LME-MCO Communication Bulletin #J253

Date: May 30, 2017

To: LME-MCOs

From: Deb Goda, Behavioral Health Unit Manager, Community Based Services, DMA and Mabel
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Subject: Clinical Coverage Policy 8C: Outpatient Behavioral Health Services Provided by Direct-
               Enrolled Providers

This bulletin provides clarification to #J232 Clinical Coverage Policy 8C: Nurse Practitioner Credentialing and
informs LME-MCOs and providers about the amendment to Nurse Practitioner (NP) credentialing requirements
located in Clinical Coverage Policy 8C, Section 6.1.

Effective July 1, 2017, Clinical Coverage Policy 8C will be amended to reflect the following requirements
applicable to NPs not certified as Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNP):

- *Nurse Practitioners not certified as PMHNP may be eligible to provide psychiatric services to Medicaid
  beneficiaries if they meet all the requirements listed below, as demonstrated to the credentialing body of
  the Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP):*
      a. *Documentation that they have three (3) full-time years of psychiatric care and
         prescribing experience under licensed psychiatric supervision including psychiatric
         assessments and psychotropic medication prescribing; and*
      b. *A signed supervision agreement with a North Carolina Licensed Psychiatrist that covers
         prescribing activities; and*
      c. *Continuing education requirements, going forward, which include*
      *20 hours each year focused on psychiatric physiology, diagnosis, and psychopharmacology.
      (21 NCAC 36.0807)*

- *The PIHP credentialing body and the Medical Director are responsible for assessing the qualifications
  of Nurse Practitioners not yet certified as Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners and for*

monitoring the supervision and continuing education requirements.

- *Waiver of the requirement for three years of supervised psychiatric experience for a NP not yet certified as a PMHNP must be based on access needs of the PIHP, documented in the records of the credentialing body, approved by the PIHP Medical Director, and reassessed on an annual basis. Other details in items b. and c. above apply.*

The goal in developing this policy was to assure that qualified NPs are working within the behavioral health system and to recognize the need for flexibility so that access to services would not be impacted. As you implement this policy, we are asking you to:

- Avoid any action that would eliminate the ability to practice for a NP not certified as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, who has less than three years of experience and is currently practicing in your network, unless there is a quality of care issue.
- Consult with your providers about ongoing needs to employ or contract with NPs not certified as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner with less than three years of experience.

Additionally, we intend to establish a work group with LME-MCO representatives and state staff to develop a standard procedure for providers to request a waiver of the three years of experience.

Thank you for your work on this important issue.

If you have questions, please contact Kelsi A. Knick at Kelsi.Knick@dhhs.nc.gov or 919-855-4288.

Previous bulletins can be accessed at:
http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsas/joint-communication-bulletins

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