



Department
of Health

Office of
Mental Health

Office of Alcoholism and
Substance Abuse Services

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To: Medicaid Managed Care (MMC) Plans

Date: February 19, 2019

RE: Language Assistance Services for Adult Behavioral Health Home and Community Based Services (BH HCBS)

Purpose: To address Adult BH HCBS providers' access to and reimbursement for providing language assistance for members who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs.

The New York State Office of Mental Health, NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, and the NYS Department of Health require MMC Plans to maintain a provider network capable of delivering services to all enrollees in a culturally competent manner. As per the MMC Model Contract, Section 15.10:

“The Contractor shall promote and ensure the delivery of services in a culturally competent manner to all Enrollees, including but not limited to those with limited English proficiency... In order to comply with this section, the Contractor shall... Maintain an inclusive... culturally competent network of Behavioral Health Providers, individual behavioral health practitioners, community-based providers and peer-delivered services.”

Medicaid Managed Care Plans are reminded of these obligations and to clarify that such obligations extend to the provision of language assistance services, including translation and interpreter services, for Adult BH HCBS providers to ensure no Enrollee is denied access to medically necessary services due to the Enrollee's lack of English language proficiency. MMC Plans must arrange for language assistance services and reimburse Adult BH HCBS providers for language assistance services when network providers cannot meet the enrollee's language needs. MMC Plans are also responsible for informing Adult BH HCBS providers how to access and be reimbursed for translation services for clients with limited English proficiency.

Please direct questions to the BHO@omh.ny.gov mailbox.