



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICE FAQ'S

Q. What are the new Behavioral Health Benefits under Medi-Cal Expansion?

A. Medi-Cal expansion has added new health plan outpatient behavioral health benefits for all Medi-Cal members. These new benefits include individual and group therapy, psychiatric consultation, outpatient psychiatric services, psychological testing when clinically indicated to evaluate a mental health condition, and outpatient laboratory/medications/supplies and supplements.

Q. Who is providing these new benefits?

A. LA Care has contracted with Beacon Health Strategies Provider Network for this set of new benefits. Beacon, a Managed Behavioral Health Organization, also provides behavioral health services for L.A. Care's other lines of business.

Q. What Behavioral Health Services are in the scope of a PCP's practice?

A. A PCP will continue to be responsible for routine screening for emotional health; medication treatment and monitoring for mild to moderate common conditions such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, other stabled mental health conditions (for on-going medication), etc; and, brief counseling/support/education. Moreover, you will also be responsible for the new SBIRT services for alcohol misuse.

Q. What is SBIRT?

A. SBIRT stands for screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment. Besides routine health education on alcohol and drug uses, PCP will now be required to conduct screening for individuals who answer positive to the single alcohol screening question included in the Staying Healthy Assessment or any time you identify someone with a potential alcohol misuse problem.

Q. What is included in the SBIRT services?

A. All SBIRT services must be provided by a PCP or an SBIRT trained non-licensed staff under the PCP/NP/PA/Psychologist supervision. The services include one screening session and up to three brief intervention sessions of 15-minute each in-person or via phone. PCPs are required to have a minimum of four hours of SBIRT training.

Q. Where can I get the SBIRT training?

A. Information on SBIRT training and resources can be found on the California Department of Health Care Services at <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov>

Q. Are there any changes to county mental health services?

A. LA County Department of Mental Health (DMH) will continue to provide the specialty mental health services. And, the LA County Department of Public Health/Substance Abuse Prevention & Control (DPH) will continue to be responsible for Drug Medi-Cal services.

Q. How do I know when and where to refer patient for behavioral health services when it is beyond my scope of practices?

A. When treatment for a mental health condition is beyond your scope of practices or when patient did not response to the SBIRT services you should refer the patient to the next appropriate level of care. To assist you with this process we have developed a screening tool. This screening tool, with step-by-step instruction, can be found [here](#) or on the Useful tools section. However, you may refer a patient directly to Beacon if you are not able to determine if the patient should be referred to DMH, Beacon or DPH. No Prior Authorization for Behavioral Health services are required.

Q. How do I contact Beacon Health Strategies?

A. You can contact Beacon at any time by calling 1-877-344-2858.

Q. If I am not a Beacon contracted Behavioral Health Provider, how do I proceed with providing continuity of care to an LA Care member?

A. You will need to contact Beacon Health Strategies to arrange for continuity of care with your practice. You may consider participating in Beacons Network. Beacon will work with you to assure continuity of care for an L.A. Care member.

Q. How do I become part of Beacons Network?

A. Call Beacon at 1-877-344-2858. Someone will assist you right away and begin the process.