

Beyond MCPAP and Behavioral Health Screening: MassHealth Home- and Community-Based Services for Children and Families

More than four years after implementation of the behavioral health screening requirement at all MassHealth well-child visits, screening rates continue to rise. When faced with a young patient who may have behavioral health needs, most primary care providers (PCPs) know they can contact the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project (MCPAP), a system of regional children's mental health consultation teams, to receive advice and consultation on next steps. But what pediatricians and other primary family providers may not know is that MassHealth pays for a broad array of behavioral health services, including home- and community-based behavioral health services.

These home and community based behavioral health services fall into two basic sets. The first set consists of clinical "hubs": Outpatient Therapy, In-Home Therapy (IHT), or Intensive Care Coordination (ICC). A child may access one or more of these services. Clinical hub services provide a comprehensive behavioral health assessment and act as the central point of communication and coordination when the child is involved in more than one behavioral health service. Outpatient Therapy, IHT and ICC do not require a referral. The other set consists of "hub-dependent" services: Family Support and Training (FS&T, provided by Family Partners), In-Home Behavioral Health Services (IHBS), and Therapeutic Mentoring (TM). These services require a referral from Outpatient, IHT, or ICC. A list of providers of all of these services can be found through the MA Behavioral Health Access (MABHAccess) website at www.mabhaccess.com.

MassHealth also pays for Mobile Crisis Intervention (MCI), a short-term service providing mobile, onsite, face-to-face, therapeutic response. A Mobile Crisis team goes to any location to help stabilize the child or youth. If PCPs have a youth in crisis in their office, they can have the MCI team come to the office rather than sending the family to the ED. The team can remain involved up to seven days as medically necessary and will help the family to connect or re-connect to ongoing behavioral health services. A list of local MCI teams can be found on the MBHP website at www.masspartnership.com, in the "For BH Providers" section under "Important Contacts."

While families do not require referrals to access MCI, Outpatient Therapy, IHT or ICC, PCPs play an important role in informing families of MassHealth's behavioral health services and encouraging them to contact a provider of one of these services, who can then refer them for FS&T, IHBS, or TM. For ICC or IHT, PCPs can encourage the child's parent or caregiver to contact local providers directly. Provider staff will determine if the child or youth meets medical necessity criteria for the service. Providers delivering Outpatient therapy, as well as other behavioral health services, can be found by calling an HNE Member Services representative at 413.788.0123 or 800.786.9999.

The child's parent or caregiver can contact a provider directly, or PCPs may assist by either providing contact information or by calling the provider on behalf of the Member. To guide a conversation with families about services, PCPs can refer to the MassHealth brochure, "Worried About the Way Your Child is Acting or Feeling?" which can be ordered for free through MassHealth Customer Service or by visiting www.mass.gov/masshealth/cbhi; click on *CBHI Brochure and Companion Guide* on the right-hand side. The five regional versions of the brochure describe the services in family friendly language, are available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and soon, Haitian Creole, and list contact information for the MCI, ICC and IHT providers in each region.