

March 1, 2021

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You are receiving this letter to advise you of changes that have been implemented by the organization that manages your Medicaid benefits, Colorado Community Health Alliance (CCHA). CCHA has created a new policy that starting March 1, 2021, their members will be allowed 20 mental health sessions for the duration of the year without the need for preauthorization. When a member has reached their 20<sup>th</sup> session for any outpatient mental health service, their provider(s) must complete a prior authorization request to acquire approval for more sessions.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that additional sessions will be granted. As much has not been made clear yet about this policy and the specifics about how providers should proceed, we are still gathering information on the timeframe for approvals/denials, what information they will require from providers, and the criteria used to approve or deny more sessions.

Starting March 1, 2021, all clients' session counts begin at zero. Your provider will keep track of your sessions and will advise you of when you are nearing the 20-session limit. However, if more than one outpatient provider is billing for mental health services with your Medicaid ID (with you as the identified patient), all of those sessions are counted towards the twenty. Therefore, it is imperative that you keep all of your providers informed of any services you receive with other providers, as there is no other way for your providers to know how close you are to the twenty sessions being depleted.

As standard practice, providers will discuss the progress clients are making towards their treatment goals, collaborate together on whether a prior authorization for additional services is necessary, and create a plan attempting to limit any disruptions to therapeutic services. If additional sessions are denied, providers will collaborate with their clients on next steps in the process. It is possible to appeal a denial, however, at this time we do not have much information to share on this process.

We are sure that you have questions and concerns about this change in service. If you have concerns about the limitation of sessions for yourself or your child, please discuss this with your provider(s). We will document your concerns and answer any questions we are able to answer. We will also provide you with updated information when we receive it.

As a mental health community, we are working together to find additional resources for support for clients and their families when additional sessions are denied by CCHA and mental health care is still a needed resource. If you would like to share your thoughts, concerns, and experiences with this new change in service by CCHA you may contact those listed below:

CCHA Member Support Services

Region 6 (Boulder, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson counties)

303-256-1717

Region 7 (El Paso, Park, and Teller counties)

719-598-1540

Both Region 6 and 7                    1-855-627-4685

CCHA Appeals and Grievances

<https://www.cchacares.com/for-members/appeals-and-grievances/>

Health Care Policy and Finance

Share your story at: [feedback@healthfirstcolorado.com](mailto:feedback@healthfirstcolorado.com)

Senator Rhonda Fields (Chair of Health and Human Services)

[Rhonda.fields.senate@state.co.us](mailto:Rhonda.fields.senate@state.co.us)

Attorney General Phil Weiser

<https://coag.gov/> (Under "About Us" click the "contact our office") or call

720-508-6000

Governor Jared Polis

<https://www.colorado.gov/governor/ask-help>

Constituent Services Help Line 303-866-2885

Governor's Office, Front Desk 303-866-2471

Marshall Zelinger (9news) *Note: There is a possibility of speaking on camera should they run a story :* [Marshall@9news.com](mailto:Marshall@9news.com)

Or if you would like to share your story and have the advocates at COMBINE send it to the above contacts, please file a complaint at: [www.combinebh.org](http://www.combinebh.org)

*COMBINE is a member driven nonpartisan registered small donor political committee advocating for a diverse, competent, and sustainable Medicaid behavioral healthcare workforce in Colorado.*

*Members are both professionals that provide Medicaid behavioral healthcare and the public.*