

Psychiatric residential treatment facilities

Plan: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana

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Policy contains: Bed based services; psychiatric residential treatment facilities.

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana has developed clinical policies to assist with making coverage determinations. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's clinical policies are based on guidelines from established industry sources, such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), state regulatory agencies, the American Medical Association (AMA), medical specialty professional societies, and peer-reviewed professional literature. These clinical policies along with other sources, such as plan benefits and state and federal laws and regulatory requirements, including any state- or plan-specific definition of "medically necessary," and the specific facts of the particular situation are considered, on a case-by-case basis by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana when making coverage determinations. In the event of conflict between this clinical policy and plan benefits and/or state or federal laws and/or regulatory requirements, the plan benefits and/or state and federal laws and/or regulatory requirements shall control. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's clinical policies are for informational purposes only and not intended as medical advice or to direct treatment. Physicians and other health care providers are solely responsible for the treatment decisions for their patients. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's clinical policies are reflective of evidence-based medicine at the time of review. As medical science evolves, AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana will update its clinical policies as necessary. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana's clinical policies are not guarantees of payment.

Policy statement

Psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs) are non-hospital facilities offering intensive inpatient services to individuals under the age of 21 who have various behavioral health issues. PRTFs are required to ensure that all medical, psychological, social, behavioral and developmental aspects of the member's situation are assessed and that treatment for those needs are reflected in the plan of care (POC) per 42 CFR 441.155. In addition to services provided by and in the facility, when they can be reasonably anticipated on the active treatment plan, the PRTF must ensure that the member receives all treatment identified on the active treatment plan and any other medically necessary care required for all medical, psychological, social, behavioral and developmental aspects of the member's situation.

Components

Assessment and Treatment Planning

Services must meet active treatment requirements, which means implementation of a professionally developed and supervised individual POC that is developed and implemented no later than 72 hours after admission and designed to achieve the recipient's discharge from inpatient status at the earliest possible time. "Individual POC" means a written plan developed for each member to improve his/ condition to the extent that inpatient care is no longer necessary.

The POC must:

1. Be based on a diagnostic evaluation conducted within the first 24 hours of admission in consultation with the youth and the parents/legal guardian that includes examination of the medical, psychological, social, behavioral and developmental aspects of the recipient's situation and reflects the need for inpatient psychiatric care;
2. Be developed by a team of professionals specified under §441.156 in consultation with the child and the parents, legal guardians or others in whose care the youth will be released after discharge;
3. State treatment objectives;
4. Prescribe an integrated program of therapies, activities and experiences designed to meet the objectives; and
5. Include, at an appropriate time, post-discharge plans and coordination of inpatient services, with partial discharge plans and related community services to ensure continuity of care with the member's family, school and community upon discharge.

The plan must be reviewed as needed or at a minimum of every 30 days by the facility treatment team to:

1. Determine that services being provided are or were required on an inpatient basis; and
2. Recommend changes in the plan, as indicated by the member's overall adjustment as an inpatient.

The facility treatment team develops and reviews the individual POC. The individual POC must be developed by an interdisciplinary team of physicians and other personnel who are employed by, or provide services to, patients in the facility. Based on education and experience, preferably including competence in child psychiatry, the team must be capable of:

1. Assessing the beneficiary's immediate and long-range therapeutic needs, developmental priorities, and personal strengths and liabilities;
2. Assessing the potential resources of the beneficiary's family;
3. Setting treatment objectives; and
4. Prescribing therapeutic modalities to achieve the plan's objectives.

Eligibility Criteria

Children under 21 years of age, pre-certified by an independent team, where:

1. Ambulatory care resources available in the community do not meet the treatment needs of the member;
2. Proper treatment of the member's psychiatric condition requires services on an inpatient basis under the direction of a physician; and
3. The services can be reasonably expected to improve the member's condition or prevent further regression, so that the services will no longer be needed.

The independent team pre-certifying the PRTF stay must:

1. Include a physician;
2. Have competence in diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, preferably in child psychiatry; and

3. Have knowledge of the individual's situation.

Allowed Mode(s) of Delivery

1. On-site.

Provider Responsibilities

Children/adolescents receiving services in a PRTF program must have access to education services, including supports to attend public school if possible, or in-house educational components, or vocational components if serving adolescents.

Because the PRTF is not in itself a specific research-based model, it must instead incorporate research-based models developed for a broader array of settings that respond to the specific presenting problems of the members served. Each PRTF program should incorporate appropriate research-based programming for both treatment planning and service delivery.

Facilities must use evidence-based or best practice clinical techniques as part of their program model. For milieu management, all programs should also incorporate some form of research-based, trauma-informed programming and training. A PRTF specializing in substance use disorder treatment must comply with ASAM criteria. PRTF may specialize and provide care for maladaptive sexual behaviors, substance use treatment or individuals with co-occurring disorders. If a program provides care to any of these categories of youth, the program must submit documentation regarding the appropriateness of the research-based, trauma-informed programming and training, as well as compliance with the ASAM level of care being provided.

In addition, programs may propose other models, citing the research base that supports use of that model with the target population (e.g., gender-specific approaches). They may also work with the purveyors of research-based models to develop more tailored approaches, incorporating other models.

The specific research-based models to be used should be incorporated into the program description, which should include information on the program's plan to ensure training for their staff in the selected research-based model(s), which staff types (direct care staff, therapists, etc.) are trained in the selected research-based model(s), and provisions for continuing education in the research-based model(s). All research-based programming in PRTF settings must be incorporated into the program description and approved by the State, subject to OBH review.

Provider Qualifications

The facility must provide treatment meeting State regulations per LAC 48: I. Chapter 90.

Agency

Agencies that operate as PRTFs must:

1. Be licensed by the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) in accordance with Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC) 48:I.Chapter 90 and accredited prior to enrollment by an LDH approved accrediting body: Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), Council on Accreditation (COA) or The Joint Commission (TJC). Denial, loss of, or any negative change in accreditation status must be reported

to AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana in writing immediately upon notification by the accreditation body. The PRTF must be accredited prior to delivering services.

- a. Arrange for and maintain documentation that prior to employment (or contracting, volunteering, or as required by law) individuals pass criminal background checks, including sexual offender registry checks, in accordance with all of the below:
 - i. The Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities licensing regulations established by LAC 48:I.Chapter 90, which includes those for owners, managers, and administrators, any applicant for employment, contractor, volunteer and other person who will provide services to the residents prior to that person working at the facility;
 - ii. La. R.S. 40:1203.1 et seq. associated with criminal background checks of un-licensed workers providing patient care;
 - iii. La. R.S. 15:587, as applicable; and
 - iv. Any other applicable state or federal law.
- b. Not hire individuals failing to meet criminal background check requirements and regulations. Individuals not in compliance with criminal background check requirements and regulations shall not be utilized on an employment, contract nor volunteer basis. Criminal background checks performed over 90 days prior to the date of employment will not be accepted as meeting the criminal background check requirement. Results of criminal background checks are to be maintained in the individual's personnel record.
- c. Review the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE) and the LDH State Adverse Actions website prior to hiring or contracting any employee or contractor that performs services that are compensated with AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana funds, including but not limited to licensed and unlicensed staff, interns and contractors. Once employed, the lists must be checked once a month thereafter to determine if there is a finding that an employee or contractor has abused, neglected or extorted any individual or if they have been excluded from participation in AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana or the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General. The provider is prohibited from knowingly employing or contracting with, or retaining the employment of or contract with, anyone who has a negative finding placed on the Louisiana State Adverse Action List, or who have been excluded from participation in AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana or the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General.
- d. Maintain results in personnel records that checks have been completed. The OIG maintains the LEIE on the OIG website (<https://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov>) and the LDH Adverse Action website (<https://adverseactions.ldh.la.gov/SelSearch>);
- e. Arrange for and maintain documentation that all persons, prior to employment, are free from tuberculosis (TB) in a communicable state via skin testing (or chest exam if recommended by physician) to reduce the risk of such infections in members and staff. Results from testing performed over 30 days prior to date of employment will not be accepted as meeting this requirement;
- f. Establish and maintain written policies and procedures inclusive of drug testing staff to ensure an alcohol and drug-free workplace and a workforce free of substance use;
- g. Maintain documentation that all direct care staff, who are required to complete First Aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), complete American Heart Association (AHA) recognized

training within 90 days of hire, which must be renewed within a time period recommended by the AHA; and

- h. Maintain documentation verifying that staff meet educational and professional requirements, licensure (where applicable), as well as completion of required trainings.

Emergency Preparedness Regulations

PRTFs must comply with federal emergency preparedness regulations associated with 42 CFR §441.184 in order to participate in the AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana program. Regulations must be implemented by November 15, 2017. They include safeguarding human resources, maintaining business continuity and protecting physical resources. (<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/surveycertemergprep/core-ep-rule-elements>).

Facilities should incorporate the four elements of emergency preparedness into their plans and comply with all components of the federal regulation:

1. Risk assessment and emergency planning - CMS requires facilities to perform a risk assessment that uses an “all-hazards” approach prior to establishing an emergency plan.
2. Communication plan - CMS requires facilities to develop and maintain an emergency preparedness communication plan that complies with both federal and state laws. Patient care must be well coordinated within the facility, across healthcare providers, and with state and local public health departments and emergency management agencies and systems to protect patient health and safety in the event of a disaster.
3. Policies and procedures - CMS requires that facilities develop and implement policies and procedures that comply with federal and state law, and that support the successful execution of the emergency plan and risks identified during the risk assessment process.
4. Training and testing - CMS requires that facilities develop and maintain an emergency preparedness training and testing program that complies with federal and state law, and that is updated at least annually.

The PRTF shall also meet the state requirements of LAC 48:1 Chapter 90 §9083. Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Staff

Staffing for the facility must be consistent with State licensure regulations.

All experience requirements are related to paid experience. Volunteer work, college work/study or internship related to completion of a degree cannot be counted as work experience. If experience is in a part-time position, the staff person must be able to verify the amount of time worked each week. Experience obtained while working in a position for which the individual is not qualified may not be counted as experience.

To provide services in a PRTF, staff must meet the following requirements:

1. Pass criminal background check through the Louisiana DPS, State Police prior to employment;

2. Employees and contractors must not be excluded from participation in AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana or the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Inspector General;
3. Direct care staff must not have a finding on the Louisiana State Adverse Action List;
4. Pass a TB test prior to employment;
5. Pass drug screening tests as required by agency's policies and procedures;
6. Complete American Heart Association (AHA) recognized First Aid and CPR and training. Psychiatrists, advanced practical registered nurses (APRNs/physician assistants (PAs), registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) are exempt from this training; and
7. Complete all required training appropriate to the program model approved by OBH.

Staffing Qualifications

Per federal regulations at 42 CFR 441.156 and state regulations at LAC 48: I. Chapter 90. §9067, the team must include, at a minimum, either:

1. A board-eligible or board-certified psychiatrist;
2. A licensed clinical psychologist and a physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy; or
3. A physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy, with specialized training and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of mental diseases, and a psychologist who has a master's degree in clinical psychology or who has been licensed by the State psychological association. Note: Louisiana does not consider individuals with a master's degree in clinical psychology to practice and be considered "psychologists". Facilities wishing to utilize this option under federal and state regulations must ensure that State psychology scope of practice is followed. In this case it would mean that the psychologist must be a licensed or medical psychologist.

The team must also include one of the following:

1. A licensed clinical social worker (LCSW);
2. A RN with specialized training or one year's experience in treating individuals with mental illness;
3. An occupational therapist who is licensed and who has specialized training or one year of experience in treating individuals with mental illness; or
4. A licensed psychologist or medical psychologist.

Note: In all cases, it is preferred that team members also have experience treating children and adolescents.

Allowed Provider Types and Specialties

1. PT 96 Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, PS 9B Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility
2. PT 96 Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, PS 8U Substance Use or Addiction
3. PT 96 Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, PS 8R Other Specialization

Limitations/Exclusions

The facility must comply with seclusion and restraint requirements found at LAC 48:I.Chapter 90 and 42 CFR 483 subpart G.

Reasonable activities include PRTF treatment provided by and in the facility when it was found, during the initial evaluation or subsequent reviews, to be treatment necessary to address a medical, psychological, social, behavioral or developmental aspect of the child's care per 42 CFR 441.155.

The PRTF reasonable activities are child-specific and must be necessary for the health and maintenance of health of the child while he or she is a resident of the facility. The medically necessary care must constitute a need that contributes to the inpatient treatment of the child and is dependent upon the expected length of stay of the particular child in that facility (e.g., dental hygiene may be necessary for a child expected to reside in the facility for 12 months but not 30 days).

Educational/vocational expenses are not AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana expenses. In addition, supports to attend public school outside of the PRTF are not considered activities provided by and in the PRTF and on the active treatment plan, and may not be reimbursed by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana. However, supports to attend in-house education/vocational components may be reimbursed by the PRTF utilizing AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana funding to the extent that it is therapy to support education in a PRTF (e.g., occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), speech therapy (ST), etc.). AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana funding for the education itself is not permitted. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana will pay for the therapies associated with the education provided in-house while the child is in a PRTF.

Reimbursement

Services for AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana-eligible members not provided by and in the facility and reflected on the active treatment plan are not reimbursable by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana.

Reimbursement for PRTF is based on the following criteria:

1. Each PRTF provider must enter into a contract with AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana in order to receive reimbursement for AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana services;
2. LDH or its fiscal intermediary must make monthly capitation payments to AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana, and AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana will determine the rates paid to its contracted providers. Payment must be no less than the minimum AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana rate; and
3. Covered inpatient PRTF activities for individuals under twenty-one (21) years of age must be reimbursed by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana.

Free-standing PRTFs

The rate for free-standing PRTFs must include reimbursement for the following services when included on the active treatment plan:

1. Occupational therapy/physical therapy/speech therapy;
2. Laboratory; and
3. Transportation.

A free-standing PRTF must arrange through contract(s) with outside providers to furnish dental, vision, and diagnostic/radiology treatment activities as listed on the active treatment plan. The treating provider will be directly reimbursed by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana.

In-State PRTF Reimbursement Rates

In-State publicly or privately owned and operated PRTFs must be reimbursed for covered PRTF services according to the following provisions. The rate paid by AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana to the provider must take into consideration the following ownership and service criteria:

1. Free-standing privately owned and operated PRTF specializing in sexually-based treatment programs;
2. Free-standing privately owned and operated PRTF specializing in substance use treatment programs;
3. Free-standing privately owned and operated PRTF specialized in behavioral health treatment programs.

Out-of-State PRTF Reimbursement Rates

Out of state psychiatric residential treatment facilities must be reimbursed in accordance with AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana contractor's established rate.

Cost Reports

All in-state AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana-participating PRTF providers are required to:

1. File an annual AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana cost report in accordance with AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana allowable and non-allowable costs;
2. Submit cost reports on or before the last day of the fifth month after the end of the provider's fiscal year end;
3. Separate cost reports must be submitted by central/home offices when costs of the central/home office are reported in the PRTF provider's cost report; and
4. Submit a filing extension to LDH prior to the cost report due date if the PRTF provider experiences unavoidable difficulties in preparing the cost report by the prescribed due date.

NOTE: Facility filing a reasonable extension request will be granted an additional 30 days to file their cost reports.

References

Louisiana Department of Health. 2017. Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual. Bed Based Services. Chapter 2, Section 2.2. Issued 01/12/2024.

Policy updates

Initial review date: 8/1/2023

8/2024: Policy updated. No major changes.