

Endorsement:

2012 Behavioral Health: Preauthorization Changes



This *2012 Behavioral Health: Preauthorization Changes* endorsement is made a part of your Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM) health care plan benefit booklet and replaces or supercedes any previous information you may have received regarding preauthorization of mental health and chemical dependency services.

BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Watrin".

Elizabeth A. Watrin
President
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico

Effective for dates of service falling on or after January 1, 2012, preauthorization for outpatient individual, family, and group therapy visits related to mental disorders and/or chemical dependency is no longer required. You will continue to need preauthorization for psychological testing, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), neuropsychological testing, and intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatments.

How To Use This Benefit Booklet

Effective on January 1, 2012, the paragraph "Call the Behavioral Health Unit for Preauthorization" is replaced in the *How To Use This Benefit Booklet* section of your booklet with the following paragraph:

Call the Behavioral Health Unit for Preauthorization — All inpatient and specified outpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit at the phone number below (also listed on the back of your ID card). For services requiring preauthorization, you or your physician should call the Behavioral Health Unit **before** you schedule treatment. The Behavioral Health Unit will coordinate covered services with an in-network provider near you. If you do not call and receive authorization before receiving nonemergency services, benefits for services may be reduced or denied. Call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day:

Toll-Free Phone Number: 1-888-898-0070

How Your Plan Works (or Preauthorizations)

Effective on January 1, 2012, in the *How Your Plan Works or Preauthorizations* section of your benefit booklet, replace "Preauthorization of Mental Health/Chemical Dependency Services" with the following provision:

Preauthorization of Mental Health/Chemical Dependency Services — All inpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card. Preauthorization is also required for outpatient psychological testing, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for treatment of mental disorder and/or chemical dependency.

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Preauthorization is **not** required for outpatient/office group, individual, or family therapy visits to a physician or other professional provider licensed to perform covered services under this health plan.

For services needing preauthorization, you or your health care provider should call the BHU **before** you schedule treatment. **NOTE:** Your provider may be asked to submit clinical information in order to obtain preauthorization for the services you are planning to receive. Services may be authorized or may be denied based on the clinical information received. (*Clinical information* is information based on actual observation and treatment of a particular patient.)

If you or your provider do not call for preauthorization of nonemergency **inpatient** services, benefits for covered, medically necessary inpatient facility care may be reduced by an amount that is equal to the preauthorization (or admission review) penalty, if any, indicated for medical/surgical admissions. If inpatient services received without preauthorization are determined to be not medically necessary or not eligible for coverage under your Plan for any other reason, the admission and all related services will be denied. In such cases, **you may be responsible for all charges.**

If preauthorization is **not** obtained before you receive psychological testing, IOP treatment, or electroconvulsive therapy, your claims may be denied as being **not medically necessary**. In such cases, **you may be responsible for all charges.** Therefore, you should make sure that you (or your provider) have obtained preauthorization for outpatient services *before* you start treatment.

Covered Services

Effective on January 1, 2012, replace the paragraph for “Preauthorization Required” in *Covered Services: Psychotherapy (Mental Health and Chemical Dependency)* with the following paragraph:

Preauthorization Required — All inpatient mental health and chemical dependency services must be preauthorized by the Behavioral Health Unit at the phone number listed on the back of your ID card. Preauthorization is also required for outpatient psychological testing, neuropsychological testing, intensive outpatient program (IOP) treatment, and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) for treatment of mental illness and/or chemical dependency. Preauthorization is **not** required for outpatient/office group, individual, or family therapy visits to a physician or other professional provider licensed to perform covered services under this health plan. You or your physician should call the Behavioral Health Unit **before** you schedule treatment. If you do not call before receiving nonemergency services, **benefits for covered services may be reduced or denied** as explained in the *How Your Plan Works (or Preauthorizations)* section, earlier. In such cases, you may be responsible for all charges, so please ensure that you or your provider have received preauthorization for any services you plan to receive.