

Urine Drug Screens and Coordination of Care

Title 55 of the Pennsylvania Code Chapter 1223 establishes Medical Assistance regulations for all Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Clinic Services including payment for methadone maintenance treatment services. Per 1223.52, “a drug or biological furnished to a clinic patient for therapeutic purposes during a clinic visit, diagnostic laboratory services used to detect the patient’s use of drugs and supplies provided to the outpatient are included in the clinic visit fee.”

OMHSAS Policy Clarification 01-14-01, issued on February 11, 2014, reiterates that the clinic fee visit includes payment for diagnostic laboratory tests used and/or to monitor a consumer’s use of illegal drugs, improper use of legal drugs, or use of alcohol in both the HealthChoices and Fee-For-Service Programs and cannot be billed as a separate service.

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Magellan) members with Substance Use and Co-occurring Disorders (COD) can be some of our most challenging in terms of providing them with the most appropriate treatment options. Within your mental health or drug and alcohol practice, you have likely worked with or are currently working with a member who has a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and who may also be working simultaneously with a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) treatment provider. By the nature of individual and group counseling sessions, you have a very intimate relationship with our members. Frequently, you may suspect that a member has relapsed on a substance and/or continues to use a substance while in your care.

In these situations, a best practice would be to obtain member consent to contact the individual’s additional treatment providers to determine the best course of action. This may include requesting to receive the results of a Urine Drug Screen (UDS). It is both wasteful and duplicative that multiple providers request a UDS for the same member at the same time. This can also lead to frustration and may be counterproductive to a positive treatment experience.

Coordinating care with other involved providers allows you to make the best possible decision for our members regarding treatment options. We ask you to consider this approach as a best practice as we work together to help our members receive the best possible and least restrictive treatment experience while also protecting the financial integrity of the Pennsylvania HealthChoices program.