



To: All SUD and MH Direct Service Providers

From: Serina Sanchez and Will Gayowski, DHS-BHD Quality Assurance Managers

Cc: Chris Marlow, DHS-BHD QAPI Section Manager

Date: May 1, 2024

RE: Payment Reform Rules Related to Documentation Time

Hello Providers,

We would like to remind you of the following:

As of July 1, 2023, documentation time cannot be included in the SmartCare Face to Face/Service Time field for any rendered services that requires direct client care.

As part of the CalAim Behavioral Health Payment Reform initiative, the Department of Health Services (DHCS) is moving counties away from cost-based reimbursement to enable value-based reimbursement structures that reward better care and quality of life for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. In order to comply and align with the DHCS goal of modernizing the Medi-Cal payment methodology, all county staff and contracted agencies who claim to Medi-Cal for Specialty Mental Health Services must implement utilizing Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and Health Care Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes starting July 1, 2023.

Definition of direct client care: *Direct client care can include time spent meeting directly with the client, caregivers, significant support persons, and other professionals, unless procedure codes states client is required to be present for that service.*

If you need additional training or have questions on how this impacts your documentation, please email BHQA@sonoma-county.org