

# Mental Health VS Substance Abuse: **When to Treat and Whom to Bill**

# Assessments: What to Treat and When to Refer

- If a Member is under the influence and suicidal a Mental Health screen should be requested once the Member is cognizant enough to participate in a screen.
- If a Member has substance dependence, but also reports significant emotional distress or symptoms that could be caused by a mental illness, refer for a Mental Health assessment or screen.
- Refer for a Mental Health screen **only** when the situation is an emergency. Otherwise refer the Member to a KHS provider for a psychiatric evaluation.

# Assessments: What to Treat and When to Refer (continued)

- If a Member presents in an ER and needs to be undergo detoxification do not refer for a Mental Health screen until the Member is medically stable.
- If a Member presents in an ER and needs to undergo detoxification, and does not appear to have any suicidal ideation or homicidal ideation, and no obvious psychiatric symptoms, refer for a Substance Abuse assessment when the Member is medically stable.
- When conducting an assessment if the overriding problem appears to have little to do with substance abuse and more to do with psychiatric symptoms or relationship problems refer the Member initially for mental health services.

# Assessments: What to Treat and When to Refer (continued)

- If a Member is having trouble functioning and it is not because of the use of any substance then refer for a mental health psychiatric evaluation.

**Note:** It is rare when a person has been under the influence and needed medical attention due to substance usage that an underlying mental health condition does not exist.

# FLAGS TO TRIGGER A MENTAL HEALTH SCREEN

- The Member has suicidal or homicidal ideation.
- The Member appears to be responding to internal stimuli (experiencing auditory hallucinations).
- The Member reports a long history of psychiatric problems and is currently in extreme distress.
- The Member has not been able to do daily living activities and it appears that substance abuse is not the sole cause.

# WHEN TO BILL KHS VS VO

- If the problem that is being treated is a mental health problem then bill KHS.
- If the problem being treated is substance abuse then bill VO.
- There are situations where a Member has a therapist who treats him/her for a mental illness and a separate therapist who provides substance abuse counseling. Bill KHS for the session where the mental illness was treated and VO for the session treating the substance abuse.

# WHEN TO BILL KHS VS VO (continued)

- **Example:** A Member can seek treatment at one organization or Community Mental Health Center and see one person to address a mental health concern such as depression and see the substance abuse counselor for cocaine dependence. Bill the first session where depression is being treated to KHS and bill VO for the session where the focus of treatment was on the cocaine dependence.