



# Provider Alert

**ALERT #79**

**November 4, 2009**

## **ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION FOR IN-HOME THERAPY PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS**

*The following information should be noted immediately to your chief executive officer, chief operating officer, program director, billing director, and staff.*

**This *Provider Alert* corresponds to the In-Home Therapy Services Performance Specifications and should be reviewed alongside that document. The purpose of this *Alert* is to provide additional clarification regarding the requirements of providers who provide both components of In-Home Therapy Services, i.e. In-Home Therapy and Therapeutic Training and Support. In addition to the requirements set forth in the In-Home Therapy Services Performance Specifications, the following staffing requirements must be met in order to provide this service.**

As noted within the In-Home Therapy Services Performance Specifications, In-Home Therapy Services are delivered by one or more members of a team consisting of professional and paraprofessional staff, offering a combination of medically necessary In-Home Therapy and Therapeutic Training and Support. Practitioners must be working under an employment or contractual arrangement with one of the following: outpatient hospitals, community health centers, mental health centers, and other clinics and private agencies certified by the Commonwealth.

In-Home Therapy is a structured, consistent, strength-based therapeutic relationship between a licensed clinician and the youth and family for the purpose of treating the youth's behavioral health needs, including improving the family's ability to provide effective support for the youth to promote his/her healthy functioning within the family. Interventions are designed to enhance and improve the family's capacity to improve the youth's functioning in the home and community and may prevent the need for the youth's admission to an inpatient hospital, psychiatric residential treatment facility, or other treatment setting. In-Home Therapy is provided by a qualified clinician who may work in a team that includes one or more qualified paraprofessionals.

The following practitioners may provide the professional component of In-Home Therapy as described above:

- LICSW
- LCSW
- LMFT
- LMHC
- Licensed psychologist
- Master's-level counselors\*
- Marriage and family therapy interns\*

- Mental health counselor interns\*
- Psychiatric nurse mental health clinical specialists
- Psychiatric nurse mental health clinic specialists trainee
- Psychiatric nurses
- Psychiatrists
- Psychiatry residents
- Psychology interns

Therapeutic Training and Support is a service provided by a qualified paraprofessional working under the supervision of a licensed clinician to support implementation of the clinician's treatment plan to assist the youth and family in achieving the goals of that plan. The paraprofessional assists the clinician in implementing the therapeutic objectives of the treatment plan designed to address the youth's mental health, behavioral and emotional needs. This service includes teaching the youth to understand, direct, interpret, manage, and control feelings and emotional responses to situations and to assist the family to address the youth's emotional and mental health needs.

The following practitioners may provide any component of therapeutic training and support as described above:

- Associate-level counselors/paraprofessionals
- Bachelor-level counselors/paraprofessionals.

#### **Associate-level counselors/paraprofessional**

Associate-level counselors/paraprofessionals must have an associate's degree in a human services field from an accredited academic institution and one (1) year of relevant experience working with families or youth. If the associate's degree is not in a human services field, additional life or work experience may be considered in place of the human services degree. Associate-level counselors/paraprofessionals are supervised by a licensed clinician with one of the following credentials: LICSW, LMFT, LMHC, LCSW, LADC I, Psychologist, Psychiatric Nurse, or Nurse Clinical Specialist.

#### **Bachelor-level counselors/paraprofessional**

Bachelor-level counselors/paraprofessionals must have a bachelor's degree in a human services field from an accredited academic institution and one (1) year of relevant experience working with families or youth. If the bachelor's degree is not in a human services field, additional life or work experience may be considered in place of the human services degree. Bachelor-level counselors/paraprofessionals are supervised by a licensed clinician with one of the following credentials: LICSW, LMFT, LMHC, LCSW, LADC I, Psychologist, Psychiatric Nurse, or Nurse Clinical Specialist.

If you have questions regarding this *Alert*, please contact our Community Relations Department at **1-800-495-0086 (press 1 for the English menu, 2 for the Spanish menu, then #3 then #1 to skip prompts)**, Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

\* Note that all unlicensed master's level counselors and/or interns must provide services under the direct supervision of a LICSW, LMFT, LMHC, LCSW, LADC I, Psychologist, Psychiatric Nurse, or Nurse Clinical Specialist consistent with applicable state licensure requirements.