Behavioral Health Care after an Emergency Department Visit or Inpatient Hospitalization
A Guide for Care Providers

We know how busy you are – and we want to help. This handout gives you at-a-glance information designed to help you address care opportunities for patients who were recently discharged from the Emergency Department or an inpatient hospital stay with a mental health or substance use diagnosis. The recommendations below are based on multiple Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measures.

Helping Patients Get the Care They Need
If you are aware of your patients who have recently been discharged from an Emergency Department or an inpatient hospital stay with a substance use or mental health disorder, you play an important role in ensuring that they receive appropriate follow-up care. The table below outlines how the HEDIS® measures stipulate when Primary care providers can and cannot provide the post discharge follow-up treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient Diagnosis</th>
<th>Discharge from Inpatient Hospital</th>
<th>Discharge from Emergency Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>PCP to refer patient to a mental health practitioner to be seen within 7 days of discharge</td>
<td>PCP to see patient within 7 days and bill with a mental health diagnosis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance Use</td>
<td>PCP to see patient within 7 days and bill with a substance use diagnosis.</td>
<td>PCP to see patient within 7 days and bill with a substance use diagnosis.</td>
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You can support your patients by referring them to behavioral health treatment for continued care. Even patients receiving medication from their Primary Care Provider still need post-discharge supportive therapy with a behavioral health clinician. Refer your patients to behavioral health treatment and emphasize the importance of supportive therapy as a supplement to medication. A licensed master’s level clinician, such as a therapist or social worker, can provide supportive therapy. If a situation arises where a patient is unable to be seen within 7 days, then they need to have an appointment within 30 days of discharge.

How to Make a Referral for Behavioral Health Treatment
- Call the mental health/substance use phone number on the back of the patient’s health plan ID card.
- Search liveandworkwell.com to find behavioral health or substance use providers in the Optum network.

For patients with substance use disorders, you can call the Optum Substance Use Disorder Helpline: 855-780-5955.