



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**

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DATE: August 11, 2021  
TO: BPA Health SUD Network Providers  
FROM: Rosie Andueza, IDHW Division of Behavioral Health  
SUBJECT: Improving Immediate Access to SUD Services

Immediate access to SUD services is a top priority for the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare (IDHW) Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). In an effort to support this priority, DBH is now covering services for up to 30 days while newly screened and eligible clients apply for Medicaid. Effective 8/9/2021, clients going through the initial screening process with BPA Health and who are determined eligible for DHW funding will not be required to have a Medicaid application denial first.

This change will give clients who are approved in the initial screening process with BPA Health (phone or paper pathway) 30-day authorizations for an Assessment and any necessary Recovery Support Services (RSS) under DBH funding. This will include Case Management (CM) units to help the provider assist the client in the Medicaid application process. BPA Health will list specific notes in the authorizations during the initial 30 days to help the provider understand where the client is in the process.

It is in the best interest of the client to apply for Medicaid as soon as possible, ideally within the initial 14 days of the authorization start date. If the client completes their Assessment before the 30-day authorization ends and their Medicaid application is still being processed, the client will be eligible for additional treatment services under DBH funding until their Medicaid status has been determined.

**Friendly Reminders:**

- Clients may apply for Medicaid via phone, website, or in person.
- It is in the best interest of the client to apply for Medicaid. If the client is approved under Medicaid they are eligible for primary health care and other services, in addition to SUD services.
- It is in the best interest of the provider to have the client apply for Medicaid to ensure continuity of care and better outcomes for the client continued payment of services.
- The 30 days of the services covered by DHW start from the authorization start date, not the date of the client's Assessment with the provider.
- The client should not wait until the end of this 30-day authorization to apply for Medicaid. It is highly encouraged that the application to be completed within the first 14 days for the best chances of the application process to be completed within this 30-day authorization.
- Whenever possible, please include the provision of Medicaid application assistance in the provider's initial intake process.

If you have any questions, please contact BPA Health at 800-922-3406.