



Greater Columbia Behavioral Health

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Basic Documentation Elements for Reporting Medicaid Services

During this contract year's provider primary data verification auditing there were some fairly consistent findings across agencies. It was apparent that most clinicians are not aware of all the basic elements required to properly document Medicaid reported services. Sometimes the clinicians' failure to document correctly is driven by agency forms that do not allow for the basic elements to be captured. Please review all your agency forms to ensure that they include all these basic elements. It is also suggested that clinical staff who deliver and document service delivery and administrative staff who input the data be trained on the importance of these elements.

Documentation Elements

- Date, time of day and place service delivered
- Length of service delivery (actual client time, e.g., 15, 30, 45, 60 minutes; one and one half hours)
- Correct CPT/HCPCS code for service delivered
- Description of service delivered that includes interventions provided during the encounter:
 - The description of the service should demonstrate how it is tied back to the treatment plan
 - Continuity of care should be evident in description. Hence, the progress note should reflect commentary on the effect of changes to the treatment plan that may have recently been done (as an example – when a medication was changed during the last appointment, the effect should be noted in the next prescriber note).
 - The description should have enough detail to cover the time spent delivering the service
- Legible staff signature that includes name (not initials), title or role and degree
 - Staff that perform the service must report the service
 - Multiple staff cannot report for the same service time

Additionally, we found the following documentation related issues:

- Legal documentation in charts without supporting chart notes
- Identical or virtually unchanged progress noting from session to session
- Changes to charting (strikeouts/whiteouts) not initialed by staff
- Travel time with consumers is reportable only when noting supports interactions with the consumer related to the ITP