

Recent News:

SWMBH would like to draw your attention to the following excerpt from the Paw Paw Courier Leader.

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PAW PAW—A Van Buren County Commissioner was recently honored for his years of service to Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health. County Commissioner Richard Godfrey was honored with a plaque by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health Substance use Disorder Oversight Policy Board. Godfrey has served as a county commissioner since May of 2010. He also served numerous terms as County Commissioner chair. He chose not to seek reelection this year. Godfrey served on regional SUD advisory boards prior to the start-up of SWMBH and on SWMBH's SUD advisory board since its funding. As one of the founders of the West Michigan Regional Veterans Treatment Court, Godfrey's support of the veterans treatment court did not stop when the court began. He has continued as an active supporter. VTCs employs a unique hybrid integration of drug court and mental health court principles tailored to meet the specific needs of military veterans. Godfrey has attended many court sessions as well as graduations to

provide support for participants and workers. Debra Hess, CEO at Van Buren Community Mental Health Authority, said of Godfrey, "My experience with Dick, I have observed is that he is a man dedicated to community service as you can tell from his long list of community service, but more than the -long list, Dick demonstrates his care and concern by showing up and lending a hand. And even more than a hand, his knowledge, analytical mind, service and action in whatever ways are needed." She concluded, "He not only shows up and services, but he also helps others to show up and serve their communities." Godfrey received his undergraduate degree from Alma College, and his MBA from Central Michigan University. He is a retired faculty member of Grand Rapids Junior College, where he was a statistics professor. He is president of Bloomingdale Communication, where his father was president of the board for 44 years, a position Godfrey now fills since 2006. In 2022, Godfrey was honored as a "Friends of the Trail", showing exemplary care and dedication for the Kal Haven Trail. He is a member of the Van Buren County Land Preservation Board and serves on the Wings of Hope Hospice Board.

County Commissioner honored by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health



Van Buren County Commissioner Richard Godfrey was recently honored with a plaque by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health, where he served as the founding vice chairman of Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health Substance Use Disorder Oversight Policy Board. Shown with Godfrey is Debra Hess, CEO, Van Buren Community Health Mental Authority. Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

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Call Center Corner

Beth Guisinger, Director of Utilization Management

Level of Care and Medical Necessity Criteria

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) is committed to ensuring each Medicaid beneficiary receives the services best designed to meet their individual needs as identified through the Level of Care assessment process. Any individual requesting treatment services are screened for the most appropriate level of care based on their presented needs.

The current level of care placement tools used as required by Michigan's Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) are the following:

- LOCUS (Level of Care Utilization System) for adult mental health, ages 18+
- ASAM-PPC (American Society for Addiction Medicine – Patient Placement Criteria) for substance use disorders, adults ages 18+
- MichiCANS (Michigan Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) for infants, toddlers, children, youth, and young adults ages birth to 21
- CAFAS/PECFAS (Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale/Preschool and Early Childhood Functional Assessment Scale) for 1915 (i) and SEDW eligibility determinations
- MCG (Milliman Care Guidelines) for emergent/

SWMBH UM Staffing Updates

SWMBH is happy to announce their UM & Call Center has hired a new manager, Nicole French-Scramlin, MA, LPC, who began in this role effective January 6, 2025. Nicole joined SWMBH in November 2022 and has been a wonderful asset and addition to the UM department and will serve that team and our regional providers well. Congratulations, Nicole!

And, while Leah Mitchell, MA, LMSW, is “gone” from the wonderful world of Access and UM, she is certainly not “forgotten”. Leah has transitioned into a new role within SWMBH with Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement as a Clinical Quality Specialist and the vast experience she has gained at SWMBH since joining us in 2016 will serve our region well.

urgent inpatient hospitalization, partial hospitalization, and crisis residential medical necessity determinations, all ages

The SIS (Supports Intensity Scale) has not been replaced by MDHHS since the contract lapsed for use in 2022. The current MDHHS plan to implement the use of WHODAS (World Health Organizations Disability Assessment Schedule) is not scheduled to begin until SFY26, October 1, 2025.

To ensure adequate and uniformed benefits for members, SWMBH utilizes medical necessity criteria to ensure service authorization requests are appropriate based on level of care principles and ensure the intensity of services provided are consistent with the severity of illness. The current medical necessity criteria being utilized through SWMBH's Central Care Management and Outlier Management processes are MCG (Milliman Care Guidelines) for emergent behavioral health services and ASAM-PPC for substance use services. MCG and ASAM-PPC medical necessity criteria may be obtained by providers by request, if needed. To obtain the most current medical necessity criteria, **please contact the Utilization Management Provider line at (800) 676-0423. Press prompt 1 for Providers.**



Grievance and Appeals Overview

Sarah Ameter, Customer Service Manager

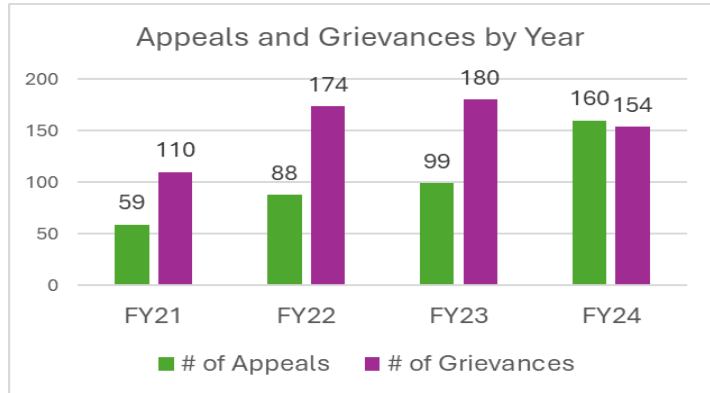
Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) compiles Medicaid and Healthy Michigan Plan grievance and appeal information quarterly. To the right are highlights from our Fiscal Year 24 analysis. This data includes all 8 Community Mental Health (CMH) agencies as well as cases filed with SWMBH directly.

While the number of grievances has declined in the past two years, we are seeing more complex concerns requiring more interventions and investigation to reach a resolution. Of the 154 complaints filed in FY24, 104 of these were related to interactions with staff. The other two highest categories of complaints were access to care and quality of care (clinical concerns).

Regionally, we have seen a steady increase in the number of appeals filed over the past few years. The higher number of appeals may be due to factors such as: increased utilization reviews, changes in eligibility for Medicaid or waivers, increased provider education on filing on behalf of customers, and sending notices when customers stop engaging in care.

Of the appeals, we had 6 cases go to a State Fair Hearing with an Administrative Law Judge. This is a higher number of hearings than we had in the past two years. Of these cases, we had 4 withdrawn/dismitted during the hearing process, and 2 decisions affirmed by the Judge.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about grievances or appeals, please contact SWMBH Customer Service at 1-800-890-3712 or email us at: customerservice@swmbh.org.



SWMBH Provider Directory Updates

Courtney Dunsmore, Provider Network Specialist

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) is committed to providing members with the most current information about its in-network providers and the array of services available. The Provider Directory is located on SWMBH's website on the "Find a Provider" page - [https:// www.swmbh.org/providers/provider-directory/](https://www.swmbh.org/providers/provider-directory/).



If you are a provider in SWMBH's network and would like to update any information listed under your agency in this directory, please email swmbhprovidernetwork@swmbh.org with the updates you wish to see in the directory and a Provider Network Specialist will be happy to assist in making those changes. SWMBH also encourages Provider feedback regarding any issues and/or concerns you may encounter while navigating the Provider Directory; feel free to send an email with feedback to the same email address listed above at any time. SWMBH appreciates your time and diligence to keeping the Region's Provider Directory up to date for the members we serve!

SWMBH Board Ends

Ella Philander, Executive Project Manager

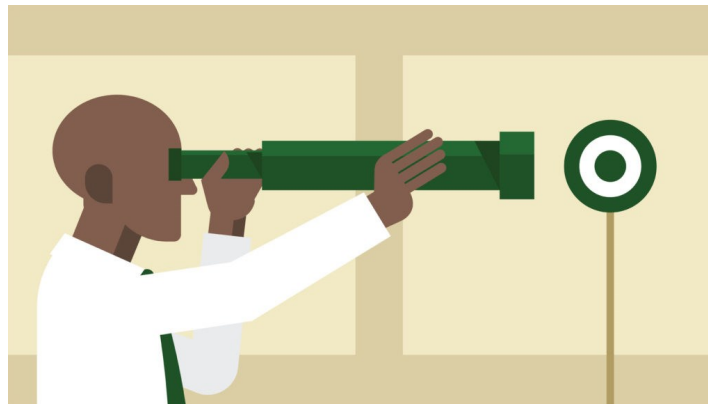
The SWMBH Board is excited to announce that they have adopted a revised set of Board Ends which directs SWMBH towards the benefits to be produced, for whom and at what cost reflecting the organization's vision and reason for being. Developing revised Ends included multiple contacts with each of our eight CMH Boards to ensure their values are expressed through our Ends. In the next step the CEO develops Ends Interpretations and measures of Ends achievement.

Global End: As a benefits manager of state and federal funds, SWMBH exists to assure that member agencies and providers create sustainable programs and provide specialty services so that persons in the SWMBH region have access to appropriate resources and experience improvements in their health status and quality of life, optimizing self-sufficiency, recovery, and family preservation. Quality services are provided while minimizing costs through efficient stewardship of human, financial, and technology resources available and use of shared knowledge.

1. Member CMH boards, EOs, and staff value the partnership with SWMBH, and experience the

relationship as collaborative, transparent, responsive, and reciprocal.

2. Member CMHs are aware of environmental disruptors and trends and benefit from SWMBH's regional and statewide regulatory and public relations advocacy impacting the Mental Health Community.
3. Member CMHs have the resources needed to address their communities' individualized needs, successfully access appropriate resources and successfully meet contractual obligations (*including managed care functions*).
4. Member CMHs and other providers assure and monitor ready access to appropriate programs and services for their consumers and contribute accurate data so SWMBH can create aggregated, comprehensive, and comparative regional results which supports access to maximum funding available.
5. The SWMBH regional partners align with best practice, learning from each other, collaborating, sharing resources, and benefitting from lessons learned.



Universal Credentialing

Kelly Gabriel, Provider Network Specialist

MDHHS updated the credentialing/recredentialing policy for FY25 to comply with MI Public ACT 282 of 2020 which mandates a universal credentialing system for licensed and/or certified providers and practitioners. The updated policy extends the recredentialing period from 2 years to every 3 years. SWMBH will be implementing the use of the

Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) for credentialing/recredentialing of our providers / practitioners in adherence with MDHHS policy. Additional information will be provided as we make this change to our credentialing/ recredentialing process this year.

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Quality and Excellence through Partnerships

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.SWMBH.ORG

Check out the SWMBH Provider Manual and Provider Directory, on our SWMBH website: www.swmbh.org. The website contains information about the SWMBH policies and procedures as well as helpful information on topics such as provider responsibilities, customer rights, utilization management and other helpful material.



Do you wish to stay up-to-date on SWMBH Trainings? If YES, please submit your name and the organization you work for to traininginfo@swmbh.org with a request to be added to the training email list. This will allow SWMBH to send to you information on all the latest and greatest training/webinar opportunities.

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) is the Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP) for eight Michigan counties, and is in partnership with the Community Mental Health (CMH) agencies of these counties. SWMBH, in partnership with the CMH's and local providers, provides mental health services to adults with severe and persistent mental illness, children with severe emotional disturbance, individuals with developmental disabilities, and individuals with substance use disorders. As the manager of services, SWMBH will make sure that services are provided to you based on your needs and goals and are within the guidelines set by the state of Michigan. SWMBH strives to ensure that you and your family members are treated with dignity and respect.



If you have a compliance-related question or concern, or to file a compliance report, you can do so in the following ways. Contact Mila Todd, SWMBH's Chief Compliance Officer, email Compliance at swmbhcompliance@swmbh.org or report anonymously by calling 1-800-783-0914. You can also file a report directly with the MI Office of Inspector General, by using the information on their website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/inside-mdhhs/office-of-inspector-general/contact-us>