

Inpatient facility:

Follow-up care after hospitalization leads to successful patient outcomes



One of the best things we can do for a member who has experienced a psychiatric/substance abuse hospitalization is to ensure they *have* and *keep* an aftercare appointment with a **behavioral health provider—preferably within seven days—but may occur within 30 days of discharge**. This important step contributes to aftercare compliance and helps prevent readmissions.

You play a vital role in helping members receive **timely ambulatory follow-up appointments after hospitalization** from an acute care setting:

- Begin discharge planning on the day of admission and include the utilization review staff, discharge planner, member's family, significant others, guardian, or others as desired by the member.
- Provide members with follow-up appointments with a behavioral health provider to occur **within seven days** but may occur within 30 days of discharge from an acute inpatient setting. *The seven-day appointment can be with a behavioral health therapist and does not need to be with a psychiatrist.*
- Ensure members have an actual verified appointment, *not a walk-in appointment.*
- Even if a member discharges over a weekend, ensure that aftercare appointments are in place at the time of discharge.
- Contact Magellan for a list of behavioral outpatient network providers or to assist with any scheduling challenges.
- Note that appointments with PCPs do not count as behavioral health appointments, even if the PCP has prescribed the member's psychotropic medication in the past. Also, discharging to a group home, ALF, AA or NA **solely** is not an appropriate discharge plan.
- Engage the member by having them call the provider while still in inpatient care. Do not instruct the member at discharge to set their own appointment, as doing this puts members who aren't able to schedule on their own at risk for not getting the follow-up services they need.
- Explain the benefits of aftercare so the member understands the importance of keeping follow-up appointments.
- Verify that the aftercare plan is a good fit for the member (e.g., transportation isn't problematic, appointment time works).
- Involve and educate the member's family/support system to encourage the aftercare plan.
- Reinforce the importance of staying on medication and notifying you of any side effects.
- Schedule a telehealth appointment with a behavioral health practitioner if that's a desired option. Magellan can assist you with scheduling. *Confirm member benefits/authorization requirements prior to scheduling.*
- **Share the discharge plan with Magellan as soon as possible following discharge**, as this assists the ambulatory follow-up team in making outreach to confirm the member's attendance at their aftercare appointment and/or assisting the member with rescheduling aftercare appointments.

Ambulatory Follow-Up Contact:
Care Worker/Discharge Team
P.O. Box 1926
Maryland Heights, MO 63043
(P) 1-800-201-8316
(F) 1-888-656-1806

Thank you for your continued collaboration! The tips above align with NCQA requirements and – more importantly – help members receive the services they need.