1999 - 2000 Ventura County Grand Jury Report

Mental Health Billing Follow-Up

Ventura County Behavioral Health Department Mental Health Billing Follow-up

This report by the 2000-2001 Ventura County Grand Jury covers the efforts that the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department is undertaking to correct mental health billing irregularities. This report discusses the changes in procedures and policies and the progress in the implementation of training requirements mandated by the Integrity Agreement, which became effective on November 4, 1999.

Background

In the late 1980s through early 1990s, Ventura County received special funding from the State of California to develop and implement a system of care for children with serious mental illness. A team-oriented approach, termed the Ventura Model, served as a blueprint for several other counties under state sponsorship.

The team concept provided integration of social services as well as medical services for enrolled patients diagnosed with recognized mental illnesses. Under the auspices of a team comprised of experts in all areas of proposed treatment and support, patients had access to support services, not just for themselves, but for their families.

Initially, all teams included at least one psychiatrist and patient records reflected approved treatment plans as required by Medicare. Over time, more emphasis was placed on MediCal requirements and some teams operated without a psychiatrist in attendance. Eventually, this lack of direct psychiatrist involvement with the patient for Medicare billing was to prove a costly error for the County.

In April 1998, the Board of Supervisors voted to place the Behavioral Health Department into the Human Services Department. The fact that the professional psychiatrists were now seen to be under social services broadened the existing gulf between some medical professionals and some social service caregivers, and major morale problems developed. One medical professional became a "whistle blower" and filed suit against the County in federal court for filing false and fraudulent billing for Medicare claims.

As a result of the lawsuit, the County of Ventura was compelled to pay a consent judgment for 15.3 million dollars and submit to a 5-year Integrity Agreement for training and oversight to assure the correctness of all future billing.

Methodology

The 2000-2001 Ventura County Grand Jury reviewed the Integrity Agreement between the Ventura County Medical Center and the Office of the Inspector General (federal). Meetings were held with the Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) Compliance Officer and the Manager of Patient Accounting for the VCMC. Documents which were reviewed included the VCMC Compliance Program Manual, Utilization Review Procedures, Utilization Review results, revised charge tickets and training implementation results.

Findings

- F-1 The Integrity Agreement was intended to correct Medicare Outpatient Mental Health billing problems. The Agreement covers the five-year period which commenced on November 4, 1999.
- F-2 The Integrity Agreement consists of two key elements:
 - 1. Compliance Training
 - 2. Production of a Policy and Procedures Manual.
- F-3 Ernst and Young, a consulting firm, was hired to conduct the mandated independent review of compliance and to audit billing. They will audit 5% of the charts, which is double the industry standard.
- F-4 Compliance Training started November 4, 1999, and trained 2,300 people during the first four months. Those trained included reimbursement personnel, providers and contractors.
- F-5 All contractors and employees are being screened and are removed from consideration if any fraudulent activity is uncovered in their background.
- F-6 A Policy and Procedures Manual was developed as a result of the Integrity Agreement and is referred to as the Compliance Program Manual. This manual does not replace Ventura County's General Administrative Manual, the Human Resources Manual, County and Health Care Agency Policies, applicable labor agreements or any other policies of VCMC that give specific guidance to the daily activities of VCMC and its departments. The Compliance Program Manual sets forth the key elements needed to implement VCMC's obligations under the Integrity Agreement. The Table of Contents of this manual is shown in Attachment 1.
- F-7 A confidential Compliance Hotline that guarantees no retaliation has been established; it documents all complaints and responses and utilizes specialized health care counseling for complaints.
- F-8 A Utilization Review Committee was established to review patient record charts. During the year 2000, 60% of all patient charts were reviewed which is double the industry standard. An example of a utilization review procedure is shown in Attachment 2.
- F-9 A summary chart for the outpatient 5% billing chart review is shown in Attachment 3.

VCMC COMPLIANCE PROGRAM MANUAL **Table of Contents** 8. Responding to External Investigations Responding to Subpoenas and Search Warrants 8.1. Responding to Fiscal Intermediary, Carrier and PRO Audits 8.2. 8.3. **Responding to Government Investigations** 9. Compliance with Federal and State Fraud and Abuse Laws 9.1. Anti-Kickback Self-Referral Laws 9.2. 9.3. **Physician Recruitment** 9.4. State Corporate Practice of Medicine 9.5. Inducements to Lower Utilization Provision of Inducements to Patients 9.6. 9.7. Waivers of Coinsurance 9.8. Vendor Contracts 9.9. Vendor Contracts - Off-Site Contractors **10.** Patient Care and Rights 10.1. (This section deleted.) 10.2. Patient Freedom of Choice/Disclosures of Financial Interest 10.3. Independent Contractor Credentialing 10.4 (This section deleted.) 10.5. Treatment Plans **11. Business Office** 11.1. Financial Records 11.2. Medical Necessity - Patient Services 11.3. Medical Necessity - Laboratory and Radiology Services 11.4. Outpatient Billing prior to Inpatient Stay 11.5. Refunding Overpayments and Credit Balances 11.6. Laboratory Standing Orders 11.7. Revenue & Usage Reports 12. Ethics 12.1. Entertainment and Gift Policy 12.2. Prohibition Against Gifts to Federal, State or Fiscal Intermediary Employees 13. Medical Records/Coding 13.1. Continued Education Policy for Coding Staff 13.2. Prohibition Against Contingency Based Coding Arrangements 13.3. Coding Staff - Employee Orientation 13.4. Availability of Coding Reference Materials 13.5. Prohibition Against Incentive and Bonus Plans for Coding Employees 13.6. Coding Related Documentation - Outpatient Services 13.7. Provider Based Policy 13.8. Reimbursement of Teaching Physician Services 14. Reimbursement 14.1. Cost Report Documentation 14.2. Cost Report Disclosure Statements 14.3. Reporting Cost Report Errors 14.4. Independent Review of Cost Reports 14.5. Fiscal Intermediary Audits of Cost Reports Treatment of Non-Allowable Costs 14.6. 14.7. Treatment of Protested Items 14.8. Continuing Education Policy for Reimbursement Personnel 14.9. Reimbursement Manual Policy 14.10. Policy Regarding Cost Report Representation 14.11. Physician Billing Numbers

Attachment 1- VCMC Compliance Program Manual Table of Contents

- F-10 An example of a Master Treatment Plan, which was developed as part of the Policy and Procedures Manual, is shown in Attachment 4.
- F-11 The error rate in chart preparation uncovered by the first review has been 40%.
- F-12 The Problem Oriented Record computer program used for outpatient billing has been significantly improved to facilitate out-patient billing for Medicare.
- F-13 Onsite training is being provided by outside experts from Ernst and Young, a consulting firm.
- F-14 Billing charts have been updated. (See example in Attachment 5.)
- F-15 Staffing of open positions is still a problem. Certain staff skills are difficult to find. Human Resources' hiring procedures can be lengthy.

Conclusions

The Grand Jury concludes as a result of its analysis of the above findings that:

- C-1 Compliance Training which began on November 4, 1999 is a key element of the Integrity Agreement and is proceeding and being accomplished as scheduled. F-1, F-2, F-4, F-12
- C-2 The Policy and Procedures Manual, which is the second key element of the Integrity Agreement, has been completed. This manual is an evolving document, which is changed as required. F-1, F-2, F-6
- C-3 Auditing of Charts is being accomplished as required by the Integrity Agreement. F-3, F-8, F-9, F-10
- C-4 Billing charts are more user friendly. F-14
- C-5 Staffing is a problem. Vacancies take an inordinate amount of time to be filled. F-15
- C-6 More scrutiny is being exercised in background screening of contractors and employees. F-5

Recommendations

R-1 Revamp County hiring procedures so that appropriate priorities are established by Human Resources for filling critical vacancies. C-5

Commendations

The VCMC Compliance Organization together with Patient Accounting are doing an outstanding job under difficult conditions. They are an excellent example of skillful and dedicated Ventura County personnel. C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-6

Responses

Director of Behavioral Health, R-1

Director, Ventura County Health Care Agency, R-1

Director, Human Resources Division, R-1

VENTURA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	POLICIES	AND PROCEDURE	s ,	1					
UTILIZATION REVIEW FOR OUTPATIEN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES CLINICS	IT	PROCEDURE NO.: UR1	Page 1 of 2						
DEPARTMENT: UTILIZATION REVIEW	E DATE: F	REVISION DATES:							
AFFECTS: ALL DEPARTMENTS	21/00	REVIEW DATES:		1					
APPROVED BY: Marfiel Lite Milling OW	(David &	hi	11					
Lead Author Composition	-	Behavioral Health Director/Med	ical Director						
Ought Mändstehen Metical Dector		Compliance Officer							
POLICY:									
Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) continuously clinical documentation, to ensure that all services provid In addition, Utilization Review (UR) ensures that all char by documentation, and that all subsequent billing is done	ed are med ges for serv	lically necessary and /ices rendered are ful	appropriate.						
To ensure an objective review, UR must be performed b service delivery for the client whose records are being re	y individual eviewed.	s that are not involve	d in the						
⁷ JR facilitates giving feedback to clinicians so they can in documentation. UR data is reported in a monthly report (data can be observed over time.	nprove the see attache	quality and accuracy ed) so that trends and	of their I summary						
PROCEDURE:									
 VCBH will conduct UR on a random sample of 5% of had at least one billable service in the previous mont approximately 60% of all open charts in Adult, Child, with at least one billable service will be reviewed. 	h. This me	ans that within the ca	lendar vear.						
 Charts are selected randomly by the Information Sys identification number, using billing and client record d 	tems Depai lata.	rtment according to c	lient						
 Lists of 5% of charts selected per site will be printed Utilization Reviewers by the fifth of every month. 	by client na	me and site and distr	ibuted to the						
4. The Utilization Review Committee, led by the Quality random lists to ensure 60% of unduplicated clients' cl	Manageme	ent Medical Director,	monitors the						
randomnists to ensure of a of unduplicated clients of			NTY BEHAVIOF	RAL HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES					
		ilization Reviewers us	All helicteb c	checklist to inspect all charts (see attached). The checklist					
Page 1 of 2	is Ad	comprised of elements	s to ensure med . The checklist :	cal necessity, and compliance with all state, Federal and and any changes are the responsibility of the QM Medical					
		at the time of review, a R Reviewer, this is not tached to the review st	ed on the review	e checklist is not complete or qualitative in the eyes of the sheet, and the documentation is photocopied and					
	7. All potential deficiencies are forwarded to the Quality Management Physicians to review and final determination. If it is determined that a charting deficiency can be corrected (please re Documentation Standards Policy and Procedure) this is done. If remediation is not possible charges affected by the deficiency are posted on the Utilization Review Non-Authorized Billi Form.								
	8. Th	e Non Authorized Billin	ng Form is forwa	rded to the Billing Department to reverse charges.					
	tra	ining needs.		cording to Clinic and Clinician to determine trends and					
	mo req Co Ch clir are	nthly Utilization Revie juire further training. 1 mmittee. The monthly ild Outpatient and Cris nical staff, so that they e commented on and re	w Committee. T The Medical Dire reports are forv is Services for d can obtain perse eviewed at tne n						
	11. The monthly report is also forwarded to the Compliance Office and the Billing Manager for review								
	12. UR data for individual sites and staff are compiled and forwarded to the appropriate Medical Directors for review. Clinicians who fail to document their services adequately may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.								
	Co	mmittee for summary a	and reporting, ar	R is referred to the Quarterly Quality Improvement ad to the compliance office.					
	per per	e Medical Director of the reentage of review is re- riew will be reported ar	equired if trendin	view Committee may determine that an increased g information indicates this is necessary. This increased UR Monthly Report.					
	Page 2 of 2								

Attachment 2- Ventura County Behavioral Health Polices and Procedures

				ult Outpatient 5 ebruary 23, 2001					2/2:
Review, Period	ClientiID#Clinicia	n Items 200	Deficiencies Comments	Minutes® Disallowed®	Action Plan	Responsible Person	Target Date	Remediation	Date I Remediate
lov. 2000	6912 West Ventura	Assessment	17c, 19	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/29/01
lov. 2000	Ventura	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17b&c, 19, 23, 26	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/29/01
lov. 2000	Ventura	Assessment MTP	17c, 19	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/29/01
lov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	Individual therapy notes do not contain required components (I	0 non-MD)	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
lov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
lov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	0	0	None.	None.		NA	
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	32 - Note 11/30 note miscoded	0	Staff education 1570 note should be 1560	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Dr. notified of cod ing errors. Correc	1/26/01 ted.
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17, MTP signed late	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Memo to QA. Sta education comple	
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	Individual therapy & CN not approved on MTP potential disallowances	0	Still within 60 day window	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan	02/01/01	Dr informed of potential problem	1/26/01
ov. 2000	6932 Dntn Oxnard	Assessment MTP	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	6932 Dntn Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	6932 Dntn Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	17	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		Staff education completed.	1/26/01
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP	16, 19 New admit	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan		10	
ov. 2000	Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	16, 17 2/22/00 Psych Eval incomplete	. 0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan			
ov. 2000	6932 Dntn Oxnard	Assessment MTP Prog. Notes	16, 17, 33 Therapy Services reason & time frames not specifie	0	Staff education	Dennis Cain Dr. Duncan			

Attachment 3-Ventura County Behavioral Health Utilization Review

		Check if changed
Principal Diagnosis:		
Secondary Diagnosis:		
Other Diagnosis:		
Other Diagnosis:		
Axis III Diagnosis:		
Axis IV Diagnosis:		Axis V GAF:
and social features found during examin	t Documenting Medical Necessity: Provide tion, and any diagnoses to be ruled out. Patient r or probability of significant deterioration in an im	must meet the criteria for DSM IV diagnosis
		portain uter of me functioning.
		DECEIVED MAR 27 2001
Signatures + 0 N		
Signatures: A Supervising Physician's sign:	ure is required to approve the diagnosis.	
Supervisir - Dharisian O'		
Supervising Physician Signat Living Dev. Disab. Factors	re Please Print Physician N Sub. Abuse Factors Phys. Hith. Factors	Name Date Conserv/ Data Entry:
Arrangement Affecting MH	Affecting MH Affecting MH	Court Status
Y N Unk	Y N Unk Y N Unk	, , ,
Ventura County Behavioral Health		Name ID # Site
Mental Health Services	Adult & Older Adult	
Confidential Patient Information Welfare & Institutions Code 5328 and Evidence Code 1014	- Master Treatment Plan: Diagnostic Summary Page 1 of 3	
Revised 10/30/00 DM		

Attachment 4a-Ventura County Behavioral Health Utilization Review

Control Periods: 1-Jan/Jul 2-Fel	o/Aug []3-Mar/Sep	4-Apr/Oct	t 5-May/Nov]6-Jun/Dec	
Service authorization ends on last day of each con	ntrol period.	TBS Services	Psychological 7	Testing	
Medication Service: Start Date// Number of Visits Frequency: per w Symptoms and Functional Impairments:		Goals SHORT TERM (GOALS -		
Medication with Psychotherapy		LONG TERM G	OALS –		
☐ Individual and/or ☐GroupTherapy: Start I Number of Visits Frequency:per we Symptoms and Functional Impairments:		Completion Date Goals	2//		
Case Management: Start Date// Needs:	Goals Housing Benefits Medical Services Med Compliance				
Rehabilitation Therapy: Start Date/ Number of Visits Frequency: per w Identify strengths that need increased support:		Condition sta	tial demonstrated able and stationary prevention indicated		
By Signing This Form, the Supervising Physician generally accepted standards of medical practice, (a) clinically appropriate, reasonable and necessary in ten and (c) are reasonably expected to improve or maintain	services are needed to dia ns of type, frequency and d	y. The Supervising agnose or treat a m uration for the patier	ental illness; (b) that the nt's diagnosis as shown on	ordered services are Page 1 of this form;	
Service Clinician			// Date		
Team Leader			// Date		
Supervising Physician Signature			Date		
Mental Health Services	dult & Older A ster Treatmen Treatment Servi Page 2 of 3	t Plan:	Name ID #	Site	
Revised 10/30/00 DM					

Attachment 4b-Ventura County Behavioral Health Utilization Review

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evised 10/30/00 DM	Revised 10/30/00 DM						

Attachment 4c-Ventura County Behavioral Health Utilization Review

Cliniciar	Name	Ps		t Charge	Ith Service Ticket-O Special F	utpatie		Yes	No
					C",AE		"W", CalWORKs "N", None	les	140
CPT Code	TX Code	ASSESSMENT	CC Time	Total Time	CPT Code	Tx Code	MEDICATION MANAGEMENT	CC Time	Total Time
90801	1530	Assessment/Office			90862	1560	Med Inter/Pharmacologic Mgmt-Office		
90899 90801	1531	Assessment/Phone Assessment/Field			90899	1561	Med Inter/Pharmacologic Mgmt-Phone		
		SINTERVENTION			90862 M0064	1562 1568	Med Inter/Pharmacologic Mgmt-Field		
90801	1570	Crisis Intervention/Office			90899	1563	Brief Med Monitoring-Office Medication Given-Office		
90899	1571	Crisis Intervention/Phone			90899	1564	Medication Given-Field	•	
90801	1572	Crisis Intervention/Field				-	ACTIVE ASSESSMENT		
	EVALL	IATION AND MANAGEMENT			90802	1802	Assessment-Office	*	
99201	1901	New patient-10 min			90802	1803	Assessment-Field		
99202	1902	New patient-20 min				INTER	ACTIVE THERAPY		
99203 99204	1903 1904	New patient-30 min New patient-45 min			90810	1810	Individual 20-30 min-Office		·
99205	1905	New patient-60 min			90812 90814	1812	Individual 45-50 min-Office		
99212	1912	Established patient-10 min			90810	1814 1824	Individual 75-80 min-Office Individual 20-30 min-Field		
99213	1913	Established patient-15 min			90812	1826	Individual 45-50 min-Field		
99214	1914	Established patient-25 min			90814	1828	Individual 75-80 min-Field		
99215	1915	Established patient-40 min			90657	1552	Group - Office		
99241	1941	Office Consult-new/estab-15 min			90857	1553	Group - Field		
99242	1942	Office Consult-new/estab-30 min					ERAPY WITH EVALUATION AND MGM	π	
99243 99244	1943 1944	Office Consult-new/estab-40 min Office Consult-new/estab-60 min			90811	1811	Individual With E&M 20-30 min-Office		
99245	1945	Office Consult-new/estab-80 min			90813 90815	1813 1815	Individual With E&M 45-50 min-Office Individual With E&M 75-80 min-Office		
		THERAPY			90811	1831	Individual With E&M 20-30 min-Field		
90804	1546	Individual 20-30 min-Office			90813	1833	Individual With E&M 45-50 min-Field		
90806	1540	Individual 45-50 min-Office	-		90815	1835	Individual With E&M 75-80 min-Field		
80808	1547	Individual 75-80 min-Office				REHA	BILITATION		
90899	1541	Individual-Phone			90899	1543	Rehabilitation/Office		
90804 90806	1548 1542	Individual 20-30 min-Field Individual 45-50 min-Field			90899 90899	1544 1545	Rehabilitation/Phone Rehabilitation/Field		
90808	1549	Individual 75-80 min-Field			30033		MANAGEMENT/BROKERAGE		
90853	1550	Group-Office			90899	1500	CM/Broker Direct/Office		
90853	1551	Group-Field			90899	1501	CM/Broker Direct/Phone		
90846 90899	1510 1511	Family/Significant Other-W/O Client-Office Family/Significant Other-W/O Client-Phone			90899 99361	1502 1961	CM/Broker Direct/Field		
90846	1512	Family/Significant Other-W/O Client-Field			59301		Medical Conference With Team GEMENT INFORMATION CODES		
90847	1513	Family/Significant Other-With Client-Office				9001	No Case Made		
90899	1514	Family/Significant Other-With Client-Phone				9010	Collateral: Family/Significant Other		
90847	1515	Family/Significant Other-With Client-Field				9030	Assessment		
		PY WITH EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT				9035	Psych. Testing		
90805 90807	1805 1807	Individual With E&M 20-30 Min-Office				9040	Individual Therapy		
90809	1809	Individual With E&M 45-50 Min-Office Individual With E&M 75-80 Min-Office				9045 9050	Rehabilitation		
90899	1837	Individual With E&M-Phone				9050	Group Therapy Medication Support		
90805	1825	Individual With E&M 20-30 Min-Field				9070	Crisis Intervention		
90807	1827	Individual With E&M 45-50 Min-Field				9004	Case management		
90809	1829	Individual With E&M 75-80 Min-Field				9005	Job Development		
		04				9006	Job Coaching		
STATEM	ENT: 1			linicien er	coocible (on the continue indicate the this statu		
knowledg the client understar and/or St be, subm Justice; C provided Signatu	e and be 's written nd that j ate laws. itted upo Office of t without		accordance an, or Physor State fund ding this co Services; the d Human S	ce with the sician orde ds, and an ertificatior he Medi-ca iervices, o	law. The s rs. I certify y falsification of service al Fraud Union r their duty	or providi ervices w y that all on or cond will be ke it; Californ authoriz	Ing the services indicated on this claim, ar vere, to the best of my knowledge, provide information submitted on this claim is acc cealment of a material fact may be pro pol for a minimum period of 3 years from on nia Department of Mental Health, Californ ced representatives. I also acree that se	ed in accordance curate and comple osecuted under F date of service ar nia Department of	with te. I Federal nd can
		a County Behavioral Health					Name: ID #:	Site:	
	N	Aental Health Services							
		fidential Patient Information							

Attachment 5-Ventura County Behavioral Health Dept. Psychiatrist Charge Ticket Outpatient