



ARTIST CREDIT: DANNY M.

# MANAGED CARE



## MARCH 2013

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## Getting Services For Your Client That You Don't Provide

Let's say you are a contracted provider in private practice and that the mainstay of your practice is individual therapy. Let's say that although you are great at what you do, you recognize that your client(s) would benefit from being involved in group therapy that has a specific focus germane to your client's issues. You don't do groups at your practice or you don't do groups that focus on the issues your client needs to focus on. What do you do?

**We'll help you network with other providers**

Well, one thing you could do is contact us here at Managed Care and let us know what kind of group you are looking for. We can then send an email blast (eblast for short) to all of our contracted providers letting them know what kind of group you are looking for and how they can contact you. If there is someone out there who is doing the kind of group you are looking for, hopefully they'll read their email and get in touch with you. Although Managed Care can't advertise therapeutic services our providers are facilitating, we can help our providers to network with each other so that our Fresno County clients get the best care possible.

When you are ready for us to send out an eblast, contact Jonathan using his email: [jhalverstadt@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:jhalverstadt@co.fresno.ca.us) and he'll take

it from there. We'll help you network with other providers to help you provide the best care possible for our client.

## National Alliance on Mentally Illness

Although Managed Care and NAMI are not affiliated, we at Managed Care want to support the hard work of NAMI in Fresno County. At the heart of NAMI's mission is their grassroots and the sharing of information with people with mental illness, their families, friends, mental health professionals, and the general public. NAMI strives to offer hope, reform and health to our American community through support, education, and advocacy efforts.

### Goals of NAMI

- ❖ Provide group support for families.
- ❖ Share experiences and knowledge about mental illness and the mental health care system.
- ❖ Advocate for better treatment and services for the mentally ill.
- ❖ Influence and support legislative efforts that address the needs of the mentally ill and their families.
- ❖ Erase stigma and prejudice.
- ❖ Support an increase in funding for research for care and treatment of the mentally ill.

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For more information about NAMI services for clients and opportunities for mental health professionals to help serve, contact the local office of NAMI in Fresno through their website at <http://www.namifresno.org/> or call them at (559) 224-2469.



In order to bill for any service, the type of service being billed for needs to be listed on the Plan of Care prior to providing that service. That said, the following are examples of situation/services you can bill for and you will want to write a note for each service billed. When records are audited, a client ledger is run for each client whose chart will be reviewed. The reviewer looks for documentation to match each billing present on the ledger. If documentation is missing, the money paid

for the service will be recouped. Make sure to include a signed, dated progress note for every service billed with a dated signature that also includes your educational level and/or licensure (such as ASW, LCSW, LVN). Your job title is not a substitute for the educational level/licensure status. For example, a signature that states "Mental Health Clinician" is not sufficient unless the licensure status is included as well. This is important because all services must be provided within the practitioner's scope of practice. The educational designation or licensure status allows the reviewer to determine if this criterion has been met.

**DO** bill for coordinating with other professionals that address the client's mental health issues. This is case management linkage and consultation. Make sure the documentation indicates how the consultation time was divided between the two providers if both are billing Medi-Cal.

**DO** bill for documentation and travel time connected with a billable service provided to a client. Documentation and travel time are added to the actual service time to give the total billable time.

**DO** bill for mental health services that require a provider with mental health expertise. Remember that Medi-Cal mental health money is only available to pay for mental health services. A reviewer will look at progress notes to see if a Mental Health Professional was needed to provide the service or if it could have been delivered by a lay person such as a family member, friend, neighbor, etc. If the documentation suggests a Mental Health Professional was not needed, the billing for the service may be recouped.

**DO** bill for mental health services that you provide within your

scope of practice. Many people have knowledge which exceeds the limitations of their scope of practice. Nonetheless, it is important to work within the parameters of your job description. If you are a therapist, dealing with medications is not in your scope of practice, just as therapy is not in the scope of practice of a Community Mental Health Specialist, Personal Services Coordinator, Rehabilitation Specialist, Case Manager, or other similar staff categories.

**DO** properly divide the billing for group services among all group members. Group billing must always be EQUALLY divided between all participants in the group using the group formula. The group formula must be applied to all group participants, not just Medi-Cal recipients. The components of the group formula must be clearly identified on the progress note. These include: total actual service time or the face to face group time, total documentation time, total travel time, number of group facilitators, and the number of clients. Also remember, when a group member leaves early or arrives late, be sure to adjust the group formula for that client to reflect the reduction in service time.

Those are some of the "Do's" when documenting for services. Next month's Spotlight on Documentation will provide a host of "Don'ts" when it comes to documentation.



This story is quoted from the Blue Sky Wellness Center Website

Blue Sky Wellness Center was developed with the primary focus on a basic mental health recovery principle: dispensing hope, having freedom of choice, modeling self-determination and personal responsibility, and the fact that we can and do heal from a mental health diagnosis. Blue Sky is

consumer directed and consumer driven. All staff is presently or has been a past consumer of mental health services.

Self-help and peer support are the foundation of our peer community. Staff provides a safe environment where we come together to socialize, participate in peer support groups, and volunteer our talents. This connection is a deep holistic understanding based on mutual experience where people are able to be together without the constraints of traditional (expert/patient) relationships. We have out grown the role of "mental patient" and have taken a wellness posture of mental health advocate with peer support as our backbone.

Blue Sky offers a culture of wellness, recovery and a strength-based attitude as opposed to a culture of dependency, disability and illness. We dispel the assumption of a developed career as a "mental patient" and model the undoing of the cultural process that a diagnosis is forever.

There is no club joining, membership fee, or referral to attend Blue Sky; only the willingness to take the first step and the choice to come through the front door. We are truly wellness and recovery focused with daily choices in support groups, a variety of activities, computer availability, library, weekly clothes closet, and a gym for personal use. Consumers are welcomed by consumer volunteers at the consumer center, where they are greeted with a smile and offered compassion and respect. For more information, click on:

<http://blueskywellnesscenter.org>

## Newsletter Artwork ☘

Have you ever notice the amazing artwork that adorns the front of each Managed Care Newsletter? Each month we feature artwork of at least one Fresno County Mental Health client. We are very proud of our clients and grateful for the talent and gifts they have to share.