



The Top 5 Things to Know About Billing to Insurance Companies

1

Know the company's definition of medical necessity

Know the recommendations or requirements for consulting with other providers

2

3

Be able to describe your client's diagnosis and how it impairs their functioning.

4

Be able to describe how therapy will alleviate your client's symptoms

5

Have a clear short-term treatment plan from the outset

The Top 5 Things to Know About Billing to Insurance Companies

by Dr. Maelisa Hall

Always check with each individual insurance company about their requirements!

1 Know the company's definition of medical necessity. Most have similar components. These usually include a diagnosis (and the company may limit diagnoses that can be treated to a certain list), impairment in some area of life in which functioning was previously not impaired, and a clear treatment plan or treatment goals. Know this well enough that you can assess for medical necessity during your initial appointment and always keep this in mind when requesting sessions.

2 Know the recommendations or requirements for consulting with other providers. Some insurance companies would like for you to consult with the client's primary care physician, among others. This can have an obvious impact on treatment. Know what they require, what they recommend and how they'd like you to document that consultation. Ask about frequency and expectations and make sure to discuss this with your client in an objective way once you're clear on your role.

3 You must be able to describe your client's diagnosis and how it impairs their functioning. This is key to explaining why your client's needs should be addressed through therapy rather than other means. Example: Client is on probation at work because he cannot focus and completes tasks late due to symptoms of depression. It is important to spell this out so it is clear the employment problems are related to a mental health issue.

The Top 5 Things to Know About Billing to Insurance Companies

4

Be able to describe how therapy will alleviate your client's symptoms. Be specific about the areas therapy can address. Ask yourself, "why is therapy better for this client than medication, coaching, or even talking to a friend?" You should have a clear answer for every client. Include theoretical techniques and evidence-based practices that work well for that specific diagnosis.

5

You should have a clear short-term treatment plan from the outset. The key to this is the phrase short-term! Insurance companies want to see that you have a clear and understandable treatment plan to focus on this individual's needs. They want to know exactly how long your treatment will take. This requires planning ahead so you know what you'll cover each session. Of course, we all know other things may come up but the idea is to plan ahead and be prepared to stay on track as much as possible. Be very proactive!

Check out Maelisa's website for more resources and tips!
www.qaprep.com