

March 27, 2020

Dear New Directions Providers,

You are our strongest asset when it comes to improving member's health. That's why we want to connect with you as coverage of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to increase. The following resources may be helpful to you and those you serve:

Resources for you and your patients

- **Free emotional support line** is available 24/7 to absolutely anyone to connect with a licensed therapist. This may be helpful to increase access or support your patients between care. The number is 833-848-1764 and is answered by a clinician.
- **Tip sheets:** short handouts on things like dealing with coronavirus anxiety, xenophobia, talking to your kids about COVID-19, self-care tips, etc.
- Visit ndbh.com → **Resources** → **Self-help tools** for the latest on COVID-19 and a variety of articles and resources.
- This [CDC mental health link](#) provides behavioral health tips for coping during this time.

These resources are public-facing and available to all the people you work with, and therefore can be shared with anyone regardless of insurance, health plan affiliation, etc.

New Directions is prepared for the pandemic with:

- **A Business Continuity plan.** New Directions maintains a Business Continuity Plan that includes procedures for epidemic/pandemic illness for all New Directions service center areas. New Directions is monitoring the state of the Coronavirus outbreak through the CDC and WHO and will begin to implement internal procedures if the outbreak reaches a point deemed an epidemic and/or absenteeism affects more than 25% of the employee workforce. New Directions has the capability to re-distribute contact center calls within minutes using established protocols which designate backups for clinical care management activities.
- **Ability to serve members in a variety of ways, including remotely.** New Directions is working closely with our health plan partners to ensure the continued delivery of care to our members. We have been sending out direct communications to providers regarding plan specific nuances related to virtual care, telehealth and changes in benefits during the state of emergency.

Thank you for your continued partnership in caring for members, especially in challenging times like these.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do you have any resources I can share with my patients regarding COVID-19?

A: See our [tip sheets](#) for short handouts on things like dealing with Coronavirus anxiety, xenophobia, talking to your kids about COVID-19, self-care tips, etc.

Q: Where can I get information on whether my patient's care can be delivered using audio/visual and/or audio only communications (some health plans refer to these as telehealth, telemedicine or virtual visits)?

A: Please see health plan specific references to the COVID-19 crisis:

BCBS Kansas	https://www.bcbsks.com/CustomerService/Providers/news/2020/2020-03-17_how-bcbsks-is-responding-to-covid-19.shtml
BCBS KC	https://www.bluekc.com/consumer/covid-19.html , click on Providers
BCBS Michigan	https://provider.bcbsm.com/therecord/covid-19.html?hipaaState=off
BCBS Louisiana	https://providers.bcbsla.com/-/media/Files/Providers/2020-03-Telehealth-Covid-19-Communication-pdf.pdf?la=en
BCBS Alabama	https://providers.bcbsal.org/portal/web/pa/resources/-/resource/viewArticle/XBPIOAUGB https://www.ndbh.com/Providers/BCBSAL/Resources
BCBS Arkansas	https://www.arkansasbluecross.com/docs/librariesprovider9/default-document-library/providersnews-march-2020-508.pdf
BCBS Florida	https://www.floridablue.com/providers/covid-19-information https://www.ndbh.com/Providers/FloridaBlue/Resources

Q: Can EAP services be delivered via telehealth?

A: Yes. Telehealth services may be provided for the duration of the declared COVID-19 health crisis or until further notice from New Directions. Providers are encouraged to use telehealth to support the health of our members, providers and the community, and ensure services are uninterrupted. Please follow all applicable state and federal laws, as well as clinical best practices. Note: public-facing sites such as Facebook Live and Twitch should NEVER be used for telehealth.

Q: Do EAP authorizations need to be modified for telehealth services?

A: No, existing EAP authorizations do not need to be modified. When you bill for sessions, please notate if the sessions were face-to-face, telephonic or audio/video.

Q: Are reimbursement rates different if services are provided via telehealth? ndbh.com

A: No, the reimbursement rates for telehealth services will be identical to services provided in-person.

Q: Can EAP services be delivered telephonically?

A: Yes. According to the New Directions EAP Provider Agreement, any non in-person service delivery specifically mentioned in the EAP Provider Manual as an approved delivery is permitted. The EAP Provider Manual allows for the use of telephonic services. New Directions reimburses for telephonic sessions at the same rate as face-to-face sessions. Providers may use an existing authorization to switch to and deliver telephonic sessions during the declared COVID-19 health crisis and until further notice from New Directions. There is no need to contact New Directions for modifications to the authorization.

Q: Can EAP billing submission be delivered electronically?

A: No. All billing should still be sent via fax or postal mail. The information on where to fax or mail is provided on the EAP authorization. There are a number of services available that provide the ability to fax via a computer. Please contact EAPbilling@ndbh.com directly if you have any billing questions or concerns.

Q: Whom can I contact for more information or specific questions about my concerns or client needs?

A: Please coordinate care with New Directions by calling the member's program number. If you are unsure of this number, refer to the member's benefit card. If you have other concerns. Please contact your network representative.