



PROVIDER ALERT

PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR CRISIS AUTHORIZATIONS

JANUARY 10, 2013

Prior to January 1, 2013, the Maryland Public Mental Health System (PMHS) had designated the CPT code 90808 to be a 90+ minute, outpatient, crisis intervention code to be used by Outpatient Mental Health Clinics (OMHC), only. The 2013 CPT code changes have retired the 90808 CPT code and designated the 90839 and 90840 CPT codes as “Psychotherapy for Crisis”.

As of January 1, 2013, the Maryland PMHS will use the 90839 for 30 to 74 minute, outpatient crisis interventions by OMHCs. The 90840 will be used as the add-on code for outpatient crisis interventions by OMHCs lasting 75 or more minutes.

Per the American Medical Association’s 2013 Current Procedural Terminology, Standard Edition, the definition for “Crisis” is:

- A Crisis is a presenting problem requiring an urgent assessment that is either
 - “life threatening”
- Or*
- “complex and requires immediate attention to a patient in high distress”

The 2013 CPT code manual defines the services that constitute “Psychotherapy for Crisis” as:

- An urgent assessment and history of the crisis state
- And*
- A mental status exam
- And*
- Treatment (to include):
 - Psychotherapy
 - Mobilization of resources to defuse the crisis and restore safety



- Implementation of psychotherapeutic interventions to minimize the potential for psychological trauma

And

- A disposition

These definitions of crisis and the services expected to adequately address them will guide ValueOptions® Maryland in the medical necessity review process.

To assure a quick response to requests for Psychotherapy for Crisis authorizations, OMHC providers will be allowed to either submit their requests on line through ProviderConnect or telephonically. To submit requests electronically, OMHC providers will (as they did for 90808 requests) select “Outpatient” and then “Extended Therapy” from the drop down menu in ProviderConnect. For telephonic requests, OMHC providers will call 800/888-1965, as usual.

Only one (1) unit of 90839 (Psychotherapy for Crisis, 30-74 minutes) can be authorized for any given date of service. Only one (1) unit of 90840 (Psychotherapy for Crisis, 75+ minutes) can be authorized for any given date of service.