

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act 2008, mandates that health plans and self-insured employers offer the same level of coverage for mental health and substance abuse disorder benefits as they provide for medical and surgical benefits. This new law will become effective in October 2009.

This new legislation means that health plans operating in most states will face a complex overlap of state and federal mental health parity laws, presenting significant confusion around how to effectively prepare to comply. Plus, with projected increases in behavioral health care costs estimated to reach \$2M per 100K covered lives, MHP compliance means that health plans will need to look for creative ways to mitigate the costs before it hits their bottom line.

Synthesis Mental Health Parity Planning: Now's the Time to Prepare!

Synthesis Mental Health Parity Planning is designed to help health plans meet the rapidly approaching deadlines for complying with Federal Mental Health Parity. This consultative engagement will outline the specific state and federal requirements your health plan will need to meet in order to comply with the Mental Health Parity & Addiction Equity Act 2008. Further, it will identify opportunities to save money and achieve greater behavioral and medical health integration while meeting the increased cost and regulatory demands of this new legislation.

The Mental Health Parity

Act becomes effective

October 2009.

Will you be ready?

Health Integrated can help.

Synthesis Mental Health Parity Planning includes:

- A two-day on-site consultation with senior Health Integrated behavioral health experts that explores
 - the health plan's behavioral health benefits structure
 - compliance levels with existing state mental health parity laws through an in-depth, 10-point evaluation of current behavioral health management approaches.
- A comprehensive findings report on federal MHP impact on the plan, including:
 - an interpretation of both state and federal parity laws
 - recommended behavioral health benefits modifications in order to meet regulatory compliance
- A summary of the health plan's opportunities for mitigating costs related to MHP compliance, including:
 - proposed changes to existing behavioral health management practices, such as
 - utilization management
 - case management
 - outsourcing behavioral health management
 - reimbursement strategies
 - network management approaches
 - a go-forward strategy for achieving the modifications

Who will be Impacted and How

Though the law specifies some exemptions, in general, Mental Health Parity Act will impact commercial health plans that offer mental health and addiction benefits to employer groups of 50+ employees.

By changing the cost and lifting limitations, there will likely be an increase in accessibility and utilization of mental health benefits. At a

minimum, health plans would be prudent to implement utilization review and establish criteria to define treatment necessity and appropriateness.

Health plans who have outsourced to an MBHO will likely see an increase in fees for the additional services provided, making now an excellent time to evaluate alternative methods for managing behavioral health benefits. By carving-in behavioral health management health plans can save \$400K in administrative costs per 100K covered lives.

Considering Carve-In

Before you sign for higher MBHO rates as a result of Mental Health Parity, take time to evaluate what model of behavioral health management makes sense for your health plan.

Carving-in behavioral health management provides the potential for overall medical cost savings through better use of in-house expertise with respect to network management, customer service, and claims payment while reducing the overall cost of delivering the services.

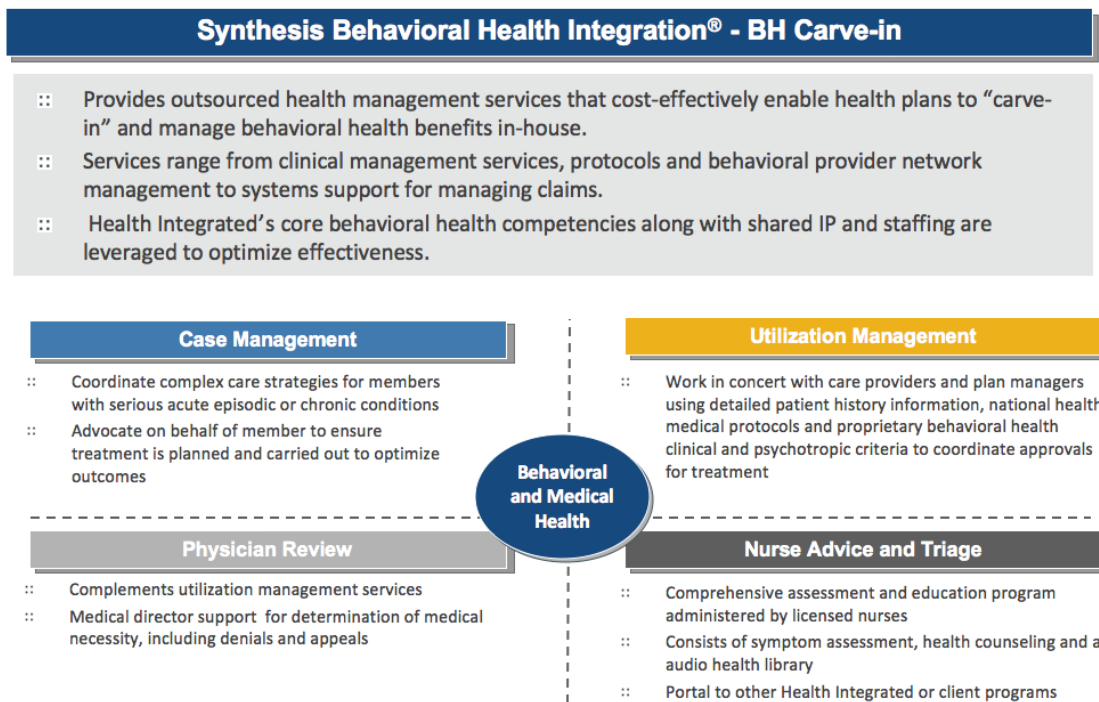
Further, Health plans that manage behavioral health in-house are better able to co-manage members with behavioral and medical co-morbidities and the “hidden” behavioral costs delivered by non-behavioral specialists. An integrated approach can also lead to:

- improved clinical outcomes
- more integrated quality management
- improved member satisfaction
- stable and consistent network management
- higher provider satisfaction
- integrated reporting

Synthesis Health Management Services

Through our Synthesis product line, Health Integrated provides a full range of consulting, personnel and systems to support health plans in evaluating, supplementing or re-integrating some or all aspects of behavioral health management.

Synthesis Behavioral Health Integration® is specifically designed to provide a proven path to quickly establish behavioral healthcare as an additional component to your business. We work in partnership to provide as much or as little support as your plan needs to accomplish this goal.



Get Started Today!

October is on its way. Give us a call today at (800) 323-0286 to schedule a presentation on Synthesis Mental Health Parity Planning.

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