Optum

February 27, 2023

Attn: San Diego County Fee-For-Service Hospital Providers

Re: Notification of changes to the Inpatient Concurrent Review Process for Psychiatric Hospital Authorizations

BACKGROUND: San Diego County utilization management for Medi-Cal authorization requests to an inpatient psychiatric hospital adheres to the concurrent review guidelines outlined in MHSUDS INFORMATION NOTICE 19-026. Behavioral Health Information Notice (BHIN) 22-017, dated April 15, 2022, available at the following link, added further guidance regarding concurrent prospective review standards. https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/BHIN-22-017-Concurrent-Review-Standards-and-Updated-Criteria-for-Psychiatric-Inpatient-Hospital.pdf

THE CHANGE EFFECTIVE Monday April 3, 2023: Optum Public Sector, on behalf of San Diego County Behavioral Health Services as their Administrative Services Organization (ASO), will shift the Utilization Management (UM) authorization request process to align with BHIN 22-017 and offer prospective review of acute inpatient psychiatric hospitalization days. Attached for further information: Optum Authorization Request Fax Cover sheet (optional), workflow, and step by step process.

What is staying the same:

1. Continued collaboration with Optum and hospital staff throughout the concurrent utilization review process; authorization requests to be submitted for the duration of the client's stay
2. Hospital to call Optum Provider Line at (800) 798-2254 with admit request 24/7, followed by faxing clinical to (866) 220-4495
3. Medical necessity criteria, although now more clearly outlined
4. Opportunities for MD to MD consultation throughout the process
5. Administrative day criteria
6. Retrospective review criteria and retrospective authorization request process
7. Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) or claim form submission process for payment after client discharges
8. Formal appeal process

Overview of changes:

1. Acute day authorization requests will shift to prospective review; Optum is no longer required to review documentation on a delay. Hospital shall now request acute days into the future.
2. There will be a set maximum of days per authorization request submission:
    - Admission requests: Up to 3 acute, 1 administrative day (call logs required if applicable)
    - Continued/ongoing requests: Up to 4 acute, up to 7 administrative days (call logs required if applicable)
3. Admission requests submitted by hospitals shall include specific information: admission orders, initial plan of care, complete face sheet, and number/type of days requested (may use Optum Authorization Fax Cover sheet).

4. Continued stay requests shall be submitted before the end of the last approved authorization time period and outline number/type of days requested (may use Optum Authorization Fax Cover sheet). Delays in submitting authorization requests may result in non-payment if request is retroactively reviewed and not deemed to meet criteria. All days within a hospital stay must be reviewed concurrently and without authorization, services may not be reimbursed.
5. A thorough list of suggested clinical information to be submitted with authorization requests is available in the attached Optum step by step process or BHIN 22-017.
6. Decisions on concurrent authorization requests shall occur within twenty-four hours of receipt of a complete request. Prospective review offers a unique opportunity for plan of care agreements to be reached through real-time two-way dialogue. Our goal is to work in partnership to ensure timely decisions and planning.

Optum looks forward to discussing these changes further with hospitals to assess their needs at upcoming regularly scheduled collaborative meetings to work toward a shared understanding around how our community will operationalize this process. We look forward to gathering hospital input and/or questions. Leading up to such meetings or after, if you have any questions with regards to the upcoming process changes, please contact Optum Provider Line at (800) 798-2254, Option 3, then option 1.

Sincerely,

Utilization Management Department
Optum Public Sector, San Diego
optumsandiego.com