



Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Employer Recommendations

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Recommendations for Action

- Meant to guide employers
- Divided into recommendations for:
 - Health Plan
 - Employer Oversight
 - Workplace
- Employers are encouraged to assess their existing networks and add recommendations to contract language if needed

Recommendation 1

Challenge: Provider Networks

- Ensure a comprehensive network of active providers
- If needed, direct MCOs/MBHOs to add providers that can adequately deliver child and adolescent behavioral health services
 - MCOs/MBHOs should have standards for inclusion in provider networks

Recommendation 2

Challenge: Provider Networks

- Assess and address availability of culturally-competent and ethnically-diverse providers
 - Health plans can request information from network providers regarding race, ethnicity, and language
 - Consider your own employee diversity when looking at the diversity of providers within the network

Recommendation 3

Challenge: Coverage

- Ensure primary care screening and assessments are reimbursed
 - Reimburse for screenings and assessments with resulting v-code diagnoses
 - Reimburse screenings in same manner as lab test
 - Use screening instruments standardized for use with children and adolescents

Recommendation 4

Challenge: Coverage

- Provide coverage for a full range of treatment options
- Assess network for providers proficient in evidence-based therapies
 - cognitive-behavioral therapy
 - family-focused therapy
 - Parent-training programs
 - Interpersonal therapy

Recommendation 5

Challenge: Supporting Collaborative Care

- Support Collaborative Care: design benefit plans to reimburse primary care and mental health providers for:
 - Telephonic consultation
 - School mental health service providers, teachers and parents
- Two major mechanisms for payment:
 - Clinical CPT codes; or
 - MCO, MBHO, EAP vendor or management company administrative payments



Recommendation 6

Challenge: Supporting Collaborative Care

- Consider providing a designated case manager for coordination and continuity of care through:
 - Employed through EAP or health plan
 - Develop communication plans (including routine updates) for providers and other caregivers.

Recommendation 7

Challenge: Supporting Collaborative Care

- Monitor continuity and coordination of care between general medical and behavioral health services
 - Ensure seamless and appropriate behavioral health care
 - Request evidence from vendors about how they coordinate behavioral health care

Recommendation 8

Challenge: Supporting Collaborative Care

- Work with health plans to:
 - provide primary care providers access to a list of in-network mental health professionals skilled in the care of children and adolescents, accepting referrals and are willing to work collaboratively.
 - Consider tele-providers when geographic area has few or no providers.



Recommendation 9

Challenge: Supporting Collaborative Care

- Employers should work with their managed care providers to:
 - Develop a means of releasing/accepting school records, avoiding duplicative costs of assessments and screenings.
 - Follow HIPAA regulations in the transfer of records.

Recommendation 10

Challenge: Mgmt. of prescription medications

- Adopt a nationally accepted best-practice guideline with MBHOs, MCOs, Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) for dispensing of and prescribing of psychotropic drugs to children and adolescents.



Recommendation 11

Challenge: Mgmt. of prescription medications

- Work with MBHO/MCO to verify that patients prescribed psychotropics receive periodic and routine follow-up. Diagnosis, treatment plan and follow-up care should be documented in the patient's medical record.

Recommendation 11, continued

Challenge: Care coordination

- Follow suggested guidelines when referring to specialty care:
 - Document that patient was referred, reason, and notify MBHO that a referral was made
 - Primary care physician should (with patient's permission) contact specialty care clinician and advise of the need for the referral and any relevant data.



Recommendation 12

Challenge: Collecting and Analyzing Data

- Identify and develop a process for coordinating data collection between MBHOs, MCOs and the PBM. Use this information to assess the value of the mental health interventions.
- Identify care gaps and work to develop a plan for performance improvement

Recommendation 13

Challenge: Collecting/Analyzing Data

- Desired analyses should be conducted within the scope of the normal annual contract.
- Identify reports of interest during contract negotiations to avoid unforeseen costs.

Recommendation 14

Challenge: Improving Work-Life Benefits

- Implement programs and policies that decrease caregiver strain and improve work-life balance
 - Flexible leave policies
 - flexible work practices



Recommendation 15

Challenge: Improving Work-Life Benefits

- Assess and review caregiver resources available through EAP services. EAPs should:
 - Assess caregivers
 - Encourage family counseling
 - Provide support services
 - Ensure an inventory of child specialists
 - Offer advocacy services
 - Host educational seminars

Recommendation 16

Challenge: Organizational Culture

- Educate all levels of organization about mental illness
 - Mental disorders require care as do chronic diseases
 - Promote early recognition and treatment of mental health disorders (EAPs can help provide some services)