

## BEST PRACTICES FOR PATIENT FOLLOW-UP after discharge from inpatient care

### Patients are the most vulnerable for readmissions shortly after discharge!

Follow-up with a **behavioral health provider\* (BHP)** can make the difference in a patient's recovery. Dropping out of treatment after a psychiatric hospitalization increases the likelihood of readmission from 1 in 10 to 1 in 4.<sup>1</sup>



**Please schedule a  
follow-up appointment  
within 7 days of discharge!**

*The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recommends having a follow-up appointment with a behavioral health provider within 7 calendar days after discharge. These standards are used for quality and regulatory purposes.*

### Best practices for patient follow-up and stabilization:

- ✓ Include the patient's family or close friend in the discharge planning, with the patient's permission.
- ✓ Schedule follow-up appointments as early as possible during the hospitalization to ensure appointment availability.
- ✓ Document phone numbers and addresses where patient can be reached after discharge.
- ✓ Ask patient to provide a phone number of someone else who will know how to reach the patient.



**NEW**

**You can now use the MHN on-line search to find practitioners who offer appointments within 7 days.** Login to the MHN Provider Site, go to Provider Search, enter patient information, add search criteria and select "Add Optional Criteria". From the drop-down menu select "Post Discharge Follow-Up Appointment."

### Patients at high risk for not following-up with BHP after discharge:

- Individuals who prefer to follow-up with their primary care physician (PCP) instead of a BHP
- Individuals who prefer to see their previous psychiatrist but cannot get an appointment within 7 days
- Individuals who are from out of town
- Minor children with parents who want to consult with PCP/Pediatrician before scheduling with a BHP

*We encourage you to please assist patients with scheduling appointments with a BHP even if:*



- ✓ **Patient wants to make their own appointment**
- ✓ **Patient prefers to see PCP**
- ✓ **Patient signs out against medical advice (AMA)**

**If you need assistance scheduling a BHP appointment, please call MHN at (888) 327-0010. We can help!**

\* A behavioral health provider can be a social worker, psychologist, counselor, nurse-specialist or psychiatrist.

<sup>1</sup> Batscha, C., McDevitt, J., Weiden, P., & Dancy, B. (2011). The effect of an inpatient transition intervention on attendance at the first appointment post discharge from a psychiatric hospitalization. *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association*. 17(5). 330-338.

To reach MHN, you can call the number on the back of the member's ID card or (888) 327-0010

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