PCC Plan Referral Changes

As of October 1, 2016, the following services require PCC referrals:

- Chiropractor services
- Orthotic services
- Hearing Instrument Specialist services
- Prosthetic services
- Imaging services conducted by an Independent Diagnostic Testing Facility (IDTF), and
- Medical Nutrition Therapy/Diabetes Nutrition Management Training

PCCs who determine the services listed to be medically necessary for their patients must now enter a referral in the Provider Online Service Center (POSC) before the patient is scheduled to receive the referral service. Retroactive referrals can also be issued as long as the PCC agrees the service was medically necessary at the time it was provided.

When making referrals, consider the Member's prior relationship with a specialist; the Member's choice; location; and whether the specialist is a MassHealth provider. **MassHealth will not pay for the services unless they are provided by**
**Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Pilot Program**

As of December 1, 2016, MassHealth began a **one-year ACO pilot program**. ACOs are groups of doctors and other health care providers who work together to help Members stay healthy and meet their health care needs. ACOs will coordinate care and be accountable for the care of MassHealth Members assigned to them. The goal of the ACO pilot is to help MassHealth Members receive more coordinated and integrated care.

As the result of a competitive procurement process, MassHealth selected six ACOs to participate in the pilot program:

- Boston Accountable Care Organization
- Children's Hospital Integrated Care Organization
- Community Care Cooperative
- Partners Care Connect
- Steward Medicaid Care Network
- UMass Memorial Healthcare

Members whose PCCs are participating in the ACO pilot will have received a letter from MassHealth prior to December 1, 2016. The letter reminds them who their PCC is, introduces the ACO pilot, and provides them with details specific to their ACO.

**Benefits for Members in the ACO pilot will not change.** Members will continue to get the same MassHealth benefits as they do now. Also, Members' provider network will not change. Members can continue to access the entire MassHealth PCC provider network including Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) providers. Finally, Members will continue to use their current MassHealth ID card.

MassHealth has posted a [Provider Bulletin](#) with additional details related to ACO pilot.

This pilot will inform MassHealth and stakeholders about the impacts of this model on our Member and provider communities and will better prepare us for **full ACO implementation anticipated in December 2017**.

Please visit [MassHealth Innovations](#) for details and updates.
works with PCC Plan providers to support quality of care for PCC Plan Members. This is accomplished through site visits conducted by PCC Support Managers, who are employed by the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) and work out of five regional offices. Visits are conducted annually with PCCs having 80 or more PCC Plan Members in their panel, focused on:

- ensuring that PCCs treat Members in accordance with their PCC Plan provider contract;
- educating PCCs about resources offered by the PCC Plan and MBHP, including behavioral health services and MBHP's Integrated Care Management Program (ICMP); and
- supporting PCCs in their efforts to increase medical and behavioral health integration.

The PCC Support Managers work closely with others at MBHP, including regional behavioral health and care management staff and the PCC Plan Hotline.

To learn more, contact Amy Rosenstein, PCC Plan Support Services Program Director, at (617) 790-4186 or amy.rosenstein@beaconhealthoptions.com.

Introducing Recovery Learning Communities and Recovery Support Centers

Peer support workers can be found in a variety of both traditional behavioral health settings as well as in a number of community-based, peer-run programs.

Recovery Learning Communities and Recovery Support Centers are valuable resources for persons struggling with mental health challenges or addictions. These programs provide information, peer support, advocacy, and community-based activities free of charge with no referrals required. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes peer support as an evidence-based practice and a key component in recovery from behavioral health conditions. Funded by the Department of Mental Health and the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services respectively, Recovery Learning Communities and Recovery Support Centers are located in all regions of Massachusetts. Not everyone is aware of these services, so providers might consider discussing these resources with their patients who have behavioral health concerns.

More information on Recovery Learning Communities
More information on Recovery Support Centers
More information on other peer support resources

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Words Matter!

The language we use can impact both services offered and attitudes towards persons with behavioral health conditions. It can also affect whether or not persons even seek treatment for such issues. **Stigma is a major barrier** to seeking help for many persons in need of treatment for mental health and/or substance use disorders. A recent survey published by the Parent/Professional Advocacy League reports that one in four parents surveyed felt that their child was treated differently in the emergency room for medical reasons once staff learned the child had a mental health diagnosis.

For example, words like "abuser," "dirty," or "frequent flyer" convey disrespect and disregard. Calling someone a schizophrenic rather than a person with schizophrenia signals that they are nothing more than a diagnosis.

A core message in Massachusetts' current #StateWithoutStigMA campaign is that words can either reinforce stigma or help to dismantle it. Additionally, Beacon Health Options and the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness are engaged in a national campaign to reduce stigma against both mental health and substance use disorder issues called Stamp Out Stigma.

For more information:
- [Addiction Treatment Forum: Stigma Article Series: Part 1 - Patients with Opioid Addiction Continue to Face Stigma](#)
- [Mental Health Association of Portland Media Guide: Your Language Matters when Writing about Mental Illness](#)
- [Mental Health Coordinating Council Recovery-Oriented Language Guide](#)