



MassHealth
Managed Care Entity Bulletin 76
December 2021

TO: Managed Care Entities Participating in MassHealth
FROM: Amanda Cassel Kraft, Assistant Secretary for MassHealth
RE: **Behavioral Health Urgent Care Providers**

Applicable Managed Care Entities and PACE Organizations

- Accountable Care Partnership Plans (ACPPs)
- Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)
- MassHealth's behavioral health vendor
- One Care Plans
- Senior Care Organizations (SCOs)
- Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Organizations

Background

As part of the Baker-Polito Administration's [Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform](#), MassHealth is establishing a process for MassHealth-enrolled Mental Health Centers (MHCs) to qualify as Behavioral Health Urgent Care providers. As detailed below, Behavioral Health Urgent Care providers must increase timely access to treatment for MassHealth members, including offering same- or next-day appointments and night and weekend hours. This new process furthers the Commonwealth's goals of providing the right behavioral health services inclusive of mental health and addiction treatment, where and when people need them.

This bulletin, effective January 1, 2022, describes the Behavioral Health Urgent Care program and establishes the requirements for Accountable Care Partnership Plans (ACPPs), Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), and the MassHealth behavioral health vendor (MBHP) (collectively "MCEs") regarding MHCs that are participating in the Behavioral Health Urgent Care program and that are a part of the MCE's network.

Additionally, this bulletin guides the MassHealth behavioral health vendor to identify MHCs that wish to participate in the Behavioral Health Urgent Care program. EOHHS will inform MCEs of which MHCs have been designated as Behavioral Health Urgent Care providers.

Provider Participation Requirements

Beginning January 1, 2022, the MassHealth behavioral health vendor will administer an attestation process to designate MHCs as Behavioral Health Urgent Care providers. To qualify as a Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider, the provider must satisfy the following requirements:

- The MHC is enrolled in MassHealth as a provider of MHC services pursuant to 130 CMR 429.000;
- The MHC is able to provide appointments for diagnostic evaluations for new clients on the same or next day of clinic operation, when clinically indicated based on initial intake;
- The MHC is able to provide appointments for all existing clients with an urgent behavioral health need on the same or next day of clinic operation;
 - Urgent behavioral health needs are characterized by changes in behavior or thinking, role dysfunction, emerging intent of self-injury, or threats to others, but do not include immediate risk of harm to self or others;
- The MHC is able to provide urgent psychopharmacology appointments and Medication for Addiction Treatment evaluation within 72 hours of an initial diagnostic evaluation and based on a psychosocial assessment;
- The MHC is able to provide all other treatment appointments including follow-up appointments within 14 calendar days;
- The MHC has extended appointment availability, including:
 - At minimum, 8 hours of extended appointments on Mondays through Fridays outside of the hours of 9am-5pm,
 - At minimum, two 4-hour blocks of appointments on weekends per month;
- The MHC meets the reporting requirements in this bulletin; and,
- The MHC makes member experience surveys available to all clients.

The MassHealth behavioral health vendor must ensure that MHCs interested in providing Behavioral Health Urgent Care at multiple sites submit a separate attestation form for each location. A MHC must meet the requirements above for each site that it wishes to enroll in the Behavioral Health Urgent Care program.

Attestation Submission

The MassHealth behavioral health vendor must make an electronic attestation form available to MHCs interested in becoming Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider. The attestation form must be in the form of Appendix A, or as such form may be modified from time to time by EOHHS. The MassHealth behavioral health vendor must collect the attestation forms from MHCs interested in participating in the Behavioral Health Urgent Care program between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022. Eligibility will be determined and effective within 30 days of the date of submission. After that time, the deadline to submit the attestation form will occur on a quarterly schedule as follows:

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Date Due	Eligibility
August 1	October 1
November 1	January 1
February 1	April 1
May 1	July 1

Any provider that fails to fulfill any of these requirements or that is unable to serve members as intended will not be considered a Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider. Any Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider must inform the MassHealth behavioral health vendor immediately if it is no longer able to meet the requirements, above.

Reporting Requirements

The MassHealth behavioral health vendor must collect quarterly reports from Behavioral Health Urgent Care providers and provide the reports to MassHealth. The quarterly reports must include:

- Percentage of total quarterly visits provided during extended appointment hours;
- Percentage of total quarterly initial evaluations completed within 1 day of clinic operation following the first contact;
- Percentage of total quarterly initial evaluations completed during extended appointment hours;
- Percentage of total quarterly urgent visits for existing clients completed within 1 day of clinic operation;
- Percentage of total quarterly urgent visits completed within 1 day of clinic operation occurring during extended appointment hours;
- Percentage of total quarterly urgent psychopharmacology appointments that occur within 72 hours of initial diagnostic evaluation;
- Percentage of total quarterly Medication for Addiction Treatment appointments that occur within 72 hours of initial diagnostic evaluation;
- Percentage of total quarterly routine or follow-up visits completed within 14 calendar days of initial contact; and,
- Percentage of total quarterly routine or follow-up visits completed within 14 calendar days of initial contact that occur during extended appointment hours.

Such requirements are subject to change, as directed by EOHHS.

Contracting and Rates

Effective February 1, 2022, MCEs will be required to pay no less than the rates designated by MassHealth, to be added to Appendix T to the ACPP and MCO contracts and Appendix L to the

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MassHealth behavioral health vendor contract, for the specified services provided by MHCs that are designated as Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider sites. MCEs will be required to pay these rates by using appropriate codes with the Urgent Care modifier, GJ, as directed in Appendices T and L. The minimum rates constitute a 15% increase over the current minimum rates for the specified services. All MCEs are required to pay no less than the enhanced rates for the specified services provided at any Behavioral Health Urgent Care provider site in the MCE's provider network.

Additional Information

For an example of the attestation form, please see the attached document, "Appendix A."

For the latest information on the Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform, visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/roadmap-for-behavioral-health-reform>.

Questions

For all questions about the Behavioral Health Urgent Care attestation process, please use the contact information found on the [Attestation Form](#) or email BUrgentCareAttestation@beaconhealthoptions.com. For general questions about Behavioral Health Urgent Care, please contact MassHealthOBHQuestions@mass.gov.