

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
NOTICE OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST
RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER 2, 2021**

PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENT 21-0051 to add peer support services as a Medi-Cal Rehabilitative Mental Health Service and to include peer support specialists as a distinct provider type, to clarify telehealth definitions, and to remove the existing client plan requirement and update associated plan development activities for Medi-Cal Rehabilitative Mental Health Services.

This notice is to provide information of public interest about a proposed State Plan Amendment (SPA) by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

Senate Bill (SB) 803, chapter 150, statutes of 2020, authorized DHCS to seek federal approvals to add peer support specialists as a Medi-Cal provider type and peer support services as a distinct service type in counties opting to participate and implement this service. Accordingly, DHCS is submitting SPA 21-0051 to add peer support services as a Medi-Cal Rehabilitative Mental Health Service and to include peer support specialists as a distinct provider type.

Currently, Mental Health Plans (MHPs) provide, or arrange for, Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS), which include Rehabilitative Mental Health Services. This SPA will allow MHPs to provide peer support services as a SMHS, establish peer support specialists as a distinct provider type of SMHS, and seek federal reimbursement.

DHCS is also replacing the term “telemedicine” with “telehealth” for consistency across the department as DHCS moves toward utilizing the term “telehealth.” In addition, DHCS is clarifying the Rehabilitative Mental Health Services that can be provided via telehealth.

In addition, DHCS proposes to remove the existing client plan requirement and update associated plan development activities for Medi-Cal Rehabilitative Mental Health Services. This change is consistent with the department’s California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative through which DHCS proposes to update documentation requirements and align with national standards. Among these changes, DHCS proposes to remove the requirements to have a client plan and that each chart note tie to the client plan. Instead, DHCS proposes to use problem lists and progress notes to allow active and ongoing updates of a client’s evolving clinical status.

DHCS anticipates that the total federal cost associated with the addition of peer support services would be \$25,154 for Federal Fiscal year (FFY) 2021-2022 and \$26,763 for FFY 2022-2023.

The effective date of the proposed SPA is January 1, 2022. All proposed SPAs are subject to approval by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENTS

Upon submission to CMS, a copy of the proposed SPA #21-0051 will be published at the following internet address:

https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/laws/Pages/Pending_2021.aspx

If you would like to view the SPA in person once it becomes available, please visit your local county welfare department. You may also request a copy of proposed SPA #21-0051 using the mailing or email addresses listed below.

Written comments may be sent to the following address:

Department of Health Care Services
Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division
Attn: Shaina Zurlin
P.O. Box 997413, MS 4000
Sacramento, California 95899-7417

Comments may also be emailed to PublicInput@dhcs.ca.gov. Please indicate SPA #21-0051 in the subject line or message.

A copy of submitted public comments to SPA #21-0051 may be requested in writing to the mailing or email addresses identified above.