



November 2020

Accessible Outpatient Mental Health Care

Dear Provider,

Making mental health a priority is important, especially while we're dealing with the unknowns of a global pandemic. Encourage patients to use TRICARE's mental health benefit, which allows for outpatient mental health services, such as psychotherapy, and telemental health that is medically or psychologically necessary to treat a covered mental health disorder. This includes any combination of individual, family, collateral or group sessions.

Did you know most TRICARE beneficiaries can self-refer for outpatient mental health care/telemental health without a referral? We appreciate your support in seeing patients without delay.

When is a referral *not* required?

- TRICARE-certified mental health counselors (TCMHCs) can see most TRICARE patients without a referral and without physician oversight. (See active duty service member (ADSM) exception below.)
- TRICARE Prime beneficiaries (excluding ADSMs) who see network providers do not need a referral. TRICARE Prime patients who see non-network providers without an HNFS-approved referral are subject to Point of Service fees.
- TRICARE Select beneficiaries do not require an approval from HNFS.

When is a referral and/or physician oversight required?

- Care received from supervised mental health counselors, supervised licensed pastoral counselors and supervised licensed professional counselors must be ordered and supervised by a physician (MD or DO) to be covered under TRICARE.
 - For these providers, if a TRICARE patient self-refers for care, you must get a written physician referral (also known as a script) prior to rendering services. The referring physician must agree to provide oversight of the treatment. You do not need to submit a separate referral request to HNFS for approval.
 - When submitting claims, you must include the referring physician's name and National Provider Identifier (NPI) in order to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Active duty service members (ADSMs) must have a referral from their primary care provider approved by HNFS for all civilian mental health services, except for services authorized under Military OneSource.

For more information on TRICARE's mental health and telemental health benefits, visit www.tricare-west.com > *Provider > Benefits & Copays > Benefits A-Z > Mental Health*.

Thank you for your continued partnership in caring for our military service members, retirees and their families.

Proudly Supporting Our Nation's Heroes and Their Families

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