BILLING ESSENTIALS

Compiled by the Vendorship and Managed Care Committee of the New York State Society for Clinical Social Work

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A Compendium of Resources for Submitting Claims and Receiving Payments

Including Practice Management Software, Billing Services, and

Clearinghouses for Electronic Billing

These resources have been gathered from NYSSCSW members as a guide and do not represent endorsement by the Society. Quotation marks indicate member recommendation. This information may be inaccurate in some cases and we would appreciate hearing from you with corrections or updates. Please send them to info.nysscsw@gmail.com.

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Tools for Submitting Claims:

Sources for ordering CMS-1500 forms:

www.filerx.com

$11.30 for 250 forms, $16.30 for 500 forms, $46.95 for 2500 forms. Window envelopes for mailing claims (#10 and/or 9x12) available.

www.health-forms.com   1-800-869-6590

$47.90 for 2500.   CMS-1500 completion software plus 1000 claim forms, $169.00. Window envelopes for mailing claims (#10 and/or 9x12) available.

www.quill.com

$13.99 for 250 CMS-1500 forms, $49.99 for 1000, $84.99 for 2500. Window envelopes for mailing claims available.

www.staples.com

ComplyRight™ CMS-1500 forms, 250 for $31.99, 500 for $51.99, 2500 for $69.00.

TOPS CMS-1500 forms, 100 for $19.99, 500 for $47.99.

Windows envelopes for mailing claims (#10 and/or 9x12) available.

Software for typing the CMS-1500 on a paper claim:

www.littleguysoftware.com/easycms.htm

EASYCMS-1500 Form Filler CD for Windows, $65; Mac, $81.00, available as a download. Software and a CD with 500 forms, bundle: $89.50/Windows; $105.50/Mac. "This one is a favorite."

CMS-1500 forms only: 500 for $20.00 plus $8.50 shipping and handling; 1000 for $30.00 plus $9.00 shipping and handling; 2500 for $37.50 plus $9.50 shipping and handling. Window Envelopes for mailing claims: #10, 500 for $38.50 plus $8.50 shipping and handling; 9"x12", 500, for $89.00 plus $9.00 shipping and handling.

www.fiachraforms.com

You type in the data on a CMS-1500 PDF, print and send. Can print the entire form, or text only. Save to your computer, not online. Download software for $29.00. Software plus 500 CMS-1500 forms, $50.00. Mac and Windows compatible, use with Adobe Reader version 9 and higher. This company can also help you design standard forms (face sheet, progress note, treatment plan).

See also www.health-forms.com above.

Obtain an Employer ID Number (EIN):

www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=97860,00.html

Obtain or update an NPI number (National Provider Identifier):

To obtain an NPI number, view your NPI profile, or update your information, go to https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/?forward=static.npistart#/   1-800-465-3203

ICD-10 diagnostic codes (which were required as of October 1, 2015):

Use the DSM-5 for ICD-10 codes. These are listed in grey next to the DSM-5 codes.

Medicare: www.NGSMedicare.com

> Provider Contact Center: 866-837-0241
> Provider Enrollment 888-379-3807
> EDI Help Desk (Electronic Data Interchange): 888-379-9132
> https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Billing/ElectronicBillingEDITrans/EDISupport.html

Credentialing with CAQH: https://solutions.caqh.org

> CAQH is a databank that allows you to enter your credentialing information in one place and then give access to multiple insurance plans in order to make application or maintain your status as provider. Initial entry of data is extensive and time consuming. Quarterly updates are required but are simple and quickly accomplished. CAQH will also facilitate secure electronic payment from insurance company to provider.   Call the CAQH EnrollHub Helpline at 1-855-979-0715.

To file a complaint with the NYS Department of Financial Services (formerly the NYS Department of Insurance):

> Online form: http://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumer/fileacomplaint.htm
> For insurance related questions call 1-212-480-6400 or 1-800-342-3736
> Prompt pay complaints 1-800-358-9260
> > To file a Prompt Pay complaint you will need to register and create an account
> > http://www.dfs.ny.gov/insurance/provlhow.htm
>
> > "This resource has proven quite effective."

To file a complaint with the Office of the New York State Attorney General:

> Print complaint form at:
> http://www.ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/pdfs/complaints/hc_complaint_form.pdf
>
> Consumer hotline: 1-800-428-9071

For information about HIPAA compliance and sample forms:

> See Health and Hospital Services website at:
>
> https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/index.html

Books on Practice Management:

Bruce Hillowe, JD, PhD, *HIPAA Compliance Manual for Small Mental Health Practices in New York State, Fourth Edition.* Instructions, Handbook and Forms for Compliance with the 2013 HIPAA Omnibus and Related Rules, with Record-Keeping and Informed Consent Supplements, CD-ROM included, Word Format, c. 2013, Bruce V.Hillowe. All rights reserved. Permission to use forms granted to **original** purchaser only. Can be ordered by calling 800-286-0369 or from his website, for $70, by contacting him at http://www.brucehillowe.com/main.asp?id=18. $60 if ordered through NYSSCSW. Mail a check to NYSSCSW, 243 Fifth Avenue, Suite, 324, New York, NY 10016-8703. "Valuable general source on policies and procedures."

Ellen T. Luepker, MSW, BCD, *Record Keeping in Psychotherapy and Counseling: Protecting Confidentiality and the Professional Relationship, Second Edition.* Routledge, 2012. ISBN 9780415892612

Contains sample forms useful for small practices. Book explains through text and clinical vignettes the necessity for keeping records while protecting patient confidentiality thereby protecting your practice. Author is a member of the AAPCSW. Includes chapters on exceptions to confidentiality, confidentiality in an electronic age, retaining and destroying inactive records, and records in the legal system. Sample forms contained on accompanying CD. Permission to use forms granted to **original** purchaser only. New from $34.32 at Amazon.com. "A useful teaching tool."

Edward L. Zuckerman and Keely Kolmes, *The Paper Office for the Digital Age, Fifth Edition: Forms, Guidelines and Resources To Make Your Practice Work Ethically, Legally, and Profitably.* The Guilford Press 2017. ISBN 1462528007.

Per Amazon review:

Significantly revised and updated to include online and computerized aspects of private practice, this essential manual has given many tens of thousands of clinicians the complete record-keeping and risk-reduction tools that every psychotherapy practice needs. The book provides effective methods for obtaining informed consent, planning treatment and documenting progress, managing HIPAA compliance, maintaining clinical and financial records, communicating with clients and third-party payers, and reducing malpractice risk. Drawing from the professional literature, it features key guidance and easy-to-digest pointers about the ethical, legal, and business aspects of practice. With a

large-size format and lay-flat binding for easy photocopying of the 53 reproducible forms and handouts, the book includes a CD-ROM that lets purchasers customize and print the reproducible materials. License to use forms in book and CD granted to **original** purchaser only.

New to this edition:
*Updated throughout to reflect today's greater use of electronic/digital technologies in practice management.
*Chapter on insurance and billing, coping with managed care, and Medicare.
*Chapter on private practice marketing, including Internet and social media dos and don'ts.
*Expanded topics: HIPAA compliance, ICD-10, responding to subpoenas, and using online technologies for billing, communication, and record keeping.
*Information about hundreds of websites dealing with all aspects of operating a practice.

 $73.08 at Amazon.com. Other sellers may have other prices. Only buy a **new** copy to assure permission to use forms in book and CD.

"A valuable tool."

Practice Management Software and Online Practice Management Systems:

Keeping in mind the general trend toward using Electronic Health Records (EHRs), you will want to consider some of these options carefully before committing to one system.
Some practice management systems offer billing or clearinghouse services. Others are strictly practice management. Some are software you download to your computer. Others are web-based and independent of platform.

Use of online practice management systems makes you a covered entity under HIPAA. Make sure you get a Business Associate Agreement from the system's management.

The use of speech-to-text software, for example, Dragon Naturally Speaking, by Nuance, makes completion of notes on computer or online easier for some. Others find it cumbersome. This software is useful for those who have difficulty using a keyboard for entry of information into notes or who would rather compose notes by speaking. Entry is accomplished through a microphone, either hand-held with controls, on a headset or a desk stand. Some of the software "learns" as it is used, so that unfamiliar words become part of its lexicon. Prices vary according to software and features.

Automated Medical Assistant   www.automatedmedicalassistant.com

> Online therapy billing software with scheduling, claim tracking and record storage. You can track authorizations and generate various types of reports. Secure access for iPhone, iPad, Android, or PDA cell phone. $39.97/month plus $.22 per electronic claim. Integrated credit card processing. Will send paper claims.   For an additional fee you can use their Medical Assistant to do your billing. See video introduction on website.

Carepaths   www.carepaths.com

> Online practice management, electronic health records (EHR), and claims accounting. Billing (claims creation) included as part of creating clinical notes. Extensive library of pre-made forms as well as the ability to create your own forms. Scheduling site allows patients to upload documents and check their appointments or accounts. Unlimited claims and unlimited support. Access to test instruments for assessment and measurement. $29.75/month for clinicians starting a practice. After 6 months rate becomes $44.75/month. HIPAA compliant cloud storage is free for up to 5 GB. Also offers HIPAA compliant telepsychiatry. Demo gives overview (no actual form use demonstration).

CounSol   http://www.counsol.com

>   Comprehensive online practice management. Plans include a Standard Plan, $44.95/month, that does not include online billing but maintains electronic records and provides scheduling. Standard Plus, $54.95/month, includes online billing. Premium Plus, $69.95/month, includes online billing, secure video conferencing, email, messaging and online chat. Clients can securely post journals to their section of clinician's account, reviewable by clinician. All features are on the Web so it's accessible from anywhere. Business Associate Agreement provided.

ICANotes   http://www.icanotes.com

>   Menu driven, point-and-click software creates psychiatric session notes that don't look mechanical. Software also does scheduling, EHR, intake documents, treatment plans and other functions. Appointment reminders accomplished through either of two partner companies with a separate sign-up and fee. Bills created and can be printed. Electronic billing available either through ICANotes' clearing house/billing partners or through an electronic file that can be generated and sent to clinician's choice of clearing house or biller (e.g. OfficeAlly), which may require an extra fee depending on the file type required by billing service/clearinghouse.

>   For the first non-prescribing clinician the monthly fee is $75 (including one administrative user). Monthly fee includes unlimited support and training as well as all maintenance and upgrades.

My Clients Plus   http://www.myclientsplus.com

>   Complete practice management software package. Offers over 200 EMR templates. Basic plan, $19.95/month. Unlimited E-billing,$10.95/month with claim tracking. Includes appointment scheduling, and credit card payment, through Jituzu.   21-day free trial. "I use My Client Plus for bookkeeping purposes, but it also has a Therapy Notes component. It is quite easy and efficient to use and I highly recommend it."

Practice Magic   http://www.practicemagic.com

Practice management and billing software for Windows. Does not work on Mac or Linux. No session notes. Create e-claims on a disk. Calendar driven. Therapist records clinical and non-clinical appointments and enters payment info. Program uses this info to generate a statement or fill out insurance claim forms.

Standard version for $159.95; after 3 years requires yearly update for $39.95. Unlimited version, $199.95, requires no update. CMS-1500 form filler only, $139.95, same as Standard, fills out insurance forms and maintains your calendar; does not keep track of receivables.

Practice Mate   www.officeally.com

Practice Mate, a part of Office Ally (see below under Clearinghouses), provides their practice management function. Claims filing is accomplished through Practice Mate and tracking of claims is done through Office Ally. The functions that aren't part of Office Ally include patient demographics, scheduling and tracking, claims/billing accounting, patient management and a patient portal, which allows the patient to schedule appointments or upload documents to your file. Patient Ally allows two-way HIPAA-compliant email between clinician and patient. You create new patient records, listing patient's insurance, and can track visits if needed by the insurance. You can create templates for claims. All of these functions are free of charge. Other, paid, functions are EHR (Electronic Health Records), accepting credit cards, and e-prescribe. When you sign up you get a signed Business Associate Agreement. Practice Mate works best with Microsoft Internet Explorer and Safari (on Windows, Mac and iOS).

ShrinkRapt   www.ShrinkRapt.com

A mental health billing and insurance software for Windows and Mac. For $199 you can maintain an electronic medical record, stored in your computer. For $299 you keep a complete medical record and bill patients for service yourself. For $399 claims can be printed or sent to a clearing house. Add visit notes and scheduling for $100. For $485 you get electronic medical records, billing, insurance, scheduling and notes. After you purchase you always have access to your information because you own a software license, unlike with ongoing programs where you lose access to your information if you stop paying the monthly fee.

Simple Practice   http://www.simplepractice.com

  Web-based practice management for therapy notes, scheduling, claims, intake paperwork. Basic plan $39/month. Professional Plan $49/month includes online claims filing. Additional fee based on number of claims.   "It has a very intuitive user interface. It works on a Mac and just as well on iPad. Support has been very good."

TheraNest   http://www.theranest.com

  Easy to use forms on computer for recording demographics, intake information, treatment plan, session notes, scheduling and billing. Claims submission through a link with OfficeAlly (small one-time setup charge). Secure messaging portal for clients available. Patients able to read and complete pre-intake paperwork securely online. Free 21-day trial period. $38/month for up to 30 active clients; $48/month for up to 40 clients. Wiley Treatment Planners and Session Notes online planners (point-and-click creation of treatment plans and session notes) available for small additional monthly fee. Credit card acceptance available for extra fee. Software can be used by single users or in a clinic setting for multiple users and privacy levels. Supervisory review and approval of notes an available option.

Therapist Helper   http://www.helper.com

  Practice management software. Your records reside in your computer. Note that online claims submission will require an additional module. You will need to buy the Practice Management Module for billing, scheduling and general business management, $599 (one-time) and the Support Contract, $329/year. This allows you to fill out and print the CMS-1500. To bill electronically, through a clearinghouse, you will need Claims Connect for an additional $10/month and $.27 per claim page, plus a one-time $75 set-up fee. The Support Contract includes tech support calls, help on all functions of Therapist Helper, product upgrades, and classes for anyone associated with your account. Credit card processing, electronic medical records and online CE courses available as separate modules to be purchased.   Demo online.
  "A long time favorite in the field."

Therapy Appointment   http://www.therapyappointment.com/

Created by Bill Whitehead, PhD. Does everything from making appointments and keeping progress notes to billing online. Works on Windows, Mac, and tablet devices. Structured charting available to ensure HIPAA compliance. Therapists can use their own forms, or forms supplied in the software and can upload documents in either PDF or .DOC format. Regular fee for over 40 appointments a month, $57.50. There is a Getting Started rate of $30/month for 39 appointments or fewer. A one time $30.00 signup fee covers training and support. Demo can be scheduled from website.

Therapy Charts (Wiley Publishing)   http://www.therapycharts.com/

This is the replacement for Wiley's TheraScribe practice management system. An electronic health records system. Currently no electronic claims submission but their website says that will be coming later this year. Currently generates self-pay bills, invoices and statements. System is entirely web-based so is platform independent (works on PC, Mac, Linux, iPad). All data stored online on Wiley's servers. Patient demographics, appointments, and charting. Automatic updates to software, codes and definitions because it's all online. Allows access to a full range of Wiley Treatment Planner modules, Session Notes Planners and Homework Planners for point-and-click creation of treatment plans, session notes and homework assignments. Website states full HIPAA and HITECH compliance.   Price varies from $37.50 to $75.00/month based on plan purchased.

TherapyNotes   www.therapynotes.com

Form-based note taking system. Electronic claims submission and Electronic Health Records. Scheduling with to do lists and appointment reminders available. Progress note templates are customized specifically for psychotherapy and psychiatry to satisfy the requirements of HIPAA, APA, and insurance payers such as Medicare. Notes downloadable as a PDF.   Web-based product works across platforms on Windows, Mac, iPads, and other tablets. Credit card processing available. Pricing for first clinician, $59 per month, each additional clinician, $30 per month, electronic claims, $.19 each, and appointment reminders, $.19 each. Works on Windows, Mac, and iPads and other tablets. 30-day free trial available. "Amazingly helpful."

Therapy Partner   http://www.therapypartner.com

Simple scheduling, billing, and documenting procedures. No e-filing, e.g. does not generate CMS 1500 forms or files usable by clearing houses. Seems to focus on self-pay client model. Credit card processing integrated with software. Can work from many platforms including tablets, Mac and PC.

Pricing has two levels, standard and premier. Standard plan is stated by TherapyPartner to be their more popular plan and is better for clinicians billing under $60,000 in credit card fees. Cost of standard plan is $54/month plus 3.9% credit card processing fee. Premier plan is $74/month plus 3.5% credit card processing fee. Both plans process cash items at no charge. Free demo and trial available on website.

Online Payment From Patients:

Aside from the usual cash and check, more options are becoming available for clinicians to accept payment from patients. Dedicated machine/card readers attached to phone lines are no longer the only way to accept credit or debit card payment. Many options use smartphone or tablet computers as the input device for the charges and can generate receipts that are sent via email or text to patients.

Methods of making payment include:

- *Credit/debit cards with magnetic strips on the back*
- *EMV (Euro/Mastercard/Visa) enabled cards - also known as "chip" cards*
- *Near Field Communication (contactless) payment - ApplePay, Samsung Pay, Google Pay (formerly Android Pay) and others*
- *Smartphone/tablet apps that transfer funds bank to bank (commercial applications only, e.g. transfer function in patient's banking app)*

Methods of collecting payment include:

- *Magnetic stripe readers - such as Square - often attach to phones or tablets - lowest level of technology/security*
- *EMV ("chip") card readers - often attach to phone or tablets - better security*
- *Contactless/chip readers - can be stand alone - better security*
- *Dedicated terminals – such as PayPal - depending on service used can be highest level security*
- *Computer resident programs - software that connects to an accounting program - example: Intuit software connects to Quickbooks to receive payment*
- *Text-based smartphone and tablet-based apps, such as PocketSuite now allow for fees to be collected without the patient having a credit card in hand and can also do scheduling.*

Charges and receipts should not be itemized, e.g. listing CPT or ICD code for service, unless you are using an encrypted method of transmitting payment information. The highest level of encryption is P2PE (Point to Point Encryption), meaning that the information is fully encrypted from the (dedicated) terminal collecting the information, through transmission on to the bank/payment collector. Only 50 companies are validated P2PE carriers (PayPal is one of them).

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We would like to recommend not storing or "saving" patients' credit/debit card (and/or social security) numbers. If you need to charge them for a missed appointment we suggest doing so at the next session. Storing patient card numbers makes the clinician responsible for yet another piece of the patient's identifying information and can lead to financial liability in the case of identity theft.

Per New York State law, fees assessed for credit/debit card processing may not be passed along to consumers. Check with your accountant about deducting the fees for processing credit cards as a business expense.

Clearinghouses for Electronic Billing, Including Provider Websites:

A word about Clearinghouses and HIPAA compliance: Many, perhaps most, clearinghouses submit bills electronically whether or not you submit your claim information to them electronically or on paper. This makes you a "covered entity" under HIPAA. Among the things that are required to comply with the regulations is to assure that everyone who does any business for you, such as a clearinghouse or billing service, understands the requirements of confidentiality. To demonstrate this you should be getting a signed Business Associate Agreement from them.

Sources for Business Associate Agreements include the Hillowe and Zuckerman/Kolmes books. There is a complete set of HIPAA compliance forms and policy documents available for NASW members on the NASW website at https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Legal/HIPAA-Help. For more information about Business Associate Agreements and sample templates for BAA see https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/covered-entities/index.html

Ability (formerlyMDOn-line)

https://abilitynetwork.com/services/all-payer-claims-and-remittance/

Ability submits claims to Medicare, Medicaid and more than 3,000 commercial insurance companies for processing.   You key data directly into an electronic CMS-1500 form via a secure web portal.   When you use your own billing software, 837 EDI-compliant claim formats are recognized.

You can verify eligibility and submit claims, view EOBs, edit and resubmit claims. Your data is stored securely offline in a US-based data center. $54/month for up to 600 claims a year (6 visits a claim). There is usually a $350 installation fee but they will offer a solo practitioner a very reduced rate of $54. There is also an annual $100 maintenance fee, which includes tech support and keeping you compliant with HIPAA. Contact Brent.Saltzman@AbilityNetwork.com, telephone, 813-188-3250.

Availity   www.availity.com

Availity claims to be one of the nation's largest healthcare information networks. A clearinghouse for Anthem, Empire BCBS, Humana, Cigna and other plans. They provide online eligibility and benefits information, claim submission and claim status inquiry. An "advanced clearinghouse" also providing revenue cycle management and patient access management.

Beacon Health Options (Formerly Value Options and Beacon Health Strategies)

www.beaconhealthoptions.com/providers

Beacon Health Options styles itself as "the premier behavioral health company in the market". Includes Emblem, GHI, and HIP. Provides online eligibility verification, pre-certification, claim processing, and claim inquiry.

There is no single telephone number to reach Beacon Health Options. You are advised to use e-supportservices@beaconhealthoptions.com For the EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) Helpdesk at Latham, NY, call 888-247-9311.

Value Options patients may still receive materials under the name Value Options, Inc. To avoid confusion in billing use the Payor ID on the back of patient's card. Use the same processes as before the merger to verify eligibility or submit claims. If you have a relationship with PaySpan it will remain unchanged.

Connex   www.NGSMedicare.com

Online access to Medicare transactions including claim filing and the ability to check eligibility or claim status. Must be enrolled as a Medicare provider. You can file an appeal or view your provider account profile.

Empire BCBS

Provides only online eligibility, benefits, and pre-certification. To submit claims see Availity above.

NaviNet   www.navinet.net/provider-physician-solutions

A healthcare communications network serving 750 commercial and government plans. NaviNet is the tool of choice for Aetna. Claim submission for Aetna is free. This platform is also used by Cigna, BCBS, United and Medicare, but there is an additional cost and you must first register with each of them.   Establish benefits and eligibility online, file claims, review claim status and view electronic remittance reports.   Store records electronically.   You can also create patient portals, use Navinet's clinical tools, and accept payment by credit card. Free tech support.

Office Ally   www.officeally.com

An electronic claim submission clearinghouse submitting to over 4400 payors. Free Online Entry Tool for the submission of electronic claims and a free practice management system called Practice Mate (see description above under Practice Management Software).

An electronic health records system called EHR 24/7 is available for $29.95 per month. For an additional fee both Practice Mate and EHR 24/7 provide access to Eligibility Verification and a reminder system for appointments called Reminder Mate.

Claims processed within 24 hours. Full file summary report available listing errors on claims (and what the error is) and pending claims, as well as accepted claims. Provider has the option of printing the claim and can obtain a claim history.

A pre-enrollment form may be necessary for electronic submission of claims to some companies (including Medicare). There is a charge for Medicare claims if they constitute more than 20% of all claims. "Excellent customer support."

Optum ProviderExpress   www.providerexpress.com

The provider network for United Health Group (United Behavioral Health, Oxford, Optum, Oscar). Check eligibility, file claims, and check claim status.

Billing Services:

Billing services take your information and submit it for payment to the insurance company. Although you may not be a "covered entity" under HIPAA, and you are sending the information to the biller by mail or fax, this information is usually transmitted electronically to the insurer by the biller. (Some billing services may be willing to file paper claims for you.)

You must be HIPAA compliant to use a billing service if it only files electronically. A billing service filing electronically must sign a Business Associate Agreement with you.

Be aware of "fee splitting," which may occur if the billing service collects a percentage of each claim paid rather than a flat fee per claim. Fee splitting is illegal in the State of New York.

BillingCindy   917-774-5354   516-908-3646 (eFax)   billingcindy@yahoo.com

Cindy Ambrose, owner. On Long Island. Over 25 years of experience in behavioral health with both individual and group providers.   Comprehensive billing services include insurance verification prior to services, obtaining/monitoring treatment authorizations, and denial management at no additional cost.   "Dependable and helpful in working out problems such as translating DSM diagnosis codes into ICD codes."

Billing for Doctors   845-627-6114

Nanuet, NY. Compatible with every plan that utilizes the major clearinghouses for electronic filing. $5 per claim for up to six service dates per same client. You fax or mail them the diagnosis, dates of service, CPT code and charges. A summary of claims submitted is enclosed with your monthly bill. Other services: print-and-mail billing, balance billing to clients, setting up office systems, developing forms to track authorizations and OTRS. They do not obtain authorization. Contact Paul Alejandrino at paulbfd21@gmail.com.

Billshrinkers   www.billshrinkers.com   1-877-BILLSHRINK

A mental health billing service in Hackettstown, NJ. Dr. Phillip Yucht, LCSW, Director. Fee: 7% of total amount collected together with a $12.50 one-time per-patient setup charge. Dr. Yucht states that he can charge a flat fee per claim for New York State clinicians. Bills all plans. Turnaround: 2 weeks, sometimes faster. Setup: short-term contract (month-to-month) and you just send them patient demographics by fax, email or mail. They provide an authorization report and "almost any other report you could think of may be provided on request at no additional cost." Other services: print-and-mail billing, personalized account management. Work can be submitted electronically for same fee. Ask for Trisha.

COS Billing www.cosbilling.com 973-641-9213   Fax 973-857-2972   cosbilling@gmail.com

Katherine Napoli, owner. A full service agency providing billing and bookkeeping services. Charges per claim. Additional services: will confirm patient benefits, obtain initial treatment authorizations, notify providers of authorization renewal dates, follow up with unpaid claims, track payments through EOBs. Will do administrative tasks as needed (typing professional correspondence, generating patient bills and statements). "Superb. Not only technically fully competent but very patient."

Jean Hartman, bookkeeper   jhart10013@aol.com   917-608-3879

In lower Manhattan. Bookkeeping, general clerical/officework including computer entry. Quickbooks. Available on a regular basis or for special projects, pretty flexible. Fee dependent on the type of job, generally $25-30/hour. "Great bookkeeper. She has helped me out on numerous occasions."

Healthcare Claims Network   healthcareclaim@aol.com   518-469-2381

Easton, CT. Maria Schmitz, owner since 1994. Medical billing, follow up on denials and appeals; no authorizations or credentialing. Will keep up CAQH registration. Recommended by a member.

Health Assets Management   www.healthassets.com   845-334-3680

    Kingston, NY. Takes care of everything from credentialing to electronic billing. Obtains verification of patient benefits and co-pays and follows up on claims. Maintenance of all files with therapist's CV, certifications, licenses and malpractice insurance. Chosen as the official practice management company for NYS Psychological Association and for NASW-NYS for their members.   Initial flat fee up front. Ask for Brett Jones, Operations Manager, or Carmel Gold, President. CGold@healthassets.com.

Mental Health Billing Services   (516) 293-1174

    Farmingdale, NY. "A complete back office for providers." They check benefits, post bills, send electronic claims, and do follow up when claims are denied. Have been in business for approximately 13 years. Contact John Bannon. Recommended by a member.

T & T Medical   845-469-9394   www.ttmedbill.com

    Tara Thomas. All forms of mental health billing, practice management, and credentialing. Does Medicare provider enrollment application, CAQH attestation. Provides reports as needed. Will tally 1099s at tax time. Charges a flat monthly fee for full service billing based on size of practice according to the website, determined by average weekly appointments.

Questions to Ask a Billing Service:

To ensure a good fit, you yourself will need to make calls to more than one billing service. Here are some questions you may want to ask:

What do you call the kind of service you perform?

What services do you provide for your fee besides claims submission to insurance companies?

Do you offer benefit verification, obtaining authorization, following up denied claims, or help with credentialing and Medicare enrollment?

Do you do print-and-mail billing? Is there an extra charge?

Do you offer any practice management software such as software for scheduling, appointment reminders, tracking authorizations, tracking receivables, note-taking, or treatment planning?

What is your fee structure? Any hidden costs? (Note that charging a percentage of each claim paid rather than a flat fee is considered fee-splitting and therefore illegal in New York State.)

Is there a contract? For what period of time?

Is there an initial set-up fee? A fee for follow up on claims denied?

Will you sign a Business Associate Agreement?

How do I get paid? How do I pay you?

What kind of report will I get? A list? Copies of claims sent? How long do you keep your records?

What help do I get at tax time?

Do I have to have a computer?

Do I deal with the same person each time?