



axene health partners
HEALTH ACTUARIES & CONSULTANTS

Required Coverage and Reimbursement of Annual Behavioral Health Wellness Visits

Presentation to the Maryland Health Care Commission – November 16, 2023

Legislative Background

Senate Bill 108 introduced in the 2023 legislation

- **Key provisions**

- Treat behavioral health wellness visits the same as somatic wellness visits
- No cost-sharing

- **Status**

- Bill did not pass
- MHCC retained Axene Health Partners to perform appropriate fiscal, medical and social analysis in compliance with Article §15–1501

Key Points

There is currently a mental health crisis in the United States. One potential solution is to integrate behavioral health with primary care

- **About the crisis**

- In 2001 the suicide rate was 10.7 per 100,000. In 2021 the rate was 14.2 per 100,000.
- Depression cases rose 28% during the pandemic

- **Barriers to better health**

- Recognizing the existence of a problem
- Financial barriers
- Provider access

- **Potential solutions**

- Encourage behavioral health wellness visits by removing cost share
- Integrate behavioral health with primary care

- **Expected impact**

- Slight cost increase first year, followed by negligible impact
- Mandate clarity important to administer process and track results

About Clinical Wellness Visits

Wellness visits may be conducted in-person or on-line

- **Key components of a behavioral health wellness visit**
 - Assessment
 - Diagnosis and treatment
 - Prevention and health promotion
 - Resources
- **USPSTF A & B Screening Recommendations**
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Substance abuse

Financial Analysis (1/2)

If the legislation is not passed, then the cost of behavioral health wellness visits will be about 0.2% of total costs

			Baseline	Projected Costs					
			2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	
a.	Distribution of Members	Other Mental Illness	173	175	176	178	180	182	
b.		Serious Mental Illness	55	56	56	57	57	58	
c.		No Mental Illness	772	770	767	765	763	760	
d.		Total	1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
e.	Cost Per BH Wellness Visit	Allowed Costs	\$ 125	\$ 131	\$ 138	\$ 145	\$ 152	\$ 160	
f.		Cost Share	\$ 19	\$ 20	\$ 21	\$ 22	\$ 23	\$ 24	
g.		Net Paid	\$ 106	\$ 112	\$ 117	\$ 123	\$ 129	\$ 136	
h.	Patients Receiving Care	% Other Mental Illness	47.2%	47.2%	47.2%	47.2%	47.2%	47.2%	
i.		% Serious Mental Illness	65.4%	65.4%	65.4%	65.4%	65.4%	65.4%	
		Patients Receiving Wellness Visits	118	119	120	121	122	124	
j.	Total Costs BH Wellness Visits	Costs Per Visit	\$ 106	\$ 112	\$ 117	\$ 123	\$ 129	\$ 136	
k.		Total Costs	\$ 12,498	\$ 13,254	\$ 14,056	\$ 14,906	\$ 15,808	\$ 16,764	
l.	Annual Costs Per Patient	Other Mental Illness	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,490	\$ 8,014	\$ 8,575	\$ 9,176	\$ 9,818	
m.	(Excluding BH Wellness Visits)	Serious Mental Illness	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,700	\$ 11,449	\$ 12,250	\$ 13,108	\$ 14,026	
n.		No Mental Illness	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,420	\$ 6,869	\$ 7,350	\$ 7,865	\$ 8,415	
o.		Total	\$ 6,393,000	\$ 6,844,715	\$ 7,328,390	\$ 7,846,288	\$ 8,400,836	\$ 8,994,630	
p.	Total Costs	Including BH Wellness Visits	\$ 6,405,498	\$ 6,857,969	\$ 7,342,445	\$ 7,861,194	\$ 8,416,644	\$ 9,011,394	
q.	BH as a Percent of Total Costs	BH Wellness Visits	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	

Financial Analysis (2/2)

If the legislation is passed, more people will receive care and the total cost of care will increase the first year, followed by decreases after that

		Baseline 2023	Projected Costs				
			2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Distribution of Members	Other Mental Illness	173	175	176	178	180	182
	Serious Mental Illness	55	56	56	57	57	58
	No Mental Illness	772	770	767	765	763	760
	Total	1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Cost Per BH Wellness Visit	Allowed Charges	\$ 125	\$ 131	\$ 138	\$ 145	\$ 152	\$ 136
	Cost Share	\$ 19	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Net Paid	\$ 106	\$ 131	\$ 138	\$ 145	\$ 152	\$ 136
Patients Receiving Care	% Other Mental Illness	47.2%	48.1%	49.1%	50.1%	51.1%	52.1%
	% Serious Mental Illness	65.4%	66.7%	68.0%	69.4%	70.8%	72.2%
	Patients Receiving Wellness Visits	118	121	125	129	132	136
Total Costs BH Wellness Visits	Costs Per Visit	\$ 106	\$ 131	\$ 138	\$ 145	\$ 152	\$ 136
	Total Costs	\$ 12,498	\$ 15,905	\$ 17,204	\$ 18,610	\$ 20,131	\$ 18,509
Net Impact of Legislation on TCOC	Other Mental Illness	0%	3%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%
	Serious Mental Illness	0%	3%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%
	No Mental Illness	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Annual Costs Per Patient (Excluding BH Wellness Visits)	Other Mental Illness	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,715	\$ 7,934	\$ 8,490	\$ 9,084	\$ 9,720
	Serious Mental Illness	\$ 10,000	\$ 11,021	\$ 11,335	\$ 12,128	\$ 12,977	\$ 13,885
	No Mental Illness	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,420	\$ 6,869	\$ 7,350	\$ 7,865	\$ 8,415
	Total	\$ 6,393,000	\$ 6,901,808	\$ 7,307,823	\$ 7,824,061	\$ 8,376,815	\$ 8,968,671
Total Costs	BH Wellness Visits	\$ 12,498	\$ 15,905	\$ 17,204	\$ 18,610	\$ 20,131	\$ 18,509
	Other Costs	\$ 6,393,000	\$ 6,901,808	\$ 7,307,823	\$ 7,824,061	\$ 8,376,815	\$ 8,968,671
	Total Costs	\$ 6,405,498	\$ 6,917,713	\$ 7,325,027	\$ 7,842,671	\$ 8,396,946	\$ 8,987,180
Change Due to Legislation	Total Costs	\$ 0	\$ 59,744	\$ (17,418)	\$ (18,523)	\$ (19,698)	\$ (24,214)
	% of Total Costs	0.0%	0.9%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.3%

About Integrated Behavioral Health

Integrated Behavioral Health emphasizes treating the “whole person”

- **About the problem**

- 70% of patients with a behavioral health disorder have a medical comorbidity
- 30% of patients with a medical disorder have a behavioral health comorbidity

- **Potential benefits (per AMA)**

- Improved patient outcomes
- Reduced total cost of care
- Increased access behavioral health care

- **Legislative responses**

- Mental Health Parity
- 21st Century Cures Act
- National Suicide Hotline (988)
- Delaware passed legislation similar to S.B. 108
- Maryland Behavioral Health Crisis System Workgroup (2021 – 2022)

Administrative Issues

Most carriers cover behavioral health wellness visits with cost-share

- **Methodology**
 - Surveyed top 5 carriers
- **Current status**
 - If a behavioral health visit is recorded as preventive, it may be covered without cost-share
 - Some payers have a “preventive coverage policy”
- **Mandate concerns**
 - Some payers recommend integrated behavioral health approach to remove silos
 - Definition of behavioral health visit must be clear, including limits on number of behavioral health wellness visits
 - Coding is key to effective administration and tracking results

Questions

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