



Stacy Kuwahara, LMFT, Director

Kern County Behavioral Health Board
System Quality Improvement Committee

Monday, September 27th, 2021

4:00-5:00 PM

Virtual Meeting VIA Teams

Meeting Minutes

The mission of the System Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) is to review and evaluate Mental Health Plan (MHP) activities and where appropriate, make recommendations regarding policy decisions, institute needed Quality Improvement (QI) actions, or/and ensure follow-up of QI processes.

Present

Table listing attendees and their roles, including Alexander Lopez (KernBHRS - SUD), Amber Lopez (KernBHRS - SUD QID), Ashley Jones (KernBHRS - Authorizations), and others.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions - Lesleigh Davis welcomes all attendees to the meetings.
2. Review and approval of June 2021 Minutes - Alexander Lopez and Rosa Martinez motion to approve the minutes.
3. Public Comment - No Public Comment
4. New Business - No new Business
5. Guest Presenter - Privacy and Compliance - Sarah Gutierrez
6. Guest Presenter - NOABDs SUD/MH - Heather Williams and Amber Lopez



- b. The NOABDs on the mental health side has been going on much longer than the SUD side. A NOABD is a standard notice that the state provided with a specific template that all counties are required to use. This template informs Medi-Cal Beneficiary that a determination about their treatment has been made by the Mental Health Plan (MHP). In the template it outlines to the beneficiary their rights under the Medi-Cal Program, including the right to appeal the decision and their right for a fair hearing. There is a total of 8 different types of notices that mental health issues. Delivery System is issued at the time of initial assessment when the determined beneficiary does not meet criteria for the services. Termination is issued any time during treatment when it is determined the beneficiary no longer meets criteria for services. Modification or denial is issued when Authorizations determines the beneficiary does not meet criteria for the requested services. Timely Access is issued with the Mental Health Plan (MHP) fails to meet the timeframe outlined in the policy. Grievance and Appeal Timely Resolution Notice is issued when the MHP fails to timely resolve grievances and appeals. Payment Denial is issued when the MHP denies, in whole or in part, for any reason, a provider's request for payment for a service that has already been delivered to a client. Authorization Delay is issued when there is a delay in processing a provider's request for authorization for specialty mental health services. Financial Liability is issued when the MHP denies beneficiary's request to dispute financial liability, including cost-sharing and other beneficiary financial liabilities. NOABDs are monitored and reported by QID on a monthly basis. Division and team level reporting is sent quarterly to administrators and team supervisors.

**7. Quality Improvement Division – Lesleigh Davis**

- a. The system is going to have Mental health external quality review next week. This is an annual review that we participate in and the reviewers with are with an organization called Behavioral Health Concepts that have a contract with the Department of Health Care Services to do the external quality reviews.
- b. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will be coming down to do a work compliance-oriented review on the SUD side. Typically, when DHCS does a review they just speak with administrators and some supervisors. It is rare for them to speak with line staff or contract providers. This will be happening either the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October.
- c. Once a year the Behavioral Health Planning Commission (BHPC) issues a data notebook or survey. The planning commissions conducts the notebook on two topics. The first half contains previous questions relating to homelessness capacity and capacity for residential treatment. The second half involves hot topics including policy and legislation. The topic for this year is ethnic and racial inequity in behavioral health treatment. The Behavioral Health Board is responsible for completing the survey but due to the types of questions there are subject meta experts who answer the questions. The Behavioral Health Board will come together for a meeting, the meeting will be happening November 1, 2021, to walk through the responses to make sure that the responses reflect Kern County.

**8. Department Supports Admin. Ethnic Services Manager – Chelcy Gibbons**

- a. The first ever Hispanic Heritage month was on Friday September 24, 2021 and there was a lot of positive feedback.
- b. During the statewide ethnic's service manager training the Kern BHRS cultural competence plan was shared as a good example on how to hold ourselves accountable for the work that has been done.
- c. Mental health services Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team has wrapped up their evergreen mural project with several mural unveilings around the county in places like the CALM zoo and Bakersfield City School District.

**9. Substance Use Division – Alexander Lopez**

- a. Getting set up with Web Infrastructure for Treatment Services (WITS) program to streamline the screening process for individuals calling the SUD Access line.
- b. There is an Licensed Professional Of the Healing Arts (LPHA) that will be leaving in October

**10. Adult System of Care – Richard Hofferd**

- a. There was a presentation for the Adult Transition Team (ATT) on the timeliness on adults entering and exiting incarceration moving on to the workforce.

**11. Children's System of Care –**

- a. No Updates

**12. Kern Linkage Division – Tara Christian**

- a. No Updates

**13. Crisis Services – Jose Gomez**

- a. Managing the crisis surges for both adults and minors due to the little to no availability of beds in the inpatient units
- b. Have applied for a grant that would allow for a Mobile Evaluation Team (MET) Position dedicated to Kern Medical emergency department
- c. Looking and working with the Bakersfield Police Department to fund specific response teams for homelessness

**14. Medical Services –**

- a. No Update

**15. Recovery Support Admin. – Shannon Tolar**

- a. George Rivera's team is now under RSA

b. SET team is still working out at the Green Gardens location

**16. Consumer Family Learning Center – Shannon Tolar**

a. Has had to return to virtual due to Covid

b. Might be doing some classes in the courtyard with very limited invitation due to the social distance

**17. Provider Updates – Heather Plaza**

a. No Updates

**18. SQIC Recommendations**

a. No Recommendations

**19. Unfinished Business**

a. No unfinished business

**20. Adjourn – Next scheduled Meeting is October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 4:00-5:00 PM, will be virtual via Teams.**

# Privacy and Corporate Compliance

# Service Verification

- **Federal and State Requirement**
- **Process Owner: Quality Improvement Division**
- **Method of Verification: Phone call**
- **Frequency of Verification: Monthly**

# What Happens When Services Cannot be Verified

- Referred to Corporate Compliance for further review
- Discussed at Regulatory Compliance Committee



# **Mental Health Notice of Adverse Benefit Determination**

# What is a Notice of Adverse Benefit Determination (NOABD)?

It is a standardize notice

- Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) provided specific templates that all counties are required to use

Informs Medi-Cal Beneficiary that a determination about his/her treatment has been made by the mental health plan (MHP)

Outlines to the Beneficiary his/her rights under the Medi-Cal Program, including the right to appeal the decision and/or right for a fair hearing

# What are the types of notices KernBHRS issues?

## Delivery System:

- Issued at the time of initial assessment when determined beneficiary does not meet criteria for services

## Termination:

- Issued any time during treatment when it is determined the beneficiary no longer meets criteria for services

## Modification or Denial:

- Issued when Authorizations determines the beneficiary does not meet criteria for the requested services

## Timely Access:

- Issued with the MHP fails to meet the timeframes outlined in policy

## Grievance and Appeal Timely Resolution Notice:

- Issued when the MHP fails to timely resolve grievances and appeals

## Payment Denial:

- Issued when the MHP denies, in whole or in part, for any reason, a provider's request for payment for a service that has already been delivered to a client.

## Authorization Delay:

- Issued when there is a delay in processing a provider's request for authorization for specialty mental health services

## Financial Liability:

- Issued when the MHP denies beneficiary's request to dispute financial liability, including cost-sharing and other beneficiary financial liabilities

# Monitoring and Reporting of NOABDs

QID reports NOABD  
Issuance Accuracy  
quarterly at:

Quality  
Improvement  
Committee  
(QIC)

Regulatory  
Compliance  
Committee  
(RCC)

NOABD Issuance is  
monitored by QID on  
a quarterly basis

Division and Team  
level reporting sent  
quarterly to  
Administrators and  
Team Supervisors

# QID's Current Focus

## Ensure KernBHRS System of Care is meeting the Annual Work Plan Goal:

- 95% of all NOABDS sent by the MHP will be issued correctly according to state mandates.

## Increasing the accuracy of the NOABDs issued by the Mental Health Outpatient Teams:

- Delivery System
- Termination
- Timely Access

## Support the Teams by:

- Providing Team Supervisors enhanced reporting
- Include in the reporting a "one pager" highlighting the specific areas needing to be addressed
- Developing an FAQ
- Attend Team Meetings to provide Q&A
- Being available to answer staff's question via phone, email or on Teams

# **Any questions regarding Mental Health NOABDs**

Please contact the Quality Monitoring Team via email:  
[QualityMonitoring@kernbhrs.org](mailto:QualityMonitoring@kernbhrs.org)

or

Heather Williams

[hwilliams@kernbhrs.org](mailto:hwilliams@kernbhrs.org)

(661) 428-9716 cell

# SUD NOABDs

Presented by QID SUD

# What are NOABDs?

Notices of Adverse Benefit Determination (NOABDs) are a component of the Grievance and Appeals system and are required by Federal and State Law.

NOABDs are letters given in person or sent in the mail to DMC-ODS beneficiary's homes after an adverse decision has been made regarding their SUD treatment to notify them of their right to file an appeal of the decision and under what circumstances they will have a State Fair Hearing.

# Monitoring NOABDs

- SUD QID monitors SUD NOABDs quarterly and looks at beneficiaries that should have received notices and whether they did or not.
- SUD Treatment Teams and providers are notified how many NOABDs their team sent and how many they should have sent

# Monitoring NOABDs

SUD QID monitors the following types of NOABDs:

- **Denial Notices:** When the Plan denies a request for service at assessment, typically completed by SUD Outpatient and Residential Providers
- **Modification Notice:** When the plan limits or denies a request for service, including reductions in frequency and/or duration of services, and approval of alternative treatments and services, typically completed by the KernBHRS Gateway Team
- **Termination Notices:** When the plan terminates, reduces, or suspends a previously authorized service, typically completed by SUD Outpatient and Residential Providers
- **Timely Access Notice:** When there is a delay in providing the beneficiary with timely services, typically completed by the KernBHRS Gateway Team

# How Improvements are Being Made

SUD QID works closely with SUD providers to ensure NOABDs are being sent as required and on time, by:

- Providing routine training to all SUD staff
- Providing written documents with resources, such as a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document
- Providing quarterly feedback on monitoring results and compliance rates to all providers

**Thank you.**