



## United Behavioral Health: COVID-19 Updates on New York Clinical Procedure Changes (Circular Guidance)

Last update: April 1, 2020

The health of our members and the safety of those who deliver care are our top priorities. United Behavioral Health (dba Optum Behavioral Health) is taking action and providing resources to support our members and providers during this challenging time.

To support this, consistent with the New York order ([link here](#)) effective date of March 20, on a temporary basis, Optum Behavioral Health has aligned its utilization management practices with the order by the New York Governor and will suspend both prior authorization and concurrent review for inpatient (including residential) Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP) and Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP) that provide mental health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatments.

For 90 days following the effective date of the order, Optum Behavioral Health will take the following actions for inpatient (including residential) Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP) and Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP) providers that provide mental health and SUD treatments and are located in the State of New York:

- Optum will not perform prior authorization reviews for any inpatient, intensive outpatient or partial hospitalization treatment plans.
- Optum will not perform concurrent reviews for any inpatient, intensive outpatient or partial hospitalization treatment plans.
- Optum will continue to engage providers for the purpose of discharge planning and care coordination post-discharge.
- Providers are required to notify Optum of patient admissions within 48 hours.

Upon notification of admission, we will be available to assist you with:

- Supporting connecting members to available telehealth services
- Providing referrals to available Genoa pharmacies
- Assisting with after-care appointments
- Assisting with community resources
- Enrolling members in care coordination programs

Upon notification of admission, we will work with you to obtain the following information:

- Confirmation of Contact information
- Dates of follow up appointments, names of providers - need for tele-psychiatry/virtual visits
- Prescribed medications/name of prescriber/pharmacy if none refer to Genoa
- Release of Information requested/obtained
- Support system
- Is member in agreement with treatment plan and understands
- Barriers to compliance
- What gaps were identified in prior discharge plan
- Assessment of social determinants
- Member's current medical status/symptoms – fever, cough, difficulty breathing, body aches
- Does member have co-morbid medical conditions?
- Has member been tested for COVID-19? Date of test: Was result positive/negative/pending



This change in policy is effective for 90 days following the effective date of the order, but we may extend that date as necessary and will communicate through all appropriate channels.

Optum remains committed to supporting you, our network of behavioral health providers, during this unprecedented and challenging time. We want to thank and commend you all for the difficult work you are doing to support the delivery of care to our members as you also work to ensure your personal safety and wellbeing and that of your loved ones.

Optum Behavioral Health is continually monitoring this situation and if any further modifications to our normal processes are necessary to accommodate individuals impacted by COVID-19 we will communicate immediate updates on Provider Express [here](#).