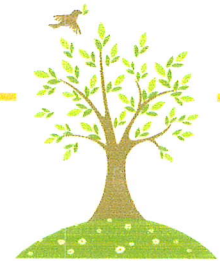




Spring/Summer 2011 Newsletter



BlueCross/BlueShield of Illinois Authorization Update

Our office previously notified all of you who are BlueCross/BlueShield of Illinois (BC/BS-IL) clients that new requirements were to be implemented in 2011 for behavioral health benefits. Specifically, BC/BS-IL planned to require members to obtain prior approval of behavioral health sessions once their policies renewed for 2011.

In January 2011, our office was informed that BC/BS-IL had removed this proposed requirement for patients and service providers. Thus,

outpatient psychological services are *not* subject to this authorization requirement. However, please be advised that, should you seek neuropsychological or inpatient services, pre-authorization from BC/BS-IL is currently required prior to treatment.

Our office is grateful to the Illinois Psychological Association for its advocacy efforts, to members of the media for drawing attention to this health-care issue and most of all, to *you* for voicing

your concerns directly to BC/BS-IL. We are very pleased that these combined efforts were successful and that outpatient behavioral health benefits are currently *not* subject to such requirements.

Should you have any questions about or concerns with your benefits or insurance claims processing, you may contact Ms. Jennifer Katele, Billing & Insurance Coordinator, for further information.

Inside this issue:

Blue Cross	1
TS Support Group	1
Fees	2
Parity	2
Texting	2

Tourette Syndrome (TS) Monthly Support Group



In the Fall of 2010, we began our monthly TS Support Group. We meet one Sunday afternoon a month (3:00-4:30 p.m.) in our Hinsdale office. We break out into a parent and adults-with-TS meeting and a concurrent meeting (for social and recreational activities) with kids/

teens with TS. In March 2011, Cynthia Hays, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Pediatric Neuropsychologist, was our guest; Dr. Hays talked about issues and parental concerns regarding assessment of TS-related difficulties, such as symptoms of AD/HD, learning dis-

abilities and/or anxiety. We don't have an April meeting due to Passover and Easter, so our next meetings will be on May 22nd and June 12th, 2011. We take a break in the summertime and resume meetings in September, 2011. Please call us for further information.

What's On Your Mind – Suggestions for Office News

We welcome your questions, ideas, and suggestions in regards to topics for future office bulletin boards and newsletters.

Our thanks to Melissa Lofton for our Monthly Topical Bulletin Board and to Jennifer Katele and Dr. Erica Drzonek for putting

together our monthly Newsletter. It is our pleasure and great privilege to work with you and your families.

I believe that
there is a subtle
magnetism in
Nature, which, if
we
unconsciously
yield to it, will
direct us aright.
~Henry David
Thoreau

A Reminder About Fees

In January 2011, our office announced an increase in the fees for our services, effective April 1st, 2011. This is our first fee increase since 2007 and reflects a mid-range of the fees typically associated with the services we offer.

If you don't already have one, please pick up a copy of our new fee schedule in the Waiting Room at our Oak Park or Hinsdale office, or contact our Administrative Staff for this information. Thanks.

Climb up on some hill at sunrise. Everybody needs perspective once in a while, and you'll find it there.

~Robb Sagendorph

Implementation of Mental Health Parity



Our office continues to emphasize the importance of the Wellstone-Domenici Mental Health Parity Act, which became law on October 3rd, 2008, and stipulates that group healthcare plans for 50 or more employees that provide mental health/substance abuse benefits must ensure that these benefits are similar in all respects to those provided for physical health care.

See <http://apapacticecentral.org/update/2009/11-23/wellstone-domenici.pdf> for more information.

Concerted efforts persist on the part of local, state and national professional and advocacy organizations, in order to ensure full compliance on the part of all insurance companies. If your insurance company does not appear to be complying

with the Parity Act, we encourage you to contact your employer's Human Resources department to voice your concerns, as the law holds that it is your employer's responsibility to ensure compliance with the law. You also can file a complaint with the Illinois Department of Insurance (www.insurance.illinois.gov) which monitors compliance with various healthcare laws.

Texting, Social Media, and Your Child's Mental Health



There continues to be increased interest and attention (on the part of behavioral healthcare professionals, educators and the media) on the *potential risks of texting and use of social networking sites*. Here are a few examples of recent findings that we hope you'll find informative:

The *Guidance Group*, "a publishing company specializing in hands-on materials for drug and violence prevention, character education, life skills, school success, and mental health" recently cited a study which found that children and teens in the Midwest who spent three or more hours per school day on social networking sites, or who sent more than 120 text messages in a day's course, were at higher risk for behavioral health problems; for teens, these included alcohol use or abuse, illicit drug use, sexual activity and smoking. More information is available at www.guidance-group.com.

The New York Times has recently featured a number of thought-provoking articles on the consequences for children and teens of "sexting," described in a March 27th, 2011 front-page article as, "an imprecise term that refers to sending sexual photos, videos or texts from one cellphone to another," as well as articles about online bullying (e.g., "Poisoned Web: As Bullies Go Digital, Parents Play Catch-Up;" December 5th, 2010).

By the way (or should I say, BTW!), adults are *not* immune to the negative consequences of texting, sexting, or excessive/improper use of other forms of social media.

What can we do to help ourselves, each other and our children and teens? In general, some of the most effective ways to respond are straightforward and practical in nature and include:

Set appropriate time limits (for yourself too!) for use of all technology, including all kinds of

electronic devices. Time limits should be set for when to use, how to use (e.g., Do you use the cell phone to check-in and for emergencies, or for "chatting" throughout the day?), and for how long.

Talk (this means face-to-face!) with each other...about everyday experiences, as well as about the use of technology... both the benefits and potential dangers. In general, making time to talk as partners, spouses and families (e.g., at dinner time) is an effective and valuable way to "keep in touch" and "in sync" with each other. More of this contact usually helps in setting reasonable limits for use of technological forms of communicating.