of your choice at the appeal hearing, including legal counsel.

At the conclusion of the hearing you have five business days to submit further documentation for consideration. The Appeal Committee's decision is by a majority vote of the members. The decision of this Committee is final, and may uphold, overturn, or modify the recommendation of Optum. Correspondence regarding the decision is sent to the Clinician or Facility within 30 calendar days of the hearing date if submission of further written statements is waived or within 30 calendar days after the Clinician's or Facility's submission of any final written statements is due to the Appeals Committee.

## CMS Preclusion List

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has a Preclusion List effective for claims with dates of service on or after January 1, 2019. The Preclusion List applies to both Medicare Advantage (MA) plans as well as Part D plans.

The Preclusion is comprised of a list of prescribers and individuals or entities who:

- Are revoked from Medicare, are under an active reenrollment bar, and CMS has determined that the underlying conduct that led to the revocation is detrimental to the best interests of the Medicare program; or
- Have engaged in behavior for which CMS could have revoked the prescriber, individual or entity to the extent possible if they had been enrolled in Medicare and that the underlying conduct that would have led to the revocation is detrimental to the best interests of the Medicare program.

Providers receive notification from CMS of their placement on the Preclusion List, via letter, and will have the opportunity to appeal with CMS before the preclusion is effective. There is no opportunity to appeal with Optum or UnitedHealthcare.

Through the Preclusion List, which CMS updates monthly, CMS advises MA and Part D plans of the date upon which Providers' claims must be rejected or denied due to precluded status ("claim-rejection date"). As of the claim-rejection date, a precluded Provider's claims will no longer be paid, pharmacy claims will be rejected, and the Provider will be terminated from the Optum network; additionally, the precluded Provider must hold Medicare beneficiaries harmless from financial liability for services or items provided on or after the claim-rejection date.

## Continuation of Services after Termination

**Network Clinicians, Group Practices and Agencies** who withdraw from the Optum network are required to notify us, in writing in accordance with your Agreement, 90 calendar days prior to the effective date of termination, unless otherwise stated in your Agreement or required by state law.

With the exception of terminations due to quality-related issues, suspected fraud, waste or abuse, change in license status or change in ability to participate in federal programs, Clinicians

are obligated to continue to provide treatment for all Members under their care. The timeline for continued treatment is up to 90 calendar days from the effective date of the contract termination, or as outlined in your Agreement or until one of the following conditions is met, whichever is shortest:

- The Member is transitioned to another Optum Clinician
- The current episode of care has been completed
- The Member's Optum benefit is no longer active

Please note that state-specific laws will be followed when they provide for a different post-termination timeframe.

To ensure continuity of care, Optum will notify Members affected by the termination of a Clinician, Group Practice or Agency at least 30 calendar days prior to the effective date of the termination, whenever feasible. Optum will assist these Members in selecting a new Clinician, Group or Agency. You are also expected to clearly inform Members of your impending non-participation status upon the earlier of; the Member's next appointment or prior to the effective termination date, in compliance with your Agreement.

**Network Facilities** that withdraw from the network are required to notify Optum, in writing in accordance with your Agreement, 120 calendar days prior to the date of termination unless otherwise stated in your Agreement or required by state law. The Care Advocate may continue to issue authorizations for treatment during the termination period at the contracted rate, as provided by your Agreement.

To ensure there is no disruption in a Member's care, Optum has established a 120 calendar-day transition period for voluntary terminations. In the event that a Facility's participation is terminated due to quality-related issues, fraud or change in license status requiring immediate transfer of a Member to another Facility, Optum and the Facility will coordinate to ensure a safe and effective transition of care.

In some cases, you and the Care Advocate may determine it is in the best interest of a Member to extend care beyond these timeframes. Optum will arrange to continue authorization for such care at the contracted rate. You may continue to collect all applicable co-payments and deductible amounts. The Facility continues under contract at the existing rates through the completion of the episode of care at any level of care provided by the Facility. Members may not be balance billed.

# Benefit Plans, Authorizations, EAP and Access to Care

## Introduction

Optum establishes guidelines and requirements for Providers. Where required by law, more stringent standards may be applied. However, if applicable law permits the application of less stringent standards, the Optum standards specified herein shall still be applied pursuant to the terms of your Agreement. In accordance with industry standards and Best Practices, Optum may review and modify authorization procedures.

Optum administers managed behavioral health care Benefit Plans for Members nationwide. These plans vary in types of benefits and amounts of coverage. All Members shall be provided care in the same manner, on the same basis, and in accordance with the same standards offered to all other patients of the Provider. Covered services will be available and accessible to all Members.

In some states, Optum provides the behavioral health network and may manage the benefits for membership covered under Medicaid plans. State regulations vary significantly regarding eligibility, benefits and processes related to serving the Medicaid membership. To learn more about Medicaid requirements in your state, see the “State-Specific Provider Information” in the “Our Network” section on *Provider Express* or contact Provider Relations.

## Care Advocacy

Licensed Behavioral Health Care Advocates are responsible for the administration of benefits including authorization of benefits when authorization is required. In addition, Care Advocates and cross-site functional areas focus on activities that impact Members’ stabilization and recovery, and promote active participation in their care. This approach consists of targeted interventions intended to reduce barriers in care, identify Members who may be at risk, and to assist you in the coordination and delivery of care to Members. This approach supports a collaborative relationship between you and the Care Advocate. Care Advocacy activity may include:

- Emphasizing the integration of medical and behavioral care by promoting communication among all treating Providers involved in Members’ care
- Ensuring that Members being discharged from facility-based care have appropriate discharge plans, that they understand them, and that they are able to access and afford the recommended services
- Assisting with appointment access within seven (7) days from the discharge date
- Using the information on the Wellness Assessments to identify Members who may be at-risk
- Collaborating to identify barriers to care/community tenure and evaluation of gaps in prior

discharge plans

- Reaching out proactively to Providers to discuss Members' care when an individual has been identified as being at-risk
- Offering clinical consultations with Optum medical staff
- Reaching out to Members in some circumstances to educate, evaluate risk, and offer assistance
- Supporting Members to actively participate in treatment and follow-up care including identifying support systems
- Referencing web-based and written information for Members and treating Clinicians regarding behavioral health conditions, designed to support informed decision-making

## Care Advocate Availability

Each Care Advocacy Center is open for standard business operations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in their respective time zones. In addition, Care Advocates are available twenty-four hours a day, seven-days a week, including holidays and weekends, to discuss urgent and emergent situations such as inpatient admissions, clinical benefit determinations and decisions, appeals, or any other questions about the care advocacy process.

Call the toll-free number on the Member's ID card to reach the appropriate Care Advocacy staff member.

## Affirmative Incentive Statement

Coverage determinations are based only on the appropriateness of care as defined by applicable **Clinical Policies and Guidelines**, Medicare Coverage Summaries, the Member's Benefit Plan, and applicable laws.

You will find these **Guidelines, Policies and Medicare Coverage Summaries**, along with the **Best Practice Guidelines**, and the **Supplemental and Measurable Guidelines** on *Provider Express* or you can receive a paper copy of Optum documents from Provider Relations.

In addition, Optum has adopted *The ASAM Criteria* for SUD level of care determinations. Links to **information regarding *The ASAM Criteria***, developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under **Optum Clinical Criteria**

Optum expects all treatment provided to Optum Members be outcome-driven, clinically necessary, evidence-based, and provided in the least restrictive environment possible. Optum does not reward its staff, Practitioners or other individuals for issuing denials of coverage or service care. Utilization management decision makers do not receive financial or other incentives that encourage decisions that result in underutilization of services.

## Eligibility Inquiry

The services a Member receives are subject to the terms and conditions of the Benefit Plan with

which he or she participates. It is important that you inquire about what services are covered and the Member's enrollment status before providing services.

We encourage you to use **Provider Express** secure "Transactions" to conduct eligibility inquiries. This service is only available to Optum-contracted Providers who are registered with *Provider Express*. First-time users may register for a One Healthcare ID by using the "**First Time User**" link. You may also inquire about eligibility by calling the phone number on the Member's ID card. Be prepared to provide the following information: the Member's name, address, and identification number, as well as the subscriber's name and date of birth.

In addition to contacting Optum to inquire about eligibility, we encourage you to discuss with the Member the importance of keeping you informed of changes in coverage or eligibility status. Optum will not always have the eligibility information at exactly the same time as the organization that controls the eligibility decisions. In addition, COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985) rights, including election and payment grace periods, result in significant time during which Optum may not know the exact status of a Member's coverage. Therefore, the Member is often your best source for timely information about eligibility and coverage changes.

The Agreement states that if an individual was not eligible for coverage for services rendered, those services shall not be eligible for payment by Optum. Members who are no longer eligible to access this Agreement under a Benefit Plan revert to the status of being a private paying patient, and you may bill them directly in accordance with applicable law.

## Authorization or Notification for Inpatient and Sub-acute Services

In most cases, inpatient admissions will be directed only to participating hospitals and attending psychiatrists. All inpatient and sub-acute level of care admissions require notification or pre-authorization by the network Provider or Facility. Optum requires notification within 24 hours after an admission for a Facility to request a pre-authorization, unless a longer period is required by contract or state-specific requirements. This includes, but is not limited to:

- MH or SUD Inpatient Treatment
- MH or SUD Partial/Day Hospitalization
- MH or SUD Residential Treatment

Network Providers are solely responsible for completing prior notification or obtaining pre-authorization prior to providing inpatient or sub-acute level of care services. This includes timely provision of information necessary for concurrent review of continued stay or ongoing care requests prior to the delivery of services. Should a Provider fail to obtain or otherwise follow the required administrative procedures for notification or pre-authorization, Optum may, in accordance with applicable law, apply a reduction of payment to the network Provider up to 100% of Provider's reimbursement rate. Network Provider payment reductions for failure to complete notification or obtain pre-authorization are solely the network Provider's liability (i.e., the Member cannot be billed for these reductions in payment).

Be prepared to provide information regarding clinical issues related to the Member, such as:



symptom severity, functional status, medical condition, treatment and engagement history, risk factors, recovery environment and discharge plan. You can access our [Guidelines/Policies & Manuals](#) at [Provider Express](#) from our Clinical Resources page. You may also request a paper copy of Optum documents from Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

Links to [information regarding The ASAM Criteria](#), developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under **Optum Clinical Criteria** on *Provider Express*.

Services provided to Members in an inpatient psychiatric or substance use disorder unit are reviewed at the time of the initial request and may be reviewed concurrently by licensed Clinicians. These reviews provide information regarding the patient's status and need for continued care. Optum reserves the right to require a direct conversation with the attending psychiatrist before authorizing benefits for admission or continued stay.

## Emergency Admissions

In the event of an emergency admission for a Member requiring immediate treatment and stabilization due to an MH/SUD condition, Facilities should stabilize and treat the Member as soon as possible. Circumstances that warrant an emergency admission are those in which there is a clear and immediate risk to the safety of the Member or another person as a direct result of mental illness or substance use disorder. After a Member is stabilized in an emergency room, Optum allows 24 hours after an admission for a Facility to request a preauthorization, unless a longer period is required by contract or state-specific requirements.

## Routine and Non-Routine Outpatient Services

### Authorization or Notification for Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Benefits

In accordance with the Agreement and many Benefit Plans, most routine outpatient behavioral health services do not require an initial pre-authorization or notification.

Some non-routine outpatient services require ongoing authorization prior to providing services. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Outpatient Electro-Convulsive Treatment
- Extended outpatient treatment visits 53 minutes or more in duration with or without medication management (90837/+90838 or successor codes)
- Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) for the treatment of Autism
- Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) (for MDs only)
- Psychological Testing

Authorization for some non-routine services may be requested online:

- ABA services: *Provider Express* > **Autism Corner: Autism/ABA Information**
  - ABA Assessment Portal (electronic authorization request submissions)
  - ABA Treatment Request Documents
- Psychological/Neuropsychological Testing: *Provider Express* > Clinical Resources > Forms > Psychological Testing Request Forms:
  - **Optum Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Request Form** (electronic submission for most memberships)
  - Paper forms for specific memberships, available for download, are to be faxed in
- TMS services (electronic submission) *Provider Express* > Clinical Resources > Forms > Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) Form

For authorization of other non-routine outpatient services, call the number on the Member's ID Card. For more information refer to the "**Psychological Testing**" section below.

For an unforeseen crisis for which there may be an unanticipated need for an extended office visit, you need to use the CPT code 90839 (psychotherapy for crisis services) to bill for the first 60 minutes of psychotherapy. Prior authorization is not required for crisis sessions. See the Outpatient Psychotherapy Sessions Lasting 60 Minutes or Longer under **Behavioral Clinical Policies** for more information.

Authorizations for non-routine outpatient services are specific to the requesting Clinician. The Clinician will receive a copy of this authorization. When a written authorization lists a range of CPT and/or HCPCS codes, payment for any specific code is subject to ongoing medical necessity review.

When a Member calls seeking referrals, Optum staff will collect demographic information, request coordination of benefits information, explain the services available under the Member's Benefit Plan, and obtain a brief description of the presenting problem(s). Referrals are based on the clinical, cultural, and geographic needs of the Member.

The Member website, [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com), is another avenue for Members to locate in-network referral options for a full range of in-person and virtual clinical services. (Please note that the anonymous guest access code for you is "Clinician.")

The Member is responsible for contacting the Clinician to schedule an appointment. The Member is advised of the number of sessions available under the Benefit Plan and any deductible, co-payment, and/or co-insurance amount for which he or she will be financially responsible. The Member will be given multiple Clinician names and numbers from which to choose to schedule an appointment.

This initial session is also the time to initiate the ALERT process with the administration of the first Wellness Assessment. For greater detail about ALERT, please see "**Clinical Outcomes**"



**Model: ALERT**” and “**Wellness Assessments**” in this section of the manual. There is also an **ALERT page** on **Provider Express** that provides additional information.

Optum expects all treatment provided to Optum Members be outcome-driven, clinically necessary, evidence-based, and provided in the least restrictive environment possible.

### **Clinical Outcomes Model: ALERT**

Optum is committed to working with our network to achieve optimal therapeutic outcomes for the individuals we mutually serve. This approach focuses on assisting the network to make Consumer-directed, outcome-based, cost-effective and clinically necessary treatment decisions. With that goal in mind, we have developed the ALERT model.

ALERT stands for Algorithms for Effective Reporting and Treatment. The system uses Member responses to a validated tool, the one-page Wellness Assessment (WA), along with claims data. Both WA and claims information are analyzed through a set of algorithms to measure a Member’s behavioral health status and identify potential risks. In addition, the algorithms identify cases that may benefit from a review. Such reviews may include consideration of Clinical Criteria found at **Guidelines/Policies & Manuals** on *Provider Express*. Links to **ASAM Clinical Criteria Information**, developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under **Optum Clinical Criteria**.

The ALERT algorithms offer opportunities for earlier intervention on potential treatment complications. Care Advocacy will use a combination of letters and/or calls to inform you about any targeted risk or the requirement to complete a review. This allows us to work together more efficiently focusing on those Members with the greatest potential for benefit from such collaboration.

The WA is completed at multiple points rather than at a single point in treatment. This offers more immediate feedback on changes in health status and functioning which may inform further treatment planning, including level of care changes or coordination with medical professionals.

Psychiatrists and prescribing nurses are strongly encouraged to submit Wellness Assessments in order to participate in the Achievements in Clinical Excellence (ACE) Clinicians outcomes recognition program. Please note that claims-based ALERT algorithms do apply to prescribing Clinicians and may require Care Advocacy reviews, as noted above.

### **Wellness Assessments (WA)**

The WA includes a range of questions to measure symptom severity and overall well-being, and screens for functional impairment, substance use disorder and medical co-morbidity risks.

Administration of the WA:

- Non-prescribers are required to offer the one-page WA to each new Optum Member, or to the parent/guardian of a child or adolescent patient at the initial appointment
- Return each completed WA to Optum as instructed on the form

- A second WA is administered between session three and five
- Optum reviews the WA and alerts you if a targeted risk is identified. You will either be notified by letter, or contacted by a Care Advocate to discuss the case and/or assist in coordinating additional services
- A follow-up WA will also be sent by Optum directly to the Member approximately four months after the initial evaluation

The information contained in the Wellness Assessment (WA) is confidential and will not be shared with the Member’s employer, medical Benefit Plan or medical Clinicians without the Member’s consent. A Member may also decline to participate in ALERT. If this occurs, submit a WA to Optum by completing the Clinician and Member demographic sections and filling in the “MRef” (Member refusal) bubble located in the top demographic section of the WA. In the case of Members who are minors (except for those who are emancipated or able to consent to their own treatment under the laws of your state), the parent or guardian should be asked to complete the form.

The two versions of the Wellness Assessment, Adult and Youth, are also available in Spanish. WA forms can be obtained from [Provider Express](#). You may go to *Provider Express* for detailed information and to access Wellness Assessments. See [ALERT](#) > ALERT Toolbox > Wellness Assessment Forms.

## Practice Management

Practice Management, a clinical team, in coordination with other Optum Departments, works with network and out-of-network Providers/Groups/Facilities on the following key elements:

- Managing outliers, through the identification of practice and/or billing patterns that appear to fall outside typical patterns, including the measurement of improvement over time
- Identifying and resolving potential practice patterns that may constitute Fraud, Waste and/or Abuse (see “**Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse**” section in this manual)
- Evaluating compliance with Care Advocacy processes and contractual obligations

Practice Management employs intervention strategies to address potential practice and/or billing patterns of concern. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, a direct conversation with the Provider, education, peer-to-peer reviews, and site and/or treatment record audits.

Potential results of a Practice Management intervention may include ongoing monitoring, Performance Improvement Plans, referrals to Peer Review, non-coverage (adverse) benefit determinations, referral to Credentialing Committee for potential network termination and referral to Program and Network Integrity (PNI).

For additional information, please see the sections on “**Anti-Fraud, Waste, and Abuse**” and the “**Treatment Record Documentation Requirements**” in this manual.

## WorkLife

A Member who is actively engaged in an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or in Behavioral Health treatment may also possess WorkLife (WL) benefits. In many cases, the WorkLife benefit can complement needs while in treatment, by providing educational materials or verified community resources. Support groups, financial assistance programs, and referral to community social service agencies are only some examples of what can be provided.

Please direct the Member or family member to call their EAP/WL toll-free number. Members will be directed to a WorkLife Specialist who will assess and consult with the caller about how to best meet his or her needs.

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Benefit and Authorization

The EAP benefit is designed to provide assessment and referral, as well as a brief counseling intervention for Members and their families. The typical EAP benefit offers a limited number of sessions with an MH/SUD Clinician and is not designed to provide a course of psychotherapeutic treatment. Not all Optum Members have an available EAP benefit, but those who do can generally see any contracted Optum Clinician for EAP services. There are limitations around the use of EAP benefits with psychiatrists.

Authorizations for EAP services are required and must be initiated by Members or network Clinicians prior to the first appointment. The EAP Authorization letter is sent to the Member and allows the Member to see any Optum network non-psychiatrist Provider for the number of sessions authorized. When a Member presents for EAP services, you should inquire whether any of the authorized visits have already been used. The Member is instructed to bring a copy of the letter to the Provider. This letter includes the authorization number which should be included on the claim. You may also obtain the authorization number on *Provider Express* using the “Authorization Inquiry” function under the secure “Transactions” section on the Home page. You must be a registered user of *Provider Express* to use the secure features.

Optum makes every effort to refer Members with EAP benefits to Clinicians with an EAP expertise. However, when a Clinician with an EAP specialty is not available in the area, Optum will refer to an appropriate network Clinician based on the Member’s presenting needs. As a Clinician in the Optum network, you are expected to accept Members who present with an EAP benefit in compliance with your Agreement.

In an EAP benefit, all pre-authorized sessions are paid by Optum at 100 percent of the Optum contracted rate of reimbursement. The Member has no financial responsibility (i.e., the Member does not have a deductible, co-payment, or co-insurance amount).

**EAP benefits require pre-authorization.** To obtain an EAP authorization, either call the number on the Member’s ID card or obtain the number from the Member. Most Members have a dedicated EAP or MH/SUD number. Members with the EAP benefit are able to request EAP authorization through [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) or by phone. (Please note that the anonymous guest access code is “Clinician”)

You must obtain a new EAP authorization when a new benefit year begins.

## EAP Transition to MH/SUD Benefits

Some Members will have a managed behavioral health care benefit through Optum in addition to their EAP benefit.

In most cases, once a Member has exhausted their EAP benefit, you may continue to see the Member under their behavioral health care benefit, when indicated. Note that once a Member's benefits have transitioned from EAP to MH/SUD coverage, his or her financial responsibility will vary according to the Member's Benefit Plan. The Member may be responsible for a deductible, co-payment and/or co-insurance amount.

## EAP and Medication Management

Medication management services are rarely covered under EAP services and those that do require prior authorization or notification.

## EAP and ALERT

If the Member you are seeing has a combined EAP and MH/SUD benefit through Optum, administer the Wellness Assessment (WA) at the initial EAP session. If the Member eventually transitions to MH/SUD benefits, it is not necessary to have them complete another initial WA at the time of the transition. However, you should administer the second WA between sessions three and five. For greater detail about ALERT, please see "**Clinical Outcomes Model: ALERT**" and "**Wellness Assessments**" in this section of the manual.

## Standard Behavioral Care

Standard Behavioral Care provides MH/SUD care advocacy services for UnitedHealthcare Members enrolled in designated PPO benefit plans. You are contracted with Optum to provide MH/SUD services to Members with these benefits.

Notification through Optum is required for inpatient, residential and partial hospitalization services. Outpatient services, including intensive outpatient programs and psychological testing, do not require notification.

Members covered under these plans can receive referrals to network Clinicians and Facilities from Standard Behavioral Care staff. MH/SUD services for these Members are reimbursed at Optum contracted rates. In order to receive payment at the network benefit level, claims for these outpatient MH/SUD services should be submitted to the Optum Claims office listed on the Member's ID card.

## MH/SUD Medication Management Services

Psychiatrists and prescribing APRNs and PAs are not required to obtain prior authorization for the initial consult, routine medication management sessions and other routine outpatient services, such as the 90791, 90792, 90832, 90834 and evaluation and management codes as applicable.

## Pharmaceutical Management Services

Pharmacy benefits are not managed by the behavioral health plan. For information about formularies, pharmacy benefits and cost management programs, please contact the medical or pharmacy number on the Member's ID card.

## Lab Services

Patients with substance use disorders may require laboratory testing services in addition to the inpatient and/or outpatient psychotherapy and medical interventions included in their recovery plan. Urine drug testing services for a patient in an active Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment program may be needed to monitor levels of, and/or detect the presence of, prescribed therapeutic drugs, prescription drugs of abuse, and/or illicit drugs to support diagnosis and to assess adherence with the recovery plan.

Participating Providers should refer to your Provider Agreement which reflects contracted services and associated Fee Schedule for acceptable billing codes. Unless otherwise specified in your Agreement, lab charges are included in your contracted rates for services and will not be reimbursed separately. Claim submissions by participating Providers which are not in compliance with your Agreement will be denied.

Please identify and refer Members to in-network labs based upon the particular Member's benefit plan. When referring for lab services, Providers are expected to refer to an in-network lab based on a Member's benefits.

## Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Services

Coverage for ABA services requires prior authorization by an Optum Autism Care Advocate. Please be aware that not all Benefit Plans provide coverage for ABA services and prior to beginning care, network Qualified Behavior Analysts/Specialists and ABA Agencies must contact Optum to verify eligibility, review treatment plans, and obtain authorization.

## Complex Case Management

Optum offers a Complex Case Management (CCM) program for Members who may benefit from more intensive coordination of services. This program is intended to help Members with complex behavioral health conditions connect with needed services and resources.

Care Coordinators work intensely with individuals in the development of a comprehensive plan of care. For more information, including criteria for inclusion in the program and referring a Member, visit the [Complex Case Management Program](#) page on *Provider Express*.

## Retrospective Review Process

In extenuating circumstances, and at our sole discretion, Optum reserves the right to retrospectively certify coverage of admissions for emergency services provided. Any certification is dependent upon the specific circumstances of each individual case. Optum reserves the right to deny coverage for all or part of an admission. All requests for retrospective reviews must be

received by Optum within 180 calendar days of the date the services were provided to the Member, unless applicable law mandates otherwise. A retrospective review occurs only on those rare occasions when an initial request for authorization or notification, when required, is made after services have already been delivered but no claim has been filed.

Retrospective review requests must be submitted within 180 calendar days following the date(s) of service unless otherwise mandated by applicable law. Requests for retrospective review must include information regarding the reason or circumstances preventing required prior authorization or notification and will be processed at the sole discretion of Optum.

For all retrospective reviews, Optum will issue a determination within 30 calendar days of receipt of the request, unless otherwise required by applicable law. Any retrospective review requests received outside the established time frame will not be processed by Optum.

### **The Important Message (IM) from Medicare**

If a Facility is a hospital, the Facility must deliver valid, written notice of a Medicare beneficiary's rights as a hospital inpatient, including discharge appeal rights, using the standardized form CMS-R-193 or CMS-10065.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Facility hospitals are required to use only form CMS-10065 beginning April 1, 2020.

### **Medicare Outpatient Observation Notice (MOON)**

If a Facility is a hospital, the Facility must deliver the Medicare Outpatient Observation Notice (MOON) to any Medicare beneficiary, including a Medicare Advantage Plan Enrollee, who receives observation services as an outpatient for more than twenty-four (24) hours.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Facility hospitals may use the current MOON form CMS-10611, but must use only the new MOON form CMS-10611 (expiration date 12/31/2022) beginning April 1, 2020.

### **Pilot Projects Affecting Authorization Requirements**

We may occasionally launch pilot projects that alter the pre-authorization requirements described above. We will advise you of any initiatives affecting authorization requirements in a separate communication. Follow the expected pre-authorization requirements unless you have received notification from us of your inclusion in a pilot project.

### **Psychological Testing**

Psychological testing must be pre-authorized separately for both outpatient and inpatient services.

Psychological testing is considered after a standard evaluation (including clinical interview, direct observation and collateral input, as indicated) has been completed and one of the following



circumstances exists:

- There are significant diagnostic questions remaining that can only be clarified through testing
- There are questions about the appropriate treatment course for a patient, or a patient has not responded to standard treatment with no clear explanation, and testing would have a timely effect on the treatment plan
- There is reason to suspect, based on the initial assessment, the presence of cognitive, intellectual and/or neurological deficits or impairment that may affect functioning or interfere with the patient's ability to participate in or benefit from treatment, and testing will verify the presence or absence of such deficits or dysfunction

In some cases where a Member in need of testing has already received sufficient evaluation to conclude testing is necessary, it is permissible to conduct the initial interview intake on the same day of service as testing.

Generally, psychological testing solely for purposes of education or school evaluations, learning disorders, legal and/or administrative requirements is not covered. Also not covered are tests performed routinely as part of an assessment. We recommend that you contact Optum pre-service to determine authorization requirements and procedures.

## Access to Outpatient MH/SUD and EAP Care

As part of our Quality Management Program, and to ensure that all Members have access to appropriate treatment as needed, we develop, maintain, and monitor a network with adequate numbers and types of Clinicians and outpatient programs. We require that the network adhere to specific access standards, which are outlined as follows:

- Respond within 24 hours to a Member request for routine outpatient care
- An initial MH/SUD appointment must be offered within ten (10) business days of the request
- An initial EAP appointment must be offered within three (3) business days
- Urgent appointments must be offered within required timeframes (MH/SUD – 48 hours, EAP – 24 hours)
- Non-life-threatening emergencies must be offered within six (6) hours
- An immediate appointment must be offered for any life-threatening emergencies
- An MH/SUD outpatient appointment must be offered within seven (7) days of an acute inpatient discharge

If more stringent time frames are required by applicable law, we require that the network adhere to the more stringent time frames.

Optum expects that Members will generally have no more than a 15 minute wait time for their

appointment in your office. In addition, any rescheduling of an appointment must occur in a manner that is appropriate for the Member's health care needs and ensures continuity of care consistent with good professional practice. In cases where a Member is being discharged from acute inpatient care, Optum expects a follow-up outpatient appointment to occur within seven (7) days from the discharge date. This appointment should be included in the Facility discharge plan. If you are unable to take a referral, immediately direct the Member to the number on his or her ID card so that he or she can obtain a new referral.

## Continuation of Services after Termination

**Network Clinicians, Group Practices and Agencies** who withdraw from the Optum network are required to notify us, in writing in accordance with your Agreement, 90 calendar days prior to the effective date of termination, unless otherwise stated in your Agreement or required by applicable law. With the exception of terminations due to quality-related issues, suspected fraud, waste or abuse, change in license status or change in ability to participate in federal programs, Clinicians are obligated to continue to provide treatment for all Members under their care. The timeline for continued treatment is up to 90 calendar days from the effective date of the contract termination, or as outlined in your Agreement or until one of the following conditions is met, whichever is shortest:

- The Member is transitioned to another Optum network Clinician
- The current episode of care has been completed
- The Member's Optum benefit is no longer active

Please note that state-specific laws will be followed when they provide for a different post-termination time frame.

To ensure continuity of care, Optum will notify Members affected by the termination of a Clinician, Group Practice or Agency at least 30 calendar days prior to the effective date of the termination whenever feasible. Optum will assist these Members in selecting a new Clinician, Group or Agency. You are also expected to clearly inform Members of your impending non-participation status at the earliest appropriate opportunity of the: Member's next appointment or prior to the effective termination date, in compliance with your Agreement.

**Network facilities** that withdraw from the Optum network are required to notify Optum, in writing, 120 calendar days prior to the effective date of the termination, unless otherwise stated in your Agreement or required by applicable law. The Care Advocate may continue to issue authorizations for treatment during the termination period at the Optum contracted rate as provided by your Agreement.

To ensure there is no disruption in a Member's care, Optum has established a 120-calendar day transition period for voluntary terminations. In the event that a Facility's participation is terminated due to quality-related issues, fraud or change in license status requiring immediate transfer of a Member to another Facility, Optum and the Facility will coordinate to ensure a safe and effective transition of care.

In some cases, you and the Care Advocate may determine it is in the best interest of the



Member to extend care beyond these time frames. Optum will arrange to continue authorization for such care at the Optum contracted rate. You may continue to collect all applicable co-payments and deductible amounts. The Facility continues under contract at the existing rates through the completion of the episode of care at any level of care provided by the Facility. Members may not be balance billed.

# Treatment Philosophy

## Introduction

We are committed to creating and maintaining relationships with network Providers. We believe that optimal treatment is attained when delivered in the setting that is both the least restrictive and the one with the greatest potential for a favorable outcome. Based on more than 30 years of experience, we know it is the efforts of our clinical network that give Members the best opportunity to achieve a level of functioning that supports their quest to live healthier lives. As a result, our priority is creating relationships with network Providers that ensure appropriate, time-effective clinical treatment. Through this collaboration, we look to foster personally-defined outcomes for Members receiving behavioral health services.

In accordance with your Agreement, you are required to provide services in a manner that is consistent with professional and ethical standards as set forth by national certification and state licensing boards, and applicable law and/or regulation regardless of a Member's Benefit Plan or terms of coverage. Resources are available to you which outline the expectations for Optum network treatment quality.

This manual addresses assessment, treatment and discharge planning, coordination of care, and Member rights and responsibilities (see also the “**Treatment Record Documentation Requirements**” section of this manual).

Additional resources in these areas can be found at [Provider Express](#): Home page > Clinical Resources > Guidelines/Policies & Manuals, including:

- Clinical Criteria
- Behavioral Clinical Policies
- Best Practice Guidelines
- State/Contract Specific Criteria
- Medicare Coverage Summaries
- Reimbursement Policies

Optum participates with health plans in measuring performance on NCQA HEDIS<sup>®</sup> measures and incorporates these standards into our requirements and guidelines. [Provider Express](#), which serves as a resource for policy updates of interest to the network, is available to you 24/7.

## Clinical Criteria

Our [Clinical Criteria](#) are intended to promote optimal clinical outcomes and consistency in the authorization of benefits by Care Advocacy staff and Peer Reviewers. They are available at

**Provider Express** or you may request a paper copy of Optum documents by contacting Provider Relations at **1-877-614-0484**.

Optum is adopting the Level of Care Utilization System (LOCUS), the Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (CASII) and the Early Childhood Service Intensity Instrument (ECSII), for guidance on clinical criteria decisions for the treatment of behavioral health conditions:

- LOCUS – for adults
- CASII – for children and adolescents ages 6-18
- ECSII – for children ages 0-5

**LOCUS/CASII/ECSII** were created and updated based on the changing landscape or evidence informed care, market and regulatory considerations, and feedback from stakeholders across the care system. They meet three main concepts that need to be considered and balanced in effectively managing behavioral health services: (1) Use of wrap-around services; (2) tailored to specific age of the Member; and, (3) adopts a system of care approach.

**LOCUS/CASII/ECSII** became effective in all states on January 31, 2020 unless superseding state, federal, contractual or customer requirements apply. Some states have earlier effective dates and more specific information can be found on *Provider Express*.

**The ASAM Criteria** are clinical guidelines designed by the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) to improve assessment and outcomes driven treatment and recovery services. It is also used to match patients to appropriate types and levels of care. Your Agreement sets forth the levels of care for which you are contracted and may not cover all ASAM-defined levels of care. Links to **information regarding The ASAM Criteria**, developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under **Guidelines/Policies & Manuals** on *Provider Express* or visit [ASAM.org](http://ASAM.org).

## Best Practice Guidelines

We have adopted **Best Practice Guidelines** from external nationally recognized organizations. The guidelines provide information about evidence-based treatment of common behavioral health conditions. In addition, we have created **Supplemental and Measurable Guidelines**. Two aspects of each Supplemental and Measurable Guideline are measured annually, and the data is then used to identify opportunities for improvement. Links to these guidelines may be found at **Provider Express**.

## Behavioral Clinical Policies

Our **Behavioral Clinical Policies** provide clinical guidance regarding the safety and/or efficacy of a device, service or technology.

## Medicare Coverage Summaries

Our **Medicare Coverage Summaries** are intended to promote optimal clinical outcomes and

consistency in the authorization of Medicare benefits by Care Advocacy staff and Peer Reviewers. Medicare Coverage Summaries offer the guidance found in CMS' National Coverage Determinations and Local Coverage Determinations. They are available at [Provider Express](#) or you may request a paper copy by contacting the Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

## The Clinical Technology Assessment Committee (CTAC)

The CTAC meets quarterly to review current medical and scientific literature. An Optum Medical Director chairs this multidisciplinary committee. This committee consults on an as-needed basis with professionals who are actively working with the technology under review and/or clinical issue(s) that may be impacted by the technology under review. This Committee examines the use of new technologies and new applications of existing technologies for the assessment and treatment of behavioral health conditions. The Committee also reviews existing technologies when questions arise as to their application.

The Committee recommends as “proven” those treatments for which there is published scientific evidence of efficacy and safety. This evidence includes controlled studies of adequate sample size, published in established peer-reviewed journals, as well as guidance from state and federal agencies.

If you have a technology that you would like to have reviewed by this committee, please contact the Care Advocacy Center with which you most often work. Make your request to the Medical Director and he or she will notify the Committee Chair of your interest.

## Assisting with Recovery

We support your efforts to assist Members with their recovery by providing information about their condition, its treatment, and self-care resources. Members have the right to information that will inform decision-making, promote participation in recovery, enhance self-management, including use of personally-defined outcomes and support of broader recovery goals.

We encourage you to discuss all treatment options and the associated risks and benefits and solicit Members' input about their treatment preferences, regardless of whether the treatment is covered under the Member's Benefit Plan. Nothing in this manual is intended to interfere with your relationship with Members as patients.

[Provider Express](#) includes a [Recovery and Resiliency Toolkit](#) that contains resources for Providers, and the individuals and families you serve.

## Assessment

A thorough clinical assessment is essential to treatment planning. You are required to document your assessment, including negative findings as applicable, in the Member's clinical record. A clinical assessment must include:

- A biopsychosocial history, including previous medical and behavioral health conditions, interventions, outcomes, and lists of current and previous medical and behavioral health providers

- The mental status exam, including an evaluation of suicidal or homicidal risk
- A substance use screening should occur for Members over the age of 11 years, noting any substances abused and treatment interventions
- Other areas to be covered in the assessment are:
  - Developmental history
  - Education
  - Legal issues
  - Social support

Your assessment should also consider:

- An evaluation of why the Member is seeking treatment at this level of care at this time
- Services you can offer to meet the Member’s immediate needs and preferences
- Alternatives that exist in the service system to meet those needs
- The Member’s broader recovery, resiliency and well-being goals
- Unique cultural and spiritual needs of the Member

For routine outpatient services, a Wellness Assessment is to be part of every new treatment episode. This screening tool helps to identify symptoms, conditions and co-morbidities that may be important to address in a comprehensive treatment plan. (See the “**Benefit Plans, Authorization, EAP, and Access to Care**” section of this manual).

## Treatment, Recovery & Resiliency and Discharge Planning

The treatment plan stems from the Member’s presenting condition, and is used to document realistic and measurable treatment goals as well as the evidence-based treatments that will be used to achieve the goals of treatment. Effective treatment planning should also take into account significant variables such as age and level of development, the history of treatment, whether the proposed services are covered in the Member’s Benefit Plan and are available in the community, and whether community resources such as support groups, Consumer-run services, and preventive health programs can augment treatment.

The Provider should also take into account the Member’s preferences as might be directly expressed or documented in an advance directive or crisis plan. For some Members, treatment is part of a broader recovery & resiliency effort, so the recovery & resiliency goals which may be documented in a recovery plan should also be considered.

A change in the Member’s condition should prompt a reassessment of the treatment plan and selection of level of care. When his or her condition has improved, the reassessment should determine whether a less restrictive level of care may be adequate to treat the condition, or whether he or she no longer requires treatment. When a Member’s condition has not improved

or it has worsened, the reassessment should determine whether the diagnosis is accurate, the treatment plan should be modified, or the condition should be treated in another level of care.

Effective discharge planning enables the Member's safe and timely transition from one level of care to another, and documents the services he or she will receive after discharge. Discharge planning begins at the onset of treatment when the Provider anticipates the discharge date and forms an initial impression of the Member's post-discharge needs. The initial discharge plan may evolve in response to changes in the Member's condition and his or her preferences. The final discharge plan should document the anticipated discharge date, the proposed post-discharge services, and the plan to coordinate discharge with the Provider at the next level of care, when indicated. The discharge plan should also address ways to reduce the risk of relapse, such as by confirming that the Member understands and agrees with the discharge plan. The risk of relapse can also be mitigated by arranging a timely first post-discharge appointment.

As the Member transitions from one level of care to another, Optum expects that the first appointment at the next level of care will be scheduled commensurate with the Member's needs. The first post-discharge appointment following inpatient care should occur no later than seven (7) days from the date of discharge. This timeframe is in accordance with the HEDIS® standard for follow-up treatment after discharge from inpatient care. Optum assesses the compliance of its Network facilities in meeting this standard on an annual basis.

At Optum, Care Advocates monitor discharge planning, and are available to assist with identifying and facilitating access to available treatment services and community resources.

Optum expects that the Provider will collaborate with the Member during treatment, recovery and discharge planning whenever possible.

## Communication with Primary Physicians and Other Health Care Professionals

When a Member is receiving services by more than one professional, it is critical that the service Providers collaborate and coordinate effectively in order to ensure that care is comprehensive, safe and effective. Optum expects its Providers to make a "good faith" effort at coordinating care with other behavioral health Clinicians or Facilities and medical care professionals who are treating the Member.

To coordinate and manage care between behavioral health and medical professionals, Optum expects that you will coordinate the Member's consent to exchange appropriate treatment information with medical care professionals (e.g., primary physicians, medical specialists) and/or other behavioral health Clinicians (e.g., psychiatrists, therapists).

Coordination and communication should take place:

- At the time of intake
- During treatment
- At the time of discharge or termination of care
- At the point of transition between levels of care, and

- At any other point in treatment that may be appropriate

Optum believes that coordination of services may improve the quality of care to Members in a number of ways:

- Allows behavioral health and medical Providers to create a comprehensive care plan
- Allows a primary care physician to know that his or her patient followed through on a behavioral health referral
- Minimizes potential adverse medication interactions for Members who are being treated with psychotropic and non-psychotropic medication
- Allows for better management of treatment and follow-up for Members with coexisting behavioral and medical disorders
- Promotes a safe and effective transition from one level of care to another
- Reduces the risk of relapse

The following guidelines are intended to facilitate effective communication among all behavioral health and medical professionals as appropriate to a Member's care:

- During the diagnostic assessment session, request the Member's written consent to exchange information with all appropriate behavioral health and medical professionals who are providing treatment
- After the initial assessment, provide other behavioral health and medical professionals with the following information within two weeks:
  - Summary of Member's evaluation
  - Diagnosis
  - Treatment plan summary (including any medications prescribed)
  - Primary Clinician treating the Member
- Update other behavioral health and medical professionals when there is a change in the Member's condition or medication(s)
- Update other behavioral health and medical professionals when serious medical conditions warrant closer coordination
- At the completion of treatment, send a copy of the discharge summary to the other behavioral health and medical professionals
- Attempt to obtain all relevant clinical information that behavioral health and medical professionals may have pertaining to the Member's mental health or substance use conditions

It is understood that some Members may refuse to consent to release information to other behavioral health and medical professionals. Optum encourages its Providers to discuss the

benefits of sharing information and the potential risks of not sharing information, and to document the discussion in the Member's clinical record.

## Member Rights and Responsibilities

You will find a copy of our Member Rights and Responsibilities at the end of this manual. You may request a paper copy by contacting the Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484** (see "**Resource Guide**" section in this manual). These rights and responsibilities are in keeping with industry standards. All Members benefit from reviewing these standards in the treatment setting. We request that you display the Rights and Responsibilities in your waiting room, or have some other means of documenting that these standards have been communicated to Optum Members.

## Services of Interpreters

It is typically your responsibility to arrange for the services of interpreters, when indicated, for Members under your care. Financial responsibility for such services vary depending on the Benefit Plan and/or governing law; accordingly, these costs may be assigned to you, to Optum, to the Member or may be shared between any or among all of these parties. You may contact a Care Advocate by calling the number on the Member's ID card to determine who is financially responsible.



# Treatment Record Documentation Requirements

## Introduction

In accordance with your Agreement, you are required to maintain high quality medical, financial and administrative records (including appointment or scheduling books) related to the behavioral health services you provide. These records must be maintained in a manner consistent with the standards of the community, and conform to all applicable laws and regulations including, but not limited to, state licensing, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and/or national certification board standards.

In order to perform required utilization management, practice management, payment and quality improvement activities, we may request access to such records, including, but not limited to, claims records and treatment record documentation. You are permitted under HIPAA Treatment, Payment or Healthcare Operations to provide requested records as contractually required. In accordance with HIPAA and the definition of Treatment, Payment or Healthcare Operations, you must provide such records upon request. Federal, state and local government or accrediting agencies may also request such information as necessary to comply with accreditation standards, laws or regulations applicable to Optum and its Payors, Customers, Clinicians, and Facilities.

We may review your records during a scheduled On-Site Audit or may ask you to submit copies of the records to Optum for review. An On-Site Audit and/or Treatment Record Review may occur for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- Reviews of facilities and agencies without national accreditation such as The Joint Commission, CARF or other agencies approved by Optum
- Audits of services and programs including, but not limited to, Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), Supervisory Protocol, services delivered through telehealth platforms, and Peer Support Services
- Audits of high-volume Providers
- Routine audits
- Audits related to claims, coding or billing issues
- Audits concerning quality of care issues
- Audits concerning potential practice or billing patterns

Routine, standard monitoring, and quality of care audits may focus on the physical environment (including safety issues), policies and procedures, and/or thoroughness and quality of documentation within treatment records and/or accuracy of billing and coding. We have established a passing performance goal of 85% for both the Treatment Record Review and On-

Site Audit. On-Site Audit or Treatment Record Review scores under 85% will require a written Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Scores under 80% require submission of a written CAP and a re-audit within six months following implementation of the CAP. However, in some cases, a requesting committee may require a CAP and/or re-audit regardless of the scores on the audit tools.

Billing records should reflect all applicable fields as required for completion of the Form 1500 claim form or UB-04 claim form.

## Treatment Record – Content Standards

When billing services for more than one family member, separate treatment records must be maintained.

Optum requires that all non-electronic treatment records are written legibly in blue or black ink. All treatment records must include the following:

- The Member's name or identification number on each page of the record
- The Member's address; employer or school; home and work telephone numbers, including emergency contacts; marital or legal status; appropriate consent forms; and guardianship information
- The date of service, either start and stop time or total time in session (for time based services), the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT)/Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS)/Revenue (REV) code billed, notation of session attendees, the rendering Clinician's name, professional degree, license, and relevant identification number as applicable
- Treatment record entries should be made on the date services are rendered and include the date of service; if an entry is made more than 24 hours after the service was rendered, the entry should include the date of service, date of the entry, and a notation that this is a late entry
- Clear and uniform modifications; any error is to be lined through so that it can still be read, then dated and initialed by the person making the change
- Clear documentation of medication allergies, adverse reactions and relevant medical conditions; if the Member has no relevant medical history, this should be prominently noted
- Clear and uniform medication tracking that provides a comprehensive summary of all medications taken by the patient from the onset of care through discharge includes the following (applicable for all prescribers):
  - Standing, P.R.N. and STAT orders for all prescription and over-the-counter medications
  - The date medications are prescribed along with the dosage and frequency
  - Informed Member consent for medication, including the Member's understanding of the potential benefits, risks, side effects, and alternatives to the medications

- Changes or rationale for lack of changes in medication and/or dosage should be clearly documented along with the clinical rationale for the changes
- Discharge summaries should specify all medications and dosages at the time of discharge
- A clear summary of presenting problems, the results of mental status exam(s), relevant psychological and social conditions affecting the Member's medical and psychiatric status, and the source of such information
- Prominent documentation (assessment and reassessment) of special status situations, when present, including, but not limited to, imminent risk of harm, suicidal or homicidal ideation, self-injurious behaviors, or elopement potential (for all overnight levels of care). It is also important to document the absence of such conditions
- A medical and psychiatric history including previous treatment dates, Clinician or Facility identification, therapeutic interventions and responses, sources of clinical data, and relevant family information
- The behavioral health history includes an assessment of any history of abuse the Member has experienced
- For adolescents, the assessment documents a sexual behavior history
- For children and adolescents, past medical and psychiatric history should include prenatal and perinatal events, along with a complete developmental history (physical, psychological, social, intellectual, and academic)
- For Members 12 years of age and older, documentation includes past and present use of nicotine or alcohol, as well as illicit drugs, prescribed or over-the-counter medications
- Documentation of a DSM diagnosis consistent with the presenting problem(s), history, mental status examination, and other assessment data
- Continue to list medical conditions, psychosocial and environmental factors and functional impairment(s) that support understanding of mental health condition
- Treatment plan documentation needs to include the following elements:
  - Specific symptoms and problems related to the identified diagnosis of the treatment episode
  - Critical problems that will be the focus of this episode of care are prioritized; any additional problems that are deferred should be noted as such
  - Relates the recommended level of care to the level of impairment
  - Member (and, when indicated, family) involvement in treatment planning
  - Treatment goals must be specific, behavioral, measurable, and realistic
  - Treatment goals must include a time frame for goal attainment

- Progress or lack of progress towards treatment goals
- Rationale for the estimated length of the treatment episode
- Updates to the treatment plan whenever goals are achieved or new problems are identified
- If the Member is not progressing towards specified goals, the treatment plan should be re-evaluated to address the lack of progress and modify goals and interventions as needed
- Progress notes include:
  - Signature of the Practitioner rendering services
  - The date of service
  - If provided through telehealth, documentation of the use of this technology
  - Member strengths and limitations in achieving treatment plan goals and objectives
  - Treatment interventions that are consistent with those goals and objectives noted in the treatment plan
  - Dates of follow up visits
  - Documentation of missed appointments, including efforts made to outreach the Member
  - For time based services only, either start and stop time or total time in session
- Documentation of on-going discharge planning (beginning at the initiation of treatment) includes the following elements:
  - Criteria for discharge
  - Identification of barriers to completion of treatment and interventions to address those barriers
  - Identification of support systems or lack of support systems
- A discharge summary is completed at the end of the treatment episode that includes the following elements:
  - Reason for treatment episode
  - Summary of the treatment goals that were achieved or reasons the goals were not achieved
  - Specific follow up activities/aftercare plan
- Documentation of coordination of care activities between the treating Clinician or Facility and other behavioral health or medical Clinicians, Facilities, or consultants. If the Member refuses to allow coordination of care to occur, this refusal and the reason for the refusal must be documented. Coordination of care should occur:

- At the initiation of treatment
- Throughout treatment as clinically indicated
- At the time of transfer to another treating Clinician, Facility, or program
- At the conclusion of treatment
- Documentation of referrals to other Clinicians, services, community resources, and/or wellness and prevention programs
- Telehealth Services: If the service is being provided virtually, this must be noted in the treatment record. Many states have specific documentation requirements for telehealth services. Please review the telehealth regulations in the states in which you are licensed to practice. Additional information on Telehealth Documentation Requirements and best practices can be found on the virtual visits page of *Provider Express*
- Records related to billing must include all data elements required for submission of the claim

The [Fraud, Waste, Abuse, Error and Payment Integrity](#) information page on *Provider Express* includes additional resources to support documentation requirements.

## Guidelines for Storing Member Records

Below are additional guidelines for completing and maintaining treatment records for Members:

- Practice sites and Facilities must have an organized system of filing information in treatment records
- Treatment records must be stored in a secure area and the site must have an established procedure to maintain the confidentiality of treatment records in accordance with any applicable laws and regulations, including HIPAA
- The site must have a process in place to ensure that records are available to qualified professionals if the treating Clinician is absent
- Treatment records are required to be maintained for a minimum period of seven years from the date of service, or in accordance with applicable state or federal law, whichever is longer. Termination of the Agreement has no bearing on this requirement
- Financial records concerning covered services rendered are required to be maintained from the date of service for 10 years, or the period required by applicable state or federal law, whichever is longer. Termination of the Agreement has no bearing on this requirement
- Providers with Electronic Health Records must have an established procedure to maintain a backup copy of all electronic health records

## Member Access to Medical/Mental Health Records

A Member, upon written request and with proper identification, may access his/her records that

are in the possession of Optum. Before a Member is granted access to his/her records, the record will first be reviewed to ensure that it contains only information about the Member. Confidential information about other family Members that is in the record will be redacted.

# Confidentiality of Records

## Introduction

We strive to protect Member confidentiality by complying with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, its implementing regulations, and other applicable federal and state privacy laws – including 42 CFR Part 2 (Part 2) and substance use disorder and mental health laws. It is our expectation that participating Providers also follow these laws to protect the confidentiality of Member records as well as providing us with protected health information as needed and permitted for treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes<sup>1</sup>; obtaining Member consent when needed to provide requested information to us; and notifying us whether and when you are providing or disclosing data that is covered by Part 2.

## Release of Information

It is our policy to release information only to the Member or to other parties designated in writing by the Member unless otherwise permitted or required by law. A Member may authorize release of his or her PHI by submitting a signed, dated and legally-compliant Release of Information (ROI) that specifies what information may be disclosed, to whom, for what purpose(s), and during what period of time. A Member's authorization for ROI is not required when PHI is being exchanged between a Provider and Optum for the purposes of Treatment, Payment, or Health Care Operations as provided in HIPAA (and consistent with other applicable federal and state law).<sup>1</sup>

## Identification and Authentication

We require that anyone requesting access to PHI be reasonably identified and authenticated. To identify and authenticate you or your administrative staff, we may require certain information including, but not limited to, your federal tax identification number or physical address and Member information. Member information we may require for identification and authentication includes, but is not limited to, Member's full name, full date of birth, full address, and Member number or subscriber number. If you or your administrative staff are unable to supply an identification or address, we may require the Member's full telephone number or the last four digits of their Social Security Number.

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<sup>1</sup> "Treatment, Payment, or Health Care Operations" as defined by HIPAA include: 1) Treatment – coordination or management of health care and related services; 2) Payment purposes – the activities of a health plan to obtain premiums or fulfill responsibility for coverage and provision of benefits under the health plan; and 3) Health Care Operations – the activities of a health plan such as quality review, business management, customer service, and claims processing.



# Quality Management

## Participation in the Optum Quality Management Program

We are committed to the highest quality of care provided in a manner consistent with the dignity and rights of Members and to meeting or exceeding customer expectations. Our Quality Management (QM) Program monitors: accessibility; quality of care; appropriateness, effectiveness and timeliness of treatment; and Member satisfaction. The QM Program is comprehensive and incorporates the review and evaluation of all aspects of the managed behavioral health care delivery system. If you have any feedback regarding QM projects and processes, please contact Provider Relations.

Compliance with the QM Program is required in accordance with your Agreement, including cooperation with Optum and customers in their efforts to adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and accreditation standards.

The key components of the QM Program required of you as a participating Provider include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that care is appropriately coordinated and managed between you and the Member's primary medical physician and other treating Practitioners and/or Facilities
- Cooperation with on-site audits and requests for treatment records
- Cooperation with the Member complaint process (e.g., supplying information necessary to assess and respond to a complaint)
- Cooperation with performance measurement programs such as the Facility Platinum Designation program or the ACE Clinicians program. (Please refer to the Facility Platinum Designation or the Achievements in Clinical Excellence (ACE) Clinicians sections of this manual for more information).
- Responding to inquiries by our Quality Management staff
- Participation in Quality Management initiatives related to enhancing clinical care or service for Members
- Assisting us in maintaining various accreditations as appropriate and as requested
- Submission of information related to our review of potential quality of care concerns and sentinel events
- Helping to ensure Members receive rapid follow-up upon discharge from an inpatient level of care

Upon request, Optum makes information available about the QM Program, including a description of the QM Program and a report of our progress in meeting goals. Some of the activities that may involve you are described in more detail below.

## Sentinel Events

Sentinel events are defined as a serious, unexpected occurrence involving a Member that is believed to represent a possible quality of care issue on the part of the Practitioner/Facility providing services, which has, or may have, deleterious effects on the Member, including death or serious disability, that occurred during the course of a Member receiving behavioral health treatment. If you are aware of a sentinel event involving a Member, you must notify Optum Care Advocacy within one business day of learning about the occurrence by calling the number on the Member's ID card.

We have established processes and procedures to investigate and address sentinel events. This includes a Sentinel Event Committee, chaired by medical directors within Optum. You are required to cooperate with sentinel event investigations.

## Member Satisfaction Surveys

On at least an annual basis as customers allow, we conduct a Member Satisfaction Survey of a sample of Members receiving behavioral health services within the Optum network. The results of the survey are reviewed. Action plans are developed to address opportunities for improvement.

## Clinician Satisfaction Survey

We regularly conduct a satisfaction survey of a sample of Clinicians that delivered behavioral health services to Members. This survey obtains data on Clinician satisfaction with Optum services.

The results of the survey are compared to previous years for tracking and trending. Action plans are developed to address opportunities for improvement.

## Preventive Program

Optum provides resources for early intervention in behavioral health problems. The interventions are for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), Attention- Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders. For each of these conditions, Optum offers Member resources:

- A screening tool to help the Member decide whether to seek care
- Articles about the behavioral health conditions and how they are treated
- A list of organizations the Member can contact if they want more information about a condition and its treatment

- Contact information for self-help groups if the Member wants to talk with others who can provide support and encouragement
- Information on how to contact us if the Member has questions or concerns

These resources can be accessed on [prevention.liveandworkwell.com](https://prevention.liveandworkwell.com) by all Members, medical Providers, and Optum network Practitioners and/or Facilities.

## Practice Guidelines

Optum has adopted clinical guidelines from nationally recognized behavioral health organizations and groups. We also have Supplemental and Measurable Guidelines based on existing nationally recognized guidelines, additional literature review and Clinician input. The development of these Supplemental and Measurable Guidelines is driven by quality initiatives aimed at improving clinical outcomes for Members. The adopted **Best Practice Guidelines** and the **Supplemental and Measurable Guidelines** are available on **Provider Express**: Home page > Quick Links > Guidelines/Policies & Manuals.

Your feedback is encouraged on all guidelines and any suggestions on new guidelines to be considered for adoption are welcome. If you would like a paper copy of Optum guidelines, please contact Provider Relations.

## Quality Assurance and Complaint Investigation

You are required to fully cooperate with Optum in the complaint investigation and the Quality Assurance Review process. If we request written records for a Quality Assurance Review, you must submit these to Optum within the requested timeframe (within at least 14 days or sooner, as requested to meet customer/regulatory guidelines). In matters involving Member safety, immediate responses may be requested. Complaints filed by Members should not interfere with the professional relationship between you and the Member. Even if you use a third party medical records vendor or other unique contractual agreement, you are required to provide records in the requested timeframe to ensure that all customer/regulatory requirements are met.

Complaints staff, in conjunction with QM and Provider Relations staff, monitor complaints filed against all Practitioners and Facilities, and solicits information from them in order to properly address complaints and potential quality of care concerns. In general, resolution of most complaints is communicated to the Member when the complaint is received from, or on behalf of, the Member. QOC concerns initiated by Members do not routinely include notification of resolution except as required by applicable law or contractual agreement. We may require the development and implementation of appropriate Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) for concerns discovered in the course of investigating complaints and quality assurance reviews. Such action may include, but is not limited to, having Optum:

- Require you to submit a written response and/or submit and adhere to a CAP
- Require you to participate in an on-site audit or treatment record review audit (please refer to section below)

- Monitor you for a specified period, followed by a determination about whether substandard performance or noncompliance with Optum requirements is continuing
- Require you to use peer consultation for specific types of care
- Require you to obtain specific additional training or continuing education
- Limit your scope of practice in treating Members
- Hold referrals of any Members to your care by changing your availability status to “unavailable” and/or reassigning Members to the care of another participating Practitioner or Facility
- Terminate your participation status with Optum
- Report concerns to the appropriate entity, such as the licensing board

Cooperation with an unavailable status associated with complaint, quality of care or sentinel event investigations may include:

- Informing Members of your unavailable status at the time of an initial request for services, and identifying other network Practitioners or Facilities to provide services or referring the Member to Optum for additional referrals
- Informing current Members of your status and their option to transfer to another network Practitioner or Facility
- Assisting Members with stable transfers to another network Practitioner or Facility at the Member’s request

Additionally, Optum has a Program and Network Integrity (PNI) program. Please refer to the PNI section of this manual for additional requirements.

## Audits of Sites and Records

On-site and record-only audits may occur with any contracted Provider. Both types of audits involve reviewing a sampling of treatment records. The on-site audit also involves a review of policies and procedures, including policies related to hiring and supervision of staff, discussion of services that are offered and a tour of the Facility or office site.

Optum representatives conduct site visits at Clinician offices, Agencies such as Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs), Facilities, and Group Provider locations. On-site audits are routinely completed with Agencies and Facilities without national accreditation. In addition, audits are completed to address specific quality of care issues or in response to Member complaints about the quality of the office or Facility environment.

Facilities and Agencies that hold national accreditation through organizations such as the Joint Commission, CARF, COA, HFAP, NIAHO, CHAP, and/or AAAHC receive credit for meeting those standards of care for the identified accredited services or programs without additional review prior to the initial credentialing process. When it is determined that a service or program is not part of the accreditation, we will audit that particular service or program.

Facilities and Agencies that are not accredited will be required to participate in an on-site audit prior to credentialing and a recredentialing audit prior to their specified recredentialing timeframe. Any Facility or Agency, regardless of their accreditation status, may be subject to an on-site audit for any Member complaints or suspected quality of care concerns brought to the attention of Optum.

During on-site and record-only audits for all types of Providers, chart documentation is reviewed, including (but not limited to) the assessment (which is distinct from any questionnaire the Member may complete), diagnosis, treatment plan, progress notes, monitoring risk issues, coordination of care activities, and discharge planning. This process also verifies that services were provided to Members.

You are expected to maintain adequate medical records on all Members and document in the record all services that are provided. Prior to the audit, you will be notified of the specific types of charts that will be reviewed. Failure to adequately document services that are rendered and/or dates of services may lead to a request for a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Please see the **“Treatment Record Documentation Requirements”** section of this manual for more information.

The audit tools are based on NCQA, the Joint Commission and Optum standards. These forms are used during audits and are available at [Provider Express](#) for reference: Home page > Clinical Resources > Optum Forms > Site Audit Tools.

## Member Education

We offer 24/7 confidential access to professional care, self-help programs and information. It's available around the clock, from the convenience of your desk or the comfort of your home. Best of all, it's absolutely free to Members and their families. Use access code 'Clinician' on [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com).

From self-assessments to videos and apps, find a variety of helpful educational materials for Members. We encourage you to visit the site often and direct Members to take advantage of these resources.

## Facility Platinum Designation

The Platinum Designation is for facility-based programs. Formerly known as ACE Facility, Platinum is a Facility measurement and recognition designation that acknowledges facilities for delivering both effective and efficient clinical care for all levels of facility-based care. Data for inclusion in the program is run annually and facilities are notified when one or more of those programs have achieved the Platinum Designation or when there is a change in the Designation status.

Facilities are responsible for following prior authorization and discharge notification procedures associated with the Platinum Designation. Failure to notify Optum at time of discharge or when the patient is being stepped down to a lower level of care may result in claim processing delays or denials.

For detailed information about the program visit: *Provider Express* > Quick Links > [Platinum Recognition](#).

# Achievements in Clinical Excellence (ACE) Clinicians

## ACE for solo Clinicians and Group Practices

ACE Clinicians recognizes in-network individual and group practices based on effectiveness and efficiency metrics after the threshold for volume of Member Wellness Assessments has been met. Data for inclusion in the ACE Clinicians program with a Platinum designation is run annually and Clinicians are notified when they achieve Platinum recognition or when there is a change in recognition status.

## Criteria for Inclusion in Achievements in Clinical Excellence

Network Clinicians and Group Providers must have a minimum of 10 cases for the measurement period (two years) in which the initial ALERT Wellness Assessment for each of those 10 cases measured in the clinical range for global distress. In addition, each of those 10 cases must have submitted at least one follow-up Wellness Assessment attributable to each of those cases.

## Access and Tracking ACE Scorecards

Network Clinicians and Group Providers who achieve Platinum status are eligible for a number of benefits including recognition on Clinician directories. For more information please see our [“ACE Clinicians”](#) page on *Provider Express*.

Please note: Due to state regulatory requirements, Providers in the following six states may not be publicly recognized within our online Provider directories: **California, Colorado, Maryland, Missouri, New York and Texas.**

If your practice resides in one of the excluded states, it's very important that you continue submitting ALERT Wellness Assessments. Even though your practice may reside in one of the excluded states, your data will still be evaluated and may still qualify you or your Group for performance-based contracting increases. Also, once we receive national recognition and NCQA accreditation for our ACE metrics, we will have your data on hand in order to recognize you publicly for your achievement.

Clinicians and Group Providers will be able to view their scores by going to *Provider Express*. Select Log In on upper right corner of page. Then select Providers Reports and see Achievements in Clinical Excellence on their dashboard. ACE metrics will be calculated annually and shared with you in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter. Providers have a 60-day period to review their data prior to public recognition on *Live and Work Well*.

Network Clinicians and Group Providers may request a review of their data by submitting an ACE Review Request Form. In order to ensure a timely review, please submit your review request within 30 days of being notified of your ACE score.



## Automatic Enrollment

ACE will automatically evaluate qualified Clinicians and Group Providers. However, due to state regulatory requirements, some states may be excluded from ACE. Clinicians and Group Providers in the excluded states are ineligible to receive Clinician directory recognition.

Since measurement relies upon data that is collected over a two year period, it is still very important that Clinicians and Group Providers in excluded states continue to submit ALERT Wellness Assessments. Regulatory changes may occur allowing us to recognize excellent performance through the ACE program.

# Compensation and Claims Processing

## Compensation

The contracted rate for eligible outpatient visits is reimbursed to you at the lesser of (1) your customary charge, less any applicable co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles due from the Member, or (2) the Optum contracted rate, less any applicable co-payments, co-insurance and deductibles due from the Member.

The contracted rate for Facilities is referenced in the Payment Appendix of the Facility Agreement and defines rates applicable to inpatient and/or higher levels of care rendered at the Facility. When the contracted rates include physician fees, the Facility is responsible for payment of all treating physicians and for notifying the physicians that payment will be made by the Facility and not Optum.

It is important that contracted Providers follow your fee schedule to ensure proper payment of claims. Failure to follow the terms and conditions as set forth on your fee schedule may result in claim denial(s).

Financial records concerning covered services rendered are required to be maintained from the date of service for the greater of 10 years, or the period required by applicable state or federal law, whichever is longer. Any termination of the Agreement has no bearing on this legal obligation.

## Co-payments, Co-insurance and Deductible

In most Benefit Plans, Members bear some of the cost of behavioral health services by paying a co-payment, co-insurance, and/or deductible (the “Member expenses”). Deductible amounts and structure may vary from plan to plan. To abide by applicable law including without limitation, parity laws, some deductibles may be combined with medical services. Members should be billed for deductibles after claims processing yields an Explanation of Benefits indicating Member responsibility.

For co-payments, we encourage you to require payment at the time of service. It is your sole responsibility to collect Member payments due to you. Members are never to be charged in advance of the delivery of services.

Benefit Plans often provide for annual co-payment or co-insurance maximums. If a Member states that he or she has reached such a maximum, call the telephone number listed on the Member’s ID card to confirm the amount and status of the Member’s co-payment maximum. If a specific behavioral health number is not listed, call the medical number and follow the prompts for behavioral health.

## Balance Billing For Covered Services Is Prohibited

Under the terms of the Agreement, you may not balance bill Members for covered services provided during eligible visits. This means you may not charge Members the difference between your billed usual and customary charges and the aggregate amount reimbursed by Optum and Member co-payment, co-insurance or deductible amounts.

## Billing for Non-Covered Services and “No Shows”

In the event that you seek prior authorization of benefits for behavioral health services or authorization for continued treatment, and Optum does not authorize the requested services, the Member may be billed under limited circumstances. The Member may be billed for such services only if a written statement is signed by the Member, subsequent to the non-coverage determination and in advance of receiving such services. Please note that a financial responsibility waiver signed by the Member at the onset of treatment or at the time of admission is not applicable. The signed statement must include:

- That you have informed the Member that Optum is unable to authorize such services for coverage under the Member’s Benefit Plan
- The reason given by Optum for not authorizing the services
- That as a result, the Member has been denied coverage for such services under their Benefit Plan and will be financially responsible

In the event a Member exhausts the covered benefits under the benefit contract, you may bill the Member directly for those services. Members may be charged no more than the applicable network fee schedule or Facility contracted rate for such services.

A [Patient Financial Responsibility Form](#) may be found at [Provider Express](#). Go to Quick Links > Forms then select “Optum Forms – Administrative”. We encourage you to use this or a similar form when billing Members for non-covered services.

Optum does not pay for sessions that a Member fails to attend. You may not bill Optum for such sessions or services.

A Member who misses a scheduled appointment may be billed directly, provided you have advised the Member in advance that this is your policy and the Member has acknowledged the policy in writing. The Member should be billed no more than your applicable network fee schedule or Facility contracted rate for such services. Note that some plan designs, including Medicaid and Medicare, prohibit billing Members for no-shows under any circumstance. Members are never to be charged a deposit or advance payment for a potential missed appointment.

Failure to follow this or any other required billing practice may result in referral to the Credentialing Committee for termination.

## National Provider Identifier

The purpose of a National Provider Identifier (NPI) is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the electronic transmission of health information. We require the billing Clinician to include NPI information on all claims (whether electronic or paper claims). For more information about obtaining an NPI, you may contact the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid](#). For additional information about claims processing, visit [Provider Express](#): Home page > Admin Resources > Claim Tips > Claim Submission Hints > National Provider Identifier (NPI).

## Claims Submission

Unless otherwise directed by Optum, Providers shall submit outpatient claims using the current Form 1500 claim form (v 02/12) or facility-based claims using a UB-04 claim form, (its equivalent or successor) whichever is appropriate, with applicable coding including, but not limited to, ICD diagnosis code(s), CPT, Revenue and HCPCS coding.

Services billed using a CPT or HCPCS code must be billed on a current Form 1500 claim form and consistent with your fee schedule. Revenue codes or revenue codes with accompanying CPT or HCPCS codes should be billed on a UB-04 claim form. Billing inconsistent with the above or your contracted fee schedule will result in an initial claim denial.

Providers shall include all data elements necessary to process a complete claim including: the Member number, customary charges for the MH/SUD services rendered to a Member during a single instance of service, Provider's federal Tax Identification Number (TIN), National Provider Identifier (NPI), code modifiers and/or other identifiers requested by Optum.

In addition, you are responsible for billing of all Members in accordance with the nationally recognized CMS Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) standards. Please visit the [CMS website](#) for additional information on CCI billing standards.

Although claims are reimbursed based on the network fee schedule or Facility contracted rate, your claims should be billed with your usual and customary charges indicated on the claim.

**Claim Entry through *Provider Express*:** You can file Optum claims at [Provider Express](#). This secure HIPAA-compliant transaction feature is designed to streamline the claim submission process. It performs well on all connection speeds and submitting claims on *Provider Express* closely mirrors the process of completing the Form 1500 claim form (v 02/12). In order to use this feature you must be a network Clinician or Group Practice and have a registered user ID and password for *Provider Express*. To obtain a user ID, click on the [First-time User](#) link from our home page.

EAP claims are supported through this feature as well. We strongly encourage you to use this no-cost claims entry feature for claims submission at [Provider Express](#), which allows claims to be paid quickly and accurately. EAP claims should be submitted through *Provider Express* or on a Form 1500 claim form using the standard "HJ" code in the modifier field of section 24 D.

The table below reflects the most commonly used EAP service codes:

For more information about fast and efficient electronic claims submission, please see *Provider Express*: “[Improve the Speed of Processing – Tips for Claims Filing](#).”

**EDI/Electronic Claims:** Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) is the exchange of information for routine business transactions in a standardized computer format; for example, data interchange between a Practitioner (physician, psychologist, social worker) and a Payor (Optum). You may choose any clearinghouse vendor to submit claims through this route. Because Optum has multiple claims payment systems, it is important for you to know where to send claims. When sending claims electronically, routing to the correct claim system is controlled by the Payor ID. For Optum claims use Payor ID #87726. Additional information regarding **EDI** is available on *Provider Express*.

**Clinician Claim Forms:** Paper claims can be submitted to Optum using the Form 1500 claim form (v 02/12) or its successor form as based upon your Agreement. The claims should include all itemized information such as diagnosis code (ICD code as listed in DSM), length of session, Member and Subscriber names, Member and Subscriber dates of birth, Member identification number, dates of service, type and duration of service, name of Clinician (i.e., individual who actually provided the service), credentials, Tax ID and NPI numbers.

**Facility Claim Forms:** Paper claims should be submitted to Optum using the UB-04 claim form, or its successor, which includes all itemized information such as diagnosis code (ICD code as listed in DSM), Member name, Member date of birth, Member identification number, dates of service, procedure (CPT-4) and/or revenue codes, name of Facility and Federal Tax ID number of the Facility, and billed charges for the services rendered. After receipt of all of the above information, participating Facilities are reimbursed according to the appropriate rates as set forth in the Facility’s Agreement. Facilities may file claims through an EDI vendor and can view claim status on [Provider Express](#).

**Platinum Facilities:** Platinum Facilities must notify Optum within 24-48 hours of discharge. If the discharge isn’t submitted to Optum within the requested timeframe, the authorization will not be updated and the claim will be denied. Please note that diagnostic codes on the claim form must match the authorized program type or the claim will be denied.

**Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA):** Optum has an Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse Program in place. You are required to remain in compliance with our FWA Program. Please review the following “**Anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse**” section of this manual.

## Online Claims Help

Information for Claims and Customer Service issues can be found in the [Contact Us](#) section of *Provider Express*.

To ensure proper processing of claims, it is important to promptly contact Provider Relations if you change your Tax ID number.

If your practice address changes, it is important that you notify us with the change. You may

submit changes to your practice address online. Log in to [Provider Express](#) and click on “My Practice Info.”

## Customer Service Claims Help

Optum has dedicated customer service departments with staff available five days a week during regular business hours to assist our network with questions related to general information, eligibility verification or the status of a claim payment. The main Optum customer service phone numbers are listed below; however various Members may have account-specific customer service numbers. It is best to call the phone number listed on the Provider Remittance Advice:

- Health Plan Groups: **1-800-557-5745**
- Employer Groups: **1-800-333-8724**
- OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions of California: **1-800-333-8724**

## Coordination of Benefits (COB)

Some Members are eligible for coverage of allowable expenses under one or more additional health Benefit Plans. In these circumstances, payment for allowable expenses shall be coordinated with the other Plan(s). It is your responsibility to inquire and collect information concerning all applicable health plans available to a Member and communicate such information to Optum.

If Optum is a secondary Plan, you will be paid up to the Optum contracted rate. You may not bill Members for the difference between your billed usual and customary charge and the amount paid by the primary Plan(s) and Optum.

## Processing and Payment of Claims

All information necessary to process claims must be received by Optum no more than 90 calendar days from the date of service, or as allowed by state or federal law or specific Member Benefit Plans. Claims received after this time period may be rejected for payment at the discretion of Optum and/or the Payor. You may not bill the Member for claim submissions that fall outside these established timelines. Any corrections or additions to a claim should be made within 90 days of receipt of the initial claim.

Claims should be submitted as directed by Optum. We strongly recommend that you keep copies of all claims for your own records. You permit Optum, on behalf of the Payor, to bill and process forms for third-party claims or for third-party Payors, and execute any documents reasonably required or appropriate for this purpose. In the event of insolvency of the Member's employer or Optum, your sole redress is against the assets of Optum or the applicable Payor, not the Member. You must agree to continue to provide services to Members through the period for which premiums have been paid. Any termination of the Agreement has no bearing on this requirement.

Generally, claims that contain all of the required information and match the authorization, if

applicable, will be paid within 45 calendar days after receipt, or as required by state and federal law. This may exclude claims that require Coordination of Benefits (COB) determinations.

Benefits are payable provided coverage is in force at the time expenses are incurred, and are subject to all limitations, provisions and exclusions of the Plan. You will be paid for covered services by Optum and will not under any circumstances seek payment through Optum for Plans for which Optum is not the Payor or administrator.

Optum may make corrective adjustments to any previous payments for services and may audit claims submissions and payments to ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, procedures, including without limitation, the Manual, the Credentialing Plan, the Agreement, and state and federal law. Optum may obtain reimbursement for overpayments directly or by offsetting against future payments due as allowed by law.

In the event a Provider Agreement with Optum has not been executed timely or a commercially reasonable amount of time is not provided to align Optum systems with a Provider Agreement, Optum will not assign a retroactive effective date or pay claims retrospectively unless federally or state mandated.

In addition, no interest or penalty otherwise required under applicable law will be due on any claim which was initially processed timely and accurately, but which requires reprocessing as a result of the untimely execution of a Provider Agreement or amendment; or the inability to align Optum systems in a commercially reasonable period of time.

The procedure for submitting and processing claims will be modified as necessary to satisfy any applicable state or federal laws.

## **Processing and Payment of Claims**

You may choose to receive electronic payments by direct deposit into your business bank account (automated clearinghouse or ACH) or by virtual card payment (VCP). With VCP, you do not need to supply your bank account information to Optum as you process payments using your credit card point of sale terminal. The initial set-up of direct deposit, transition to VCP, or a change in banking information will take approximately 10 business days for processing and bank account validation. For VCP, your current credit card processing fees apply. You can confirm those rates with the merchant processor directly.

For more information regarding ACH/VCP claim payments, visit the [Optum Pay](#) page on *Provider Express* or visit the [OptumBank® website](#).



# Anti - Fraud, Waste and Abuse

## Overview

Optum believes that Providers are an integral part of our program integrity work. Protecting clients, Providers and stakeholders through the prevention, early detection, investigation and ultimate resolution of potential Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA) issues is a fundamental component of quality care and sound clinical practice. We are pleased to work in consultation with Providers to find solutions that address potential FWA without adding unnecessary burdens to your office.

Federal law requires: ...the establishment of “Special Investigations Units” or their equivalents and the “Effective System for Routine Monitoring, Auditing and Identification of Risks” and to “carry out appropriate corrective action.” (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requirement)

At Optum, our “Special Investigations Unit” is called the Program and Network Integrity (PNI) department. This group of professionals is committed to a balanced approach to potential FWA including open and clear communication with the Provider community.

The PNI department is committed to appropriate corrective action on a continuum commensurate with the questionable activity. Actions include addressing simple mistakes and the need for education to fraudulent activity and referral to law enforcement. There is also a requirement to recover payments – it is critical that dollars not appropriately directed get recovered while education and other appropriate action are under way.

Optum is committed to:

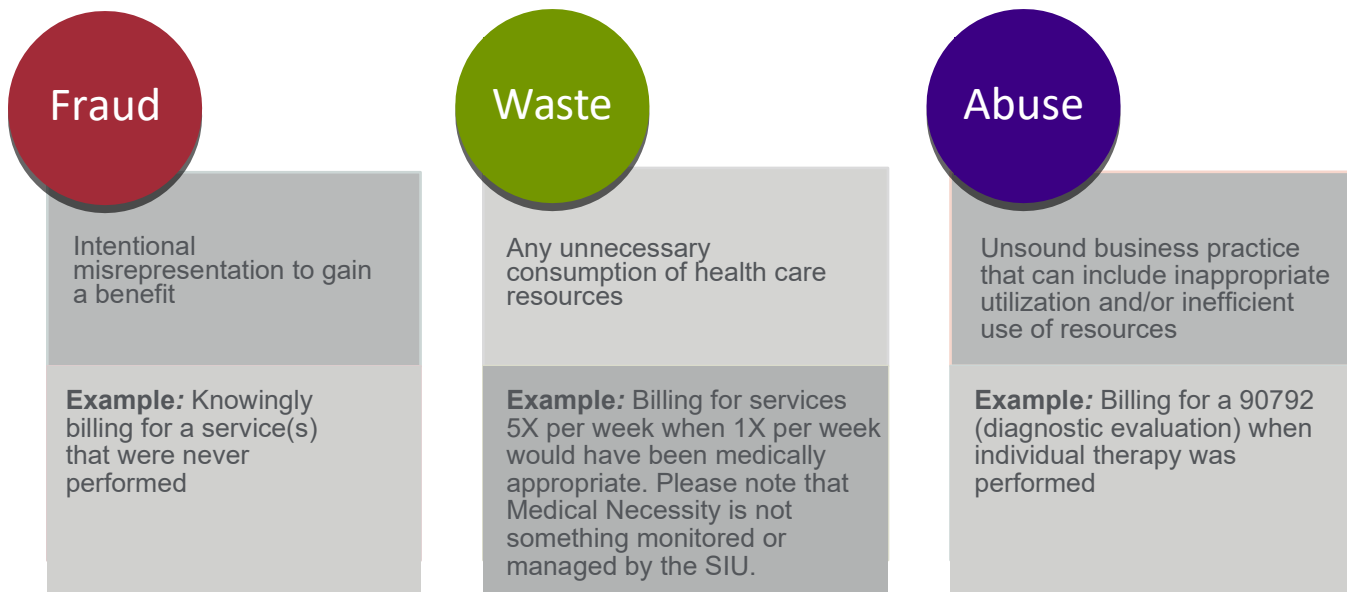
- A comprehensive view of how PNI interacts with you
- Building and sustaining trust in Provider communities regarding FWA initiatives and activities
- Transparency into our activities
- Ensuring reliability and timeliness in our practice and methodology
- Overall education and awareness for the network
- Soliciting critical feedback from the network and professional associations in developing long-term strategies for identifying and avoiding potential FWA

In summary, Optum is committed to addressing and correcting questionable activity and known offenses, recovering inappropriately paid funds, improving overall anti-Fraud, Waste and Abuse (FWA) ability and partnering with both the network and state and federal agencies to educate, pursue and prosecute violators to the fullest extent of the law.

## Program Introduction

The FWA Program incorporates multiple components leveraging technology, expertise and collaboration in a proactive way. Program components include, but are not limited to, the following: education and awareness, prevention, detection, investigation, system enhancement and capability, corrective action, and recovery and resolution. The PNI team consists of Clinicians, investigators, prospective intervention specialists, data analytics staff, certified coders and executive leadership.

Potential fraud, waste and/or abuse practices include, but are not limited to, the following:



The identification process includes, but is not limited to, examining claims to identify outlier claims billing patterns.

In the event potential fraud, waste and/or abuse is identified, appropriate corrective actions are implemented using a range of tools from education of Providers to full recoupment of improperly paid funds. Possible interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- Outreach meetings and/or written correspondence to Providers
- Records review and/or site audit
- Individual case reviews, and
- Referral for further investigation

Providers are contractually required to cooperate in this process and participate in any activities related to the identification and correction of potential fraud, waste, and abuse. Once an intervention has occurred, we continue to monitor to ensure that Providers adhere to all requirements for payment.

## Education, Awareness & Compliance Training

All Providers and Affiliates working on Medicare Advantage, Part D or Medicaid programs must provide compliance program training and Anti - Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (FWA) training within 90 days of employment and annually thereafter (by the end of the year) to their employees and/or contractors. The training is subject to certain requirements, and may be obtained through sources outside your organization.

All Providers and Affiliates meeting the FWA certification requirements through enrollment in the fee-for-service Medicare program are deemed by CMS rules to have met the training and education requirements. It is our responsibility to ensure that your organization is provided with appropriate training for your employees and applicable subcontractors. To facilitate that, we provide training attestation materials on the [Optum Forms - Clinical](#) page on [Provider Express](#). For more training and educational materials see: Home page > Admin Resources > [Fraud, Waste Abuse, Error and Payment Integrity](#).

In compliance with federal regulations, Providers are required to administer the compliance and FWA training materials to their employees and/or contractors. If your organization has already completed a compliance and FWA training program, either on your own or through a Medicare plan, that meets CMS requirements, we will accept documentation of that training. Providers must maintain records of the training (e.g., sign-in sheets, materials, etc.) in compliance with CMS requirements. Documentation of the training may be requested at any time for verification that training was completed.

## Prevention, Detection and Prospective Process

Among the ways we address prevention are education, use of rigorous credentialing standards, and proper contracting.

Optum has a prospective program that leverages technology to search through real-time claims data to alert us to anything unusual in that data in order to make a determination to pay or to investigate further. The FWA look back period or period of claims reviewed is normally determined by state and federal regulation.

## Retrospective Investigations and Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

When potential fraud, waste and abuse is reported or detected we conduct an investigation to determine potential corrective action. A sample of retrospective FWA investigation actions may include, but is not limited to:

- Contacting Providers to obtain and review medical and billing records
- Reviewing Providers' disciplinary activity, civil or criminal litigation, and financial records
- Educating Providers on errors in their billing, and

- Negotiating with Providers regarding a corrective action plan and settlement of overpayment

Following investigation, timely payment is made or, in the event that a claim denial is issued, the denial notification includes the Provider's standard appeal rights.

Findings of billing inconsistent with our policies by network Providers may result in such actions as:

- Clarification of proper procedure
- A Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- A change in network availability status, or
- May result in termination of a Provider's Agreement

In the case of retrospective review, Optum and our Payors reserve the right to pursue up to full recoupment of funds paid. The Credentialing Committee may recommend termination. In that event, the Provider is notified in writing and provided with information about appeal rights, if applicable, and in compliance with state and federal laws. A Provider's voluntary termination from the network does not suspend or stop fraud, waste and/or abuse investigations or reviews; which may still be required by law.

## Regulatory Reporting

Optum works closely with state and federal agencies in combating fraud, waste and abuse, and periodically refers suspected and/or confirmed cases of fraud, waste and abuse to these agencies as required by regulation and contract.

## Cooperation with State and Federal Agencies

Optum is committed to working with and cooperating fully with state and federal agencies in battling FWA. Optum will work diligently to fulfill all requests for investigative assistance, subpoenas and/or other investigative information requests. This includes, but is not limited to, providing information pursuant to civil and/or criminal proceedings, as well as providing expert opinion or fact testimony at depositions and trials.

Optum will participate with and contribute to information sharing sessions, working groups, task forces and communication efforts to enhance the overall national anti-FWA effort. Optum will retain all records pursuant to these activities, and may be required to produce those records upon request in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

As warranted, Providers will be reported to their respective State Department of Insurance, licensing board(s), and any other regulatory agencies based on the outcome of the investigation and as required by state and federal laws. Throughout this process, we adhere to state law, ERISA guidelines and confidentiality standards.

## Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy Awareness

All Providers and Affiliates working on Medicare Advantage, Part D or Medicaid programs, including contracted Providers, must provide a copy of our Code of Conduct to employees and contractors.

You can obtain and review our **Code of Conduct**, at [unitedhealthgroup.com](https://www.unitedhealthgroup.com) > About > Ethics & Integrity, and provide this to your employees and contractors.

## Exclusion/Sanction/Debarment Checks

All Providers and Affiliates must review federal exclusion lists (HHS-OIG and GSA) at the time of hire/contracting with their current employees/contractors, health care professionals, or vendors that work on Medicare Advantage, Part D or Medicaid programs to ensure that none are excluded from participating in Federal health care programs. For more information or access to the publicly accessible excluded party online databases, please see the following links:

- Health and Human Services – Office of the Inspector General (HHS-OIG):  
List of Excluded Individuals/Entities: [oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/index.asp](https://oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/index.asp)
- General Services Administration (GSA) System for Award Management (SAM) site:  
[sam.gov/SAM/](https://sam.gov/SAM/)

**What You Need to Do:** Review applicable exclusion/sanction/debarment lists to ensure that none of your employees or contractors are excluded from participation in federal and state health care programs.

We have guidelines to address suspected fraud, waste and/or abuse by Providers. In accordance with your Agreement, you are required to cooperate with the review process to include any requests for medical records.

When medical records are requested, you will receive a letter outlining specific information required which may include but is not limited to:

- Counseling session start and stop times
- Medication prescription monitoring (if applicable)
- Modalities and frequencies of treatment furnished
- Results of Clinical tests (if applicable), and
- Any summary of the following; diagnosis, functional status, treatment Plan and/or goals, prognosis and progress to date

# Appeals and Provider Dispute Resolution

## Introduction

There are two distinct processes related to non-coverage (adverse) determination (NCD) regarding requests for services or payment: (1) Member Appeals and (2) Provider Dispute Resolution. An NCD for the purposes of this section is a decision by Optum to deny, in whole or in part, a request for authorization of treatment or of a request for payment. An NCD may be subject to the Member Appeals process or Provider Dispute Resolution process depending on the nature of the NCD, Member liability and your Agreement. Providers must submit a separate Member Appeal or Provider Dispute for each Member.

Care Advocacy decision-making is based on the appropriateness of care as defined by the Clinical Criteria. These criteria include LOCUS, CASII, ECSII, the APA *Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Billing and Coding Guide*, the Behavioral Clinical Policies and any state or contractually required criteria, as well as the terms and conditions of the Member's Benefit Plan.

Information regarding the **Clinical Criteria** are available on [Provider Express](#) at [Guidelines/Policies & Manuals](#). To request a paper copy of Optum documents, please contact the Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

Links to [information regarding The ASAM Criteria](#), developed by the American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM), can be found under [Guidelines/Policies & Manuals](#).

Optum expects that all treatment provided to Members must be outcome-driven, clinically necessary, rational, evidence-based, and provided in the least restrictive environment possible.

Optum offers no financial rewards or other incentives for Providers, utilization reviewers or other individuals to reduce behavioral health services, limit the length of stay, withhold or deny benefit coverage.

**Important:** A Member Appeal or Provider Dispute must be submitted separately for each Member to ensure compliance with HIPAA requirements.

## Member Appeals Process

The Member Appeals process is available to Members, or their authorized representative (who may be their treating Clinician at any level of care), in the event of a non-coverage (adverse) determination (NCD) when the Member may incur financial liability beyond the normal cost share or may experience a reduction in services requested. In the case of clinical reviews, Optum offers you the opportunity to discuss a request for services with an appropriately licensed peer reviewer.

If Optum issues a denial, in whole or in part, then such determination will be subject to the

applicable Member Appeals process. The procedures for the Member Appeals process, including any applicable requirements for the filing and handling of an appeal, will be detailed in the Member rights enclosure which accompanies the NCD notice sent to you and the Member.

Member Appeals may be handled as urgent or non-urgent appeals. Urgent appeals apply in situations where, in your opinion, application of non-urgent procedures could seriously jeopardize the Member's life, health or ability to regain maximum functioning. For an urgent appeal, contact Optum immediately.

For an urgent appeal, Optum will make the review determination, notify you by telephone, and send written notification of the Member Appeal outcome to you and the Member or authorized Member Representative within 72 hours of the Member Appeal request or in accordance with applicable laws, whichever is sooner. By definition, urgent appeals are not available in situations where services have already been provided.

A non-urgent appeal must be requested within 180 calendar days from the Member's receipt of the NCD letter or in accordance with applicable laws, whichever is most beneficial to the Member. Optum will make a Member Appeal determination and notify you and the Member or the authorized Member Representative. This notification will be provided in writing within 15 calendar days from receipt of the request if services have not yet been received by the Member, or within 30 calendar days if services have already been received by the Member, or in accordance with applicable laws, whichever is sooner.

If you have received an authorization letter or a NCD letter and you wish to discuss any aspect of the decision with the Care Advocate or peer reviewer who made the decision, please follow the instructions in the letter and call the toll-free number provided in the letter. Authorization is not a guarantee of payment (except as required by law): payment of benefits is still subject to all other terms and conditions of the Member's Plan and your Agreement.

If you request a Member Appeal, it will be reviewed by someone who was not previously involved in the NCD, and who is not a subordinate of the person who made the initial NCD. The appeal reviewer will review all available information, including treatment records, in order to make a determination.

### **Appeals involving clinical determination**

For an inpatient case involving a clinical determination, the appeal reviewer will be a board-certified psychiatrist or addiction-medicine specialist (from the same or similar specialty area as the treating Clinician) with an active, unrestricted license. For an outpatient case involving a clinical determination, the appeal reviewer will minimally be the same licensure level as the treating physician requesting the appeal. For cases in which the treating Practitioner requesting the appeal is not a physician, the appeal reviewer may be a doctoral-level psychologist. For appeals involving psychological or neuropsychological testing non-coverage determinations, appeal reviewers will be doctoral-level psychologists or psychiatrists with the competency to review the case.

### **Appeals involving non-clinical administrative determination**

For non-clinical administrative appeals, the appeals reviewer will be an appropriately qualified Optum professional who was not involved in the initial NCD and who is not a subordinate of any person involved in the initial adverse decision.



## **Appeals decisions**

If the appeal decision is to uphold an NCD, Optum will notify you and the Member, or the Member Representative, of the outcome and any additional levels of appeal that are available, as applicable.

You may continue to provide service following an NCD, but the Member should be informed of the NCD by you in writing. The Member or the Member Representative should be informed that the care will become the financial responsibility of the Member from the date of the NCD. In order for the Provider to receive payment from the Member, the Member must agree in writing to these continued terms of care and acceptance of financial responsibility. You may charge no more than the Optum contracted fee for such services, although a lower fee may be charged.

The consent of the Member to such care and responsibility will not impact the appeals determination, but will impact your ability to collect reimbursement from the Member for these services. If the Member does not consent in writing to continue to receive such care and Optum upholds the determination regarding the cessation of coverage for such care, you cannot collect reimbursement from the Member pursuant to the terms of your Agreement.

## **Dispute Resolution**

Please review the terms of your Provider Agreement for specific information regarding Resolution of Disputes.

# Manual Updates and Governing Law

## Manual Updates

This manual is updated periodically as procedures are modified and enhanced. The current version of the manual is always available on [Provider Express](#). You can view the manual online or download a complete copy from your computer. If you do not have internet access or printing capabilities, you may request a paper copy by contacting the Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

## Governing Law and Contract

This manual shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, applicable federal, state and local laws. To the extent that the provisions of this manual conflict with the terms and conditions outlined in your Agreement, the subject matter shall first be read together to the extent possible; otherwise and to the extent permitted by, in accordance with, and subject to applicable law, statutes or regulations, the Agreement shall govern.

# Member Rights and Responsibilities

## Introduction

In the course of care, a Member has both rights and responsibilities.

## Member Rights

Optum believes and supports the proposition that every Member has the right to:

- Receive information about our services, network Practitioners, and Member's rights and responsibilities
- Be treated with respect and recognition of his or her dignity, including a right to privacy
- Participate with network Practitioners in making decisions about his or her health care
- Have a candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for his or her condition regardless of cost or benefit coverage
- Voice complaints or appeals about Optum or the services provided by Optum
- Make recommendations regarding our Members' rights and responsibilities policies
- Obtain care that is considerate and that respects his or her personal values and belief system
- Expect personal privacy and confidentiality of information
- Be given reasonable access to care regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, or disability
- Have family members participate in treatment planning. Members over 12 years of age have the right to participate in such planning
- Individualized treatment, including:
  - Adequate and humane services regardless of the source(s) of financial support
  - Provision of services within the least restrictive environment possible
  - An individualized treatment or program plan
  - Periodic review of the treatment or program plan
  - An adequate number of competent, qualified and experienced professional Clinicians to supervise and carry out the treatment or program plan

- Participate in the consideration of ethical issues that may arise in the provision of care and services, including:
  - Resolving conflict
  - Withholding resuscitative services
  - Forgoing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment
  - Participating in investigational studies or clinical trials
- Designate a surrogate decision-maker if he or she is incapable of understanding a proposed treatment or procedure or is unable to communicate his or her wishes regarding care
- Be informed, along with his or her family, of his or her rights and responsibilities in a language they understand
- Choose not to comply with recommended care, treatment, or procedures and be informed of the potential consequences of not complying with the treatment recommendations
- Be informed of rules and regulations concerning his or her own conduct
- Be informed of the reason for any non-coverage determination, including the specific criteria or benefit provisions used in the determination
- Have decisions about the management of their behavioral health benefits made based on appropriateness of care. Optum does not reward network Practitioners or other individuals for issuing non-coverage determinations
- Inspect and copy their protected health information (PHI) and in addition:
  - Request to amend their PHI
  - Request an accounting of non-routine disclosures of PHI
  - Request limitations on the use or disclosure of PHI
  - Request confidential communications of PHI to be sent to an alternate address or by alternate means
  - Make a complaint regarding use or disclosure of PHI
  - Receive a Privacy Notice
- Receive information about our clinical guidelines and Quality Management (QM) program

## Member Responsibilities

In addition to the rights listed above, every Member has the responsibility to:

- Supply information (to the extent possible), that Optum and its network Practitioners need in order to provide care

- Follow plans and instructions for care that they have agreed on with his or her network Practitioner
- Understand his or her health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals to the degree possible