

Access to Drug & Alcohol Treatment Services in HealthChoices: Know Your Rights!



Most people on Medicaid in Pennsylvania receive their behavioral health services through a managed care (HealthChoices) plan. The Behavioral Health plan you are in is chosen by your county.

To access drug and alcohol services or have an assessment to determine what type of treatment you need, contact your behavioral health plan directly (see page 4 to locate the plan for your county). Tell them you are looking for help getting treatment.

Behavioral health plans are required to offer services to you in a timely way. The rule is:

- If you have an emergency, face-to-face services must be provided within one hour of your request for help.
- If you have an urgent need, services must be provided within 24 hours of your request
- If you want a routine appointment, it must be provided within 7 days of your request.

The health plan must provide a choice of at least 2 providers within 30 minutes travel if you live in an urban area and 60 minutes in rural areas.

The behavioral health plans are required to answer their Member Services phone line 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week so you can call them anytime you need help.

If your plan can't find a provider for you in the timeframes described above, it is obligated to explore out-of-network providers. These are treatment programs that do not have a contract with the behavioral health plan but the plan can still pay them to provide services.

Your behavioral health plan provides a broad range of drug and alcohol treatment services including:

- Hospital detox
- Intensive outpatient
- Halfway house
- Non-hospital detox
- Partial hospitalization
- Methadone maintenance
- Residential rehabilitation
- Outpatient services
- Hospital rehabilitation

Some plans may offer additional services so you should contact your plan to see if they offer other services such as a Certified Recovery Specialist.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are trying to obtain Medication Assisted Treatment with Suboxone/ Buprenorphine, those medications are not provided by your behavioral health plan. Instead, you need to contact your Physical Health plan to find a doctor who prescribes these medications.

How do I know what type of services I need?

Pennsylvania uses a standard assessment tool to determine the level of substance abuse treatment needed for each individual. The assessment tool is administered by a qualified drug and alcohol professional who works for a treatment provider or for your county drug and alcohol office.

If you are seeking treatment, it is VERY important that you be COMPLETELY HONEST about your drug and alcohol use and its impact on you including:

- What you are using and how often
- Any physical symptoms of withdrawal
- All other medical or physical conditions you have such as diabetes, depression or Hepatitis C
- How your use has impacted your health, family, job, friends
- Your current living conditions
- Your past history of drug and alcohol treatment
- Your past history of recovery or “clean time”
- Other information asked about during the assessment

Once your assessment is complete, a level of treatment will be recommended for you by the professional who completed your evaluation.

Whatever level of treatment is recommended for you, your behavioral health plan is required to offer you a choice of at least two providers who can meet your needs.

What can I do if the level of care recommended by the assessment is denied by my behavioral health plan?

You have a right to receive this decision in writing and to appeal the denial. You can appeal the decision to what is called a First Level Grievance by calling your plan.

Please note: If you are already receiving treatment services but your plan denies a request to continue the treatment recommended by your provider, if you appeal right

away you have a right to continue to receive those services while you go through the appeal process.

You can contact the PA Health Law Project Helpline at 1-800-274-3258 or Janice Meinert directly at 412-434-5637 for more information about your appeal rights. Contact us **immediately** if you are denied any level of drug and alcohol treatment by your Medicaid behavioral health plan.

Why is it important to access drug and alcohol treatment right away?

Abuse of, or addiction to, alcohol or other drugs is a very serious medical condition that can be life threatening. It is also a progressive disease which means if it is not treated it will only get worse with continued drug and alcohol use. Like other diseases such as cancer, the sooner a person gets help with their addiction, the better their chance for a full recovery.

What if I need transportation help to get an assessment for drug and alcohol treatment or to get to a treatment program?

The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) can help but you must first register with the MATP in your county. Find the information about this program in your county at: <http://matp.pa.gov/CountyContact.aspx>. MATP can provide mileage reimbursement if you have access to a car, reimbursement if you use public transportation like a bus or a train, or transportation through a shared ride program if that is what you need.

<p>This publication is intended to provide general legal information, not legal advice. Each person's situation is different. If you have questions about how the law applies to your particular situation, please call the Helpline at 1-800-274-3258.</p>

*Copyright April 2016
The Pennsylvania Health Law Project is a nonprofit legal services organization.
www.phlp.org ▪ 1-800-274-3258*

Behavioral Health Managed Care Plans for Each County

Community Behavioral Health

- Philadelphia 1-888-545-2600

Community Care Behavioral Health

- Adams 1-866-738-9849
- Allegheny 1-800-553-7499
- Berks 1-866-292-7886
- Blair 1-855-520-9715
- Bradford, Cameron, Center, Clarion, Clearfield, Columbia, Elk, Forest, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Juniata, McKean, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union, Warren and Wayne 1-866-878-6046
- Carbon, Monroe and Pike 1-866-473-5862
- Chester 1-866-622-4228
- Clinton and Lycoming 1-855-520-9787
- Erie 1-855-224-1777
- Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna and Wyoming 1-866-668-4696
- York 1-866-542-0299

Magellan Behavioral Health

- Bucks 1-877-769-9784
- Delaware 1-888-207-2911
- Lehigh 1-866-238-2311
- Montgomery 1-877-769-9782
- Northampton 1-866-238-2312

PerformCare

- Bedford, Somerset 1-866-773-7891
- Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon and Perry 1-888-722-8646
- Franklin and Fulton 1-866-773-7917

Value Behavioral Health

- Armstrong and Indiana 1-877-688-5969
- Beaver 1-877-688-5970
- Butler 1-877-688-5971
- Cambria 1-866-404-4562
- Crawford, Mercer and Venango 1-866-404-4561
- Fayette 1-877-688-5972
- Greene 1-877-688-5973
- Lawrence 1-877-688-5975
- Washington 1-877-688-5976
- Westmoreland 1-877-688-5977