



*******Provider Alert*******

TO: Chemical Dependency/Substance Abuse Providers
FROM: Robin A. Cunningham
Director, Provider Relations
DATE: March 27, 2007
SUBJECT: NorthSTAR/Medicare Benefit Coordination for CD/SA services

NorthSTAR members who have Medicare Part A benefits can access inpatient CD care and/or Partial Hospital CD programs. When Medicare members are clinically appropriate for these benefits, they will be asked to utilize them rather than NorthSTAR CD benefits.

ValueOptions will review requests for IOP for Medicare recipients on a case by case basis, taking into consideration both Medical Necessity Criteria and logistical barriers to access to Partial Hospitalization at the two NorthSTAR area hospitals that provide this level of service to Medicare recipients (Timberlawn Hospital and Hickory Trail Hospital).

Medicare does not cover outpatient counseling if the presenting diagnosis is Chemical Dependency or Substance Abuse. Therefore, NorthSTAR members with Medicare who only have CD/SA diagnoses may access SOP or other outpatient CD counseling benefits through NorthSTAR.

For individuals with co-morbid mental health diagnoses, a COPSD approach is in alignment with the state's goals for coordinating CD and MH care. This approach allows for Medicare reimbursable counseling under mental health counseling codes. Please note that for Medicare to reimburse outpatient counseling, it must be provided by persons with LCSW licensure, a psychiatrist, or a Ph.D. psychologist. NorthSTAR members with co-morbid MH diagnoses should be referred to appropriate providers to utilize their outpatient Medicare counseling benefit.

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