



Date: June 8, 2015

To: All County and Contracted Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Providers

From: Manuel J. Jimenez Jr., MA, MFT, Director

RE: New Protocol for Psychological Testing

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Manuel J. Jimenez Jr.", is written over the "From:" and "RE:" lines of the header.

Effective 7/1/15 Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services will adopt a new policy and procedure requiring prior authorization by ACCESS for all psychological testing, and limiting the number of hours and time frame approved to complete the testing. Attached you will find the ACBHCS Psychological Testing Protocol which includes psychological testing guidelines, criteria for approval, the procedure to obtain authorization, the Psychological Testing Authorization Request form (PTAR), and the PTAR Response form. Below is a summary of the protocol.

All requests for psychological testing by providers require the completion of a PTAR form (Attachment 1) and prior authorization by ACCESS. The PTAR must meet medical necessity criteria for approval, as outlined under 'Criteria for Approval of Psychological Testing' (section 2) and 'Guidelines for Review of Psychological Testing' (section 3). ACCESS will fax a PTAR Response form indicating approval, pending, or denial. It is expected that Psychological Testing codes will be used and that services will only be performed by licensed or waived psychologists (practicum students for specific programs per ACBHCS contract) as outlined under 'Obtaining Authorization for Psychological Testing' (section 4).

16 hours of Testing is the standard authorization for 90 days.*

- 3 additional hours may be approved for monolingual clients needing an interpreter as well for Limited English Speakers and Low Literacy Clients.
- 5 additional hours of neuropsychological testing may be approved if indicated after psychological testing has been completed and a neurological exam has been performed.
- 3 additional hours may be approved if the client is home bound or unable to travel to the testing site and transportation time is needed (only applies to programs that are authorized to bill for their travel time).

* In the highly unusual situation in which the psychologist has difficulty completing the psychological testing, she/he may call for a clinical consultation with ACCESS (1-800-491-9099).

The intent of redesigning the delivery of psychological testing is to have standards that are reasonable and equitable so that all providers efficiently provide these services to beneficiaries of the Mental Health Plan. Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services must be mindful of its duty to prevent fraud, waste, and misuse of Medi-Cal resources.

Thank you all for your dedicated service to our Medi-Cal beneficiaries.