Colorado Medicaid
Psychiatric Services in Hospitals

What psychiatric services in hospitals are available to Colorado Medicaid clients?

- Medicaid pays for psychiatric inpatient care in general hospitals for Medicaid clients. Inpatient care includes all services necessary to treat a psychiatric condition. Medicaid clients are assigned to a behavioral health organization which helps the client plan the best way to treat mental health concerns.

How do I get services?

- It is recommended that you talk to your primary care doctor about any mental health concerns you have (for example, depression, excessive worrying, or drinking too much) before your concerns become serious. If you need either inpatient or outpatient hospital services for a mental health concern, your doctor can refer you to the appropriate providers for services.
- If you choose to refer yourself for mental health services, you may call the behavioral health organization yourself and request assistance. The correct telephone number is on your Medicaid card. If you are at risk of injuring yourself or someone else, you may go to an emergency room. When you do, hospital staff will evaluate you and contact your behavioral health organization to help plan the best way to treat your concerns.

Are there any limits on services?

- Psychiatric services for adults in general hospitals are limited to no more than 45 days. Children ages 20 and under may go beyond this limit with prior authorization.

Are all services approved?

- Services must be medically necessary. Your doctor, or an emergency room doctor, can help you decide whether you need to be in the hospital for a mental illness.

Are psychiatric services provided in specialized psychiatric hospitals?

- Services can be provided in specialized psychiatric hospitals if approved by your behavioral health organization. Your doctor or psychiatrist can request this coverage if it is medically necessary.

What kind of hospital outpatient mental health services are available?

- Outpatient mental health services in general hospitals are covered by Medicaid; however, outpatient services in specialized psychiatric hospitals are not covered.

For more information call:

Customer Service
Within Metro Denver – 303-866-3513
Outside Metro Denver – 1-800-221-3943

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January 2011