Aetna Pediatric Behavioral Health Management Program

Supporting pediatricians in the diagnosis and treatment of mood and behavior problems

The Aetna Pediatric Behavioral Health Management Program is designed to support pediatricians in the diagnosis and treatment of mood and behavior problems. The program is open to Aetna participating pediatricians treating any Aetna member 5 to 18 years of age who has Aetna medical and behavioral health benefits.

What the program offers pediatricians:
- Reimbursement for pediatric screenings and telephone consultations
- Facilitated access to a child psychiatrist

How the program works

After completing a thorough clinical history and medical assessment, as well as a behavioral screening tool (e.g. Pediatric Symptom Checklist) for a patient presenting with behavioral health issues, the pediatrician may select from the following options the pathway that appears most reasonable:

- Pediatrician is comfortable managing the patient, and does not request the involvement of a psychiatrist.
- Pediatrician has questions about prescribing medication and consults with the assigned child psychiatrist. The pediatrician then prescribes/monitors the patient.
- Pediatrician consults with the psychiatrist and it is jointly decided that a face-to-face evaluation by the psychiatrist is indicated, which is accommodated expeditiously. When the pediatrician and psychiatrist mutually agree, the pediatrician resumes monitoring the patient.
- Pediatrician wants the entire responsibility for the patient’s behavioral health care transferred to the psychiatrist, which is accommodated preferentially. A copy of the psychiatrist’s evaluation is sent to the pediatrician for the child’s records.

Reimbursement available for pediatricians and psychiatrists

All telephone consultations are reimbursable services for both the psychiatrist and the pediatrician.

The pediatrician’s office can bill each screen by submitting a claim with billing combination:
- Dx Code: V79.9 (Unspecified mental disorder and developmental handicap) and
- Procedure code: 99420 (Administration and interpretation of Health Risk Assessment Instrument)
Pediatricians are reimbursed for telephone calls, with the psychiatrist, by submitting a claim with billing combination:

- **Dx Code**: V79.9 (Unspecified mental disorder and developmental handicap)
- **Procedure code**: 99443 (Telephone evaluation and management service provided by a physician to an established patient, parent or guardian not originating from a related E/M service provided within the previous 7 days nor leading to an E/M service or procedure within the next 24 hours or soonest available appointment)

Psychiatrists are reimbursed for telephone consultations, with the pediatrician, by submitting a claim with billing combination:

- **Dx Code**: V79.9 (Unspecified mental disorder and developmental handicap)
- **Procedure code**: 99443 (Telephone evaluation and management service provided by a physician to an established patient, parent or guardian not originating from a related E/M service provided within the previous 7 days nor leading to an E/M service or procedure within the next 24 hours or soonest available appointment)

Procedure code 99443 requires that the pediatrician has completed the screening, and that both the pediatrician and the psychiatrist participate in the program. The pediatric outpatient E&M codes and psychiatric outpatient codes for face-to-face evaluation and management are reimbursed per current agreements.

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