



COLORADO
Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

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Frequently Asked Questions: Substance Use Disorder Benefit Expansion Beginning January 2021

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On January 1, 2021, Health First Colorado, Colorado's Medicaid program, expanded its substance use disorder (SUD) benefit. Residential and inpatient treatment and withdrawal management services have been added to the Department's list of covered SUD services, giving members access to a full range of treatment options. The Regional Accountable Entities (RAEs) are responsible for administering the new services as part of Health First Colorado's capitated behavioral health benefit. Health First Colorado and the Colorado Office of Behavioral Health have adopted the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria to determine the most appropriate level of care for individuals requiring treatment for a substance use disorder.

Covered Services

What new SUD services are covered effective January 1, 2021?

The new SUD services covered January 1, 2021 are residential, inpatient and withdrawal management (WM) services at the ASAM levels 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, and 3.7, including 3.2 WM and 3.7 WM.

Are social detox services still available to members?

Social detox services are now available as ASAM Level 3.2 Withdrawal Management. These services are billed using a single per diem code (HCPCS procedure code H0010). More details on billing requirements can be found in the Uniform Services Coding Standards Manual on the [Accountable Care Collaborative Resource Center web page](#).

What services are included in Medicaid treatment reimbursement?

The RAEs' per diem rates for inpatient, residential, and withdrawal management services cover all core components described in the ASAM criteria for each level of care. Examples of services that are core components of residential, inpatient, and withdrawal management SUD care include: individual SUD therapy, group SUD therapy, SUD assessments, case

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management, treatment planning, urine analysis administration and medical services at the higher levels of care. The RAEs will negotiate with providers individually to establish the per diem rates, potentially incorporating other services based on a provider's capabilities.

In unique circumstances, members may require additional services that are not covered in the negotiated per diem rate. Providers should contact the member's RAE for any services not included in the per diem rate.

Federal regulations prohibit Health First Colorado from paying for room and board in residential treatment settings. Residential and withdrawal management SUD providers must contract with the Managed Service Organization (MSO) that serves their region in order to receive reimbursement for room and board. More information about the MSOs and which regions they serve can be found on the [Find Behavioral Health Help web page](#). Community corrections providers work with the Division of Criminal Justice for room and board reimbursement.

Does Medicaid cover partial hospitalization for SUD treatment?

No. Partial hospitalization (ASAM 2.5) is not a covered service. Intensive outpatient (ASAM 2.1) is the Level 2 service covered by Medicaid.

Access to Services

Who determines whether Medicaid will pay for a member's services?

The treatment provider conducts an assessment and determines the appropriate level of care for that individual based on the ASAM Criteria. The ASAM Criteria helps the provider match the member's needs to a level of care where they can be addressed. Once the provider makes a determination on level of care, they submit a request for prior authorization to the RAE that manages that member's Medicaid services. The RAE reviews the recommendation for treatment and ensures that it is consistent with ASAM Criteria prior to approval of the service.

What happens if a RAE disagrees with the provider's recommendation for treatment?

RAEs offer a peer to peer review process to review prior authorization denials upon request. If the denial stands after the peer to peer review and the provider or member still disagrees with the determination, the member has the right to appeal the decision. This process may be different depending on the RAE. Information about each RAE's appeal process can be found here:



[Colorado Access](#)
[Colorado Community Health Alliance](#)
[Health Colorado](#)
[Northeast Health Partners](#)
[Rocky Mountain Health Plans](#)

Is there a limit on length of stay?

Length of stay is determined by medical necessity. Medical necessity is based on the ASAM Criteria. Length of stay will be determined by progress in treatment and continued medical necessity.

Can members access treatment outside of their region?

RAEs are required to have a statewide network. Specific services may be offered outside of the member's RAE region, depending on availability.

Which providers are participating in the benefit expansion?

In collaboration with our RAE partners, the Department has published an SUD Provider Network List. The list includes all residential and inpatient SUD treatment providers who are contracted with RAEs to provide SUD services. Due to ongoing contracting and credentialing, this list is updated periodically and made available on the Department's SUD webpage, [Ensuring a Full Continuum of SUD Benefits](#) under "IMPORTANT UPDATES." The list is available in two formats:

1. A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that allows filtering of SUD providers by provider name, location, level of care provided, contracted RAEs, etc. (note: when opening the Excel spreadsheet, please select "Read Only.")
2. A print-friendly PDF with SUD provider information formatted as a table.

Will members be charged a co-pay for the new SUD services?

No, there are no co-payments for SUD services.

Provider Requirements

As an SUD provider, what do I need to do to be eligible for Medicaid reimbursement?

SUD providers that seek Medicaid reimbursement from a RAE for inpatient, residential and withdrawal management SUD services need to:

1. Be licensed with the Office of Behavioral Health for the specific ASAM level of care that they will render and bill to Health First Colorado. (For information about licensing, visit the [OBH Designation and Licensing web page](#).)



2. Be enrolled with Health First Colorado (For information about provider enrollment, visit the [Find Your Provider Type web page](#).)
3. Add a Specialty Provider Type based on your ASAM level of care license to your current or new Medicaid provider enrollment.
 - a. **Existing providers must submit a Provider Maintenance Request** in the Provider Web Portal. (For information, visit the [Provider Maintenance Quick Guide](#).)
 - b. New providers can add the Specialty Provider Type as part of provider enrollment.
4. Contract and credential with the RAE.

What are the enrollment requirements for hospitals?

Hospitals offering inpatient levels of care (ASAM 3.7, 3.7WM) may provide these services under an 01 (acute care hospital) or 02 (psychiatric hospital) enrollment through Health First Colorado. They do not need to enroll under an ASAM Specialty Type.

Hospitals offering residential levels of care (3.1, 3.3, 3.5) must license with the Office of Behavioral Health for those levels of care and enroll with Health First Colorado with the corresponding ASAM Specialty Type(s).

Rates and Reimbursement

What codes are used to bill for inpatient and residential SUD services?

Coding pages for these services are in the most recent edition of the Uniform Service Coding Standards Manual, which can be found on the [Accountable Care Collaborative Resource Center web page](#).

Are services paid through the RAEs or Fee for Service?

Services are paid under the capitated behavioral health benefit administered by the RAEs. The one exception is that services will be billed FFS for individuals accessing services prior to their enrollment with a RAE.

Where can I find additional information about the new SUD services?

Below are links to additional resources regarding Health First Colorado's new inpatient and residential SUD treatment and withdrawal management services.



- [SUD Residential Provider Manual](#)
- www.colorado.gov/hcpf/ensuring-full-continuum-sud-benefits

For more information contact
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