Promoting wellness and recovery

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TO: Medicaid Providers of Community Mental Health Services

FROM: Douglas L. Day, Chief, OhioMHAS Bureau of Health Integration DLD

RE: Community Mental Health Family Therapy as Behavioral Health Counseling and Therapy Service.

In February of 2011, a request was submitted to the Ohio Department of Mental Health (now the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)) regarding recognition of family therapy as a Medicaid service. While OhioMHAS and the Ohio Department of Medicaid are not currently in a position to establish new billing codes under Medicaid for family therapy, we can clarify how family therapy may be provided and covered under Medicaid as the behavioral health counseling and therapy service.

Current Billing Options for Community Mental Health - Behavioral Health Counseling and Therapy Service:

HCPCS	Required Modifier	Service
H0004	HE	Individual Counseling
	GT	Individual or Group Counseling via Interactive Video Conferencing
	HQ	Group Counseling

OhioMHAS requirements for mental health services define behavioral health counseling and therapy in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5122-29-03, which states that when a child or adolescent is the beneficiary served, interactions may also occur with family members, parent(s), guardian(s) and significant others as long as the intended outcome is improved functioning of the child or adolescent and these types of interventions are included in the child or adolescent's individual service plan. Based on this definition, OhioMHAS' Office of Licensure and Certification has agreed that family therapy may be categorized as the current behavioral health counseling and therapy service as long as the rule conditions are met.

OhioMHAS has conferred with the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) regarding coverage criteria applicable to this community mental health service, which are found in OAC 5101:3-27-02. While the Medicaid rule defers to the OhioMHAS rule; there is an additional qualifier in this rule, specifically paragraph (F)(2), which defines a billable unit of service. That provision states that "face-to-face contact with family members, parent, guardian and/or significant others for children or adolescents receiving behavioral health counseling and therapy . . . when the purpose of the contact is directed to the exclusive benefit of the Medicaid eligible beneficiary" can be a billable unit of service.

Based upon the OhioMHAS service rule and the ODM Medicaid coverage rule requirements for community mental health services, behavioral health counseling and therapy services, including family therapy provided face-to-face with family members, parent(s), guardian(s), and/or significant others on behalf of a child or adolescent that directly benefits the child or adolescent, may be billed to Medicaid.