Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Behavioral Health Care Manager Qualifications: Minimum Requirements Across State Medicaid Agencies

The Collaborative Care Model (CoCM) is one of the most evidence-based approaches for integrating mental health care into primary care settings. In this model, an interdisciplinary team including a primary care provider (PCP) or specialty medical provider (e.g., OB-GYN, cardiologist, etc.), a psychiatric consultant (PC), and a behavioral health care manager (BHCM) collaborate to deliver high-quality, data-driven, patient-centered care. This integrated approach uses universal screening, measurement-based care, and care coordination to improve early detection, treatment, and relapse prevention for mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. CoCM is the only integrated behavioral health model with designated billing codes which support the financial sustainability of the model. CoCM billing codes are time-based and reflect the total amount of clinical time the BHCM spends engaging in patient care activities under the direction of the PCP, in collaboration with the PC, over the course of a calendar month.

Under Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines, a BHCM may be a designated provider with formal education or specialized training in behavioral health, including social work, nursing, or psychology, working under the oversight and direction of the billing practitioner when serving a Medicare patient. However, state Medicaid agencies vary in their requirements with some following CMS guidelines, while others set stricter requirements.

The following section outlines the minimum BHCM qualifications required by state Medicaid agency to bill for CoCM services. Grayed-out states have not adopted CoCM billing codes and therefore do not reimburse these services. States labeled “NWG” indicate that either no written guidance on BHCM education or licensure requirements has been published or no such guidance was located.

The information was compiled through extensive review of state Medicaid websites and policies, confirmation from state Medicaid agency representatives, and other publicly available guidance. While this serves as a useful guide, we recommend confirming details with the state Medicaid agency and applicable managed care organizations (MCO). If you notice any omissions or have additional questions, please contact cocm@mmhpi.org.

BHCM Minimum Qualification Requirements by State Medicaid Agency

State	Minimum Requirements
Alabama	NWG (Covered by AL BCBS Medicaid Only)
Alaska	
Arizona	NWG
Arkansas	NWG (Covered by AR BCBS Medicaid Only)
California	NWG
Colorado	Formal education, specialized training or licensure in behavioral health
Connecticut	Licensure or associated licensure, with training and/or credentials in behavioral health
Delaware	NWG
District of Columbia	Licensure
Florida	NWG
Georgia	NWG
Hawaii	NWG
Idaho	
Illinois	Formal education in a related human services field, or a bachelor's degree in any field with two years of documented supervised clinical experience in a behavioral health setting, or Registered Nurse
Indiana	
Iowa	NWG
Kansas	NWG
Kentucky	No minimum licensure requirements
Louisiana	
Maine	
Maryland	Licensure with specialized training in behavioral health
Massachusetts	NWG
Michigan	Licensure or specialized training in behavioral health
Minnesota	
Mississippi	
Missouri	Licensure
Montana	NWG
Nebraska	NWG
Nevada	NWG
New Hampshire	NWG

State	Minimum Requirements
New Jersey	NWG
New Mexico	
New York	CMS guidelines
North Carolina	Formal education, licensure, or a designated and trained member of the care team
North Dakota	
Ohio	
Oklahoma	Formal education, licensure, or a designated and trained member of the care team
Oregon	NWG (Covered by MCOs Only)
Pennsylvania	NWG
Rhode Island	NWG
South Carolina	NWG
South Dakota	
Tennessee	NWG
Texas	Formal education and must be credentialed as a Qualified Mental Health Professional-Community Services (QMHP-CS)
Utah	NWG
Vermont	NWG
Virginia	Licensure or a supervisee in social work working under the direction of a licensed supervising provider
Washington	Licensure
West Virginia	
Wisconsin	Formal education in human services field and one year of direct, supervised experience working with individuals in the behavioral health field
Wyoming	NWG