Professional Counselors: Medicaid Coverage of LPC-Intern Services

Authorize LPC-Interns to bill Medicaid providers for services provided under supervision.

More than 4 million Texans have a diagnosable mental health disorder, including 1.2 million children. At the same time, 81 percent of Texas counties are federally designated as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas.

To increase access to mental health professionals and expand the mental health workforce in Texas, the Texas Counseling Association requests that: Licensed Professional Counselor-Interns are authorized to bill Medicaid for services provided under the supervision of a Licensed Professional Counselor-Supervisor.

**Mental Health Care in Texas:**

- 4.3 million Texans have a diagnosable mental health disorder (including 1.2 million children). Of these, 1.5 million are unable to function at work, school, or in the community due to their illness.
- Only 37.5% of Texan adults with a mental illness received mental health treatment or counseling from 2009-2013.
- 10.5% of all Texan adolescents had at least one Major Depressive Episode (MDE) within the past year.
- Only 35.5% of Texan adolescents with Major Depressive Episode received treatment for their depression from 2009-2013.
- Texas averages 6 deaths each day by suicide; 90% related to untreated or under-treated mental illness.
- 74% of Texans have experienced some form of domestic violence or have a family member or friend who has experienced it.
- 81% of Texas counties (206 out of the 254) are federally designated as Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas.
- Texas’ per capita spending on mental health services is only $38.99. The national average is $120.56, ranking Texas second to last nationwide.
- Average per day costs of community-based services in Texas is $12 for adults, $13 for children, as compared to $401 for a State Hospital, $137 for a jail, and $986 for an ER visit.

**Medicaid Coverage of LPC-Intern Services Helps:**

- Expanding the pool of Medicaid mental health providers by including LPC-Interns will not only help address the waiting lists for mental health services, but will also help stretch limited Medicaid dollars. Because LPC-Interns work under supervision, it is appropriate to compensate them at a lower rate than fully licensed LPCs.
- LPC-Interns have passed the Texas License and Jurisprudence examinations and hold a temporary license to deliver mental health services to clients under supervision. They hold a Masters or Doctorate degree which includes at least 300 hours of supervised practicum experience in counseling clients. To receive their permanent license, each LPC-Intern must complete an additional 3,000 hours of supervised experience.
- Including LPC-Interns as Medicaid providers will create a pathway to help address the aging out of current provider groups. Working with Medicaid clients under supervision will increase the likelihood that these well qualified mental health professionals will remain in the system as Medicaid providers.

2014 DSHS and TEA data reports there are 21,412 Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC and LPC-Interns) and 40,041 Certified School Counselors (CSC) in Texas.

**Combined, these 61,450 Professional Counselors make-up the largest group of behavioral health professionals in the state.**

For more information, contact: ____________________________________________________________

For source information please refer to the Texas Counseling Association website [www.txca.org](http://www.txca.org) or contact [robin@txca.org](mailto:robin@txca.org).
Who is TCA?

Founded in 1947, the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) represents more than 7,300 Professional Counselors who work in a variety of settings to empower individuals, families, students and groups to accomplish their mental health, education and career goals.

TCA Divisions

**TAACE** Texas Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education - Promotes research, development, technical competency and ethical practices for measurement and evaluation in counseling.

**TAADA** Texas Association for Adult Development and Aging - Promotes resources and leadership on the development process of adults through the life span and the problems of aging.

**TACES** Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision - Promotes the preparation of professional counselors through accreditation, certification, supervision and professional development.

**TALGBTIC** Texas Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling - Promotes tolerance and non-threatening counseling environments that support the unique needs of clients and reduce stereotypical thinking and prejudice.

**TAHEAD** Texas Association for Humanistic Education and Development - Promotes human development practices that emphasize education of the whole person and instructional strategies that foster humanistic approaches.

**TAMFC** Texas Association of Marriage and Family Counselors - Promotes issues, interests and the delivery of services in the area of marriage and family therapy, divorce counseling and mediation.

**TCCA** Texas College Counseling Association - Promotes college counseling programs that foster student development, support ethical practices and encourage cooperation within higher education.

**TCDA** Texas Career Development Association - Promotes a greater understanding of the meaning of work; fosters career development over the life span; and establishes standards of professional service in the field of career development.

**TexAMCD** Texas Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development - Promotes the understanding and appreciation of ethnic, racial and cultural diversity; human and civil rights, and multicultural counseling.

**TMHCA** Texas Mental Health Counselors Association - Promotes improvements to the availability and quality of mental health counseling services for professionals in private practice, agency, hospital, business and industrial settings.

**TSCA** Texas School Counselor Association - Supports counselors, strengthens students, promotes success; provides advocacy and best practice resources to empower school counselors to deliver comprehensive guidance and counseling programs which promote student success.

**TxCSJ** Texas Counselors for Social Justice - Fosters optimal social, emotional, and cultural development with dignity for all individuals by actively promoting societal equity, access, participation, harmony, empowerment, and advocacy.

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