

FEP Provider News

Follow-up after emergency department visit for mental illness

What we measure

We capture emergency department (ED) visits for members ages 6 and older with a diagnosis of mental illness, who received a follow-up visit for mental illness. Two percentages are measured and reported:

- ED visits for which the member received follow-up within 30 days of the ED visit (31 total days)
- ED visits for which the member received follow-up within 7 days of the ED visit (8 total days)

Why it matters

Follow-up care for people with mental illness is linked to fewer repeat ED visits, improved physical and mental function and increased compliance with follow-up instructions, according to NCQA. In its national survey, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration found that more than 51 million adults ages 18 and older in the U.S. had a mental illness in the previous year, while about 40 million adults received mental health services during that time.

Tips to consider for EDs

- Help our members schedule an in-person or telehealth visit within 7 days.
- Educate members about the importance of following up with treatment.
- Focus on member preference for treatment, allowing members to take ownership of the treatment process.

Tips to consider for providers

- Encourage members to bring their discharge paperwork to their first appointment.
- Educate members about the importance of following up and adhering to treatment recommendations.
- Use the same diagnosis for mental illness at follow-up visits. A non-mental illness diagnosis code will not fulfill this measure.
- Coordinate care between behavioral health and primary care physicians:
 - Share progress notes and updates.
 - Include the diagnosis for mental illness.
 - Reach out to members who cancel appointments and help them reschedule as soon as possible.

Resources

National Committee for Quality Assurance, HEDIS® Measurement Year 2023 Volume 2 Technical Specifications for Health Plans



BlueCross
BlueShield

Federal Employee Program.

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