



Provider Insider

JANUARY 2026, VOLUME 25

Emailing SWMBH Departments

Providers! Make sure you are contacting the right people to receive the help you need. Emailing the wrong department is a sure way to slow down a response to your issue.

As a reminder:

Providersupport@swmbh.org – This email address is for technical assistance with the SWMBH SmartCare system. Do you need a password reset? This is your address. Password reset requests shouldn't be made as you're heading out the door. Temporary passwords expire again at midnight on the day they are created. Make sure to ask for the reset when you are available to receive it!

Claims@swmbh.org – This email address will get you assistance with your claims or a question about a check payment.

swmbhprovidernetwork@swmbh.org – This email address is for our provider network team and includes questions about contracts. Reach out to this one if a rendering provider is set up to bill a specific code in your contract and it isn't working properly or if you have credentialing questions. Provider Network isn't able to reset your password!

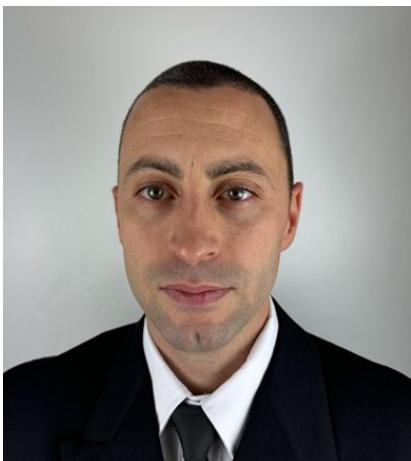
Inside this issue:

ARTICLE	PAGE
RSA-r Survey Summary	2-3
Memo to Provider Billing	4
Provider Directory Updates	4
Call Center Corner	5
PIHP Procurement	6
Upcoming Training	7



SWMBH Veteran Navigator

Sarah Ameter, Customer Services Manager



Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health is excited to introduce our new Regional Veteran Navigator, Michael Wilson.

Michael is originally from Berrien Springs, but currently resides in Watervliet, MI. He served in the United States Navy Seabee's as an Equipment Operator Chief and got to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is currently serving in the Navy Reserves with just over 18 years of service.

Michael earned a bachelor's in management and is pursuing his master's in business administration, which will help empower him as a Veteran Navigator at Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health working with Walking with Warriors. He is hoping to make an impactful difference.

If you would like to contact Michael or have a Veteran who could use his assistance, please contact him at:

269.967.9187 or Michael.wilson@swmbh.org

Be better each day.

RSA-r Survey Summary

Cate Pederson, Interim Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Manager

What is the RSA-r Survey?

- The RSA-r (Recovery Self-Assessment-revised) Survey was given to SWMBH's Medicaid & Block Grant consumers to answer about the substance use (SUD) services they receive from their current provider.
- The survey was administered through their SUD provider/CMHSP electronically via Survey Monkey or via paper form and returned to SWMBHs Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement department.
- The survey consisted of 32 questions and answers based on a scale of 1-5 (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).
- All questions related to following sub-categories:
 - Life Goals, Involvement, Diversity of Treatment, Choice, Individually Tailored Services, Inviting Space

Why does SWMBH distribute the RSA-r Survey?

- The survey is designed to gauge the degree to which programs implement recovery-oriented practices.
- It is a reflective tool designed to identify strengths and target areas of improvement, geared toward improving consumer outcomes and treatment modalities.

Results:

The 2025 RSA-r survey administration period was from: 8/1/2025-9/15/2025.

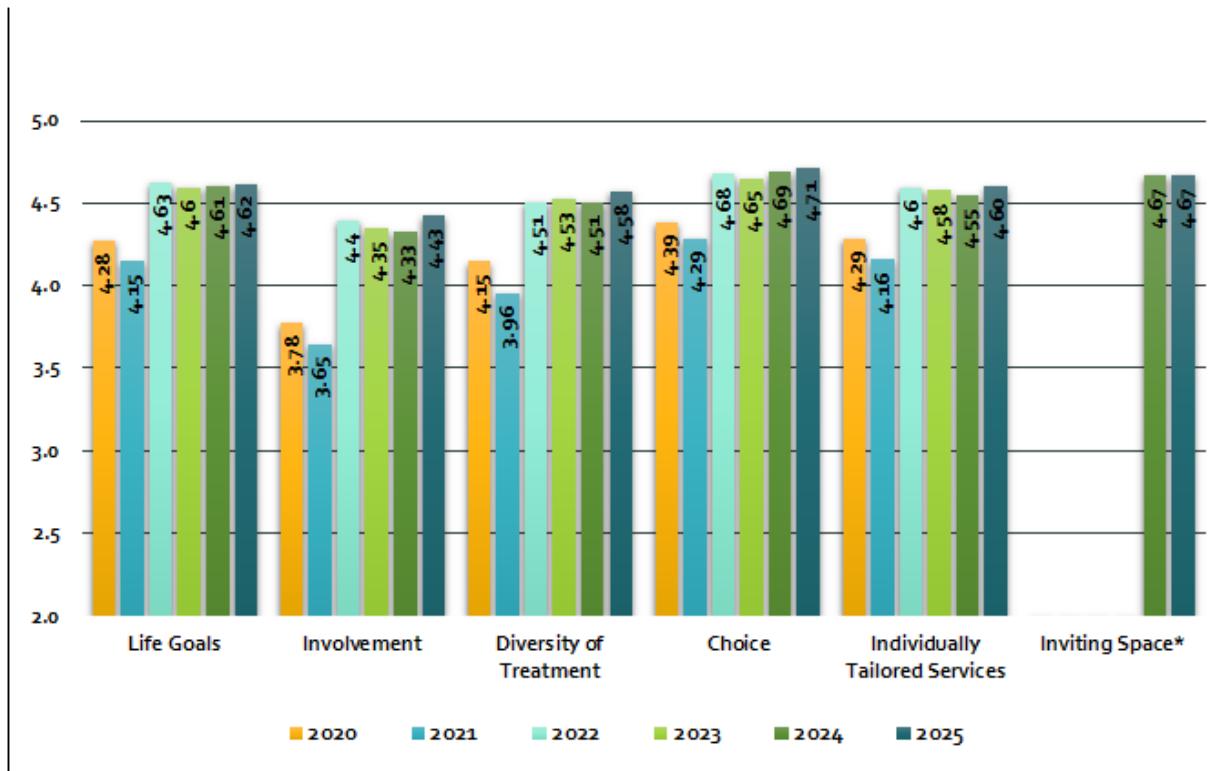
In 2025, survey participation decreased slightly with a total of 639 complete surveys received.

The chart to the right represents both the number of surveys completed and the regional overall mean score since 2018. The regional comprehensive survey score maintained from FY22-FY24 of 4.55 increased in FY25 to 4.59; however, SWMBH's analysis found the increase was not statistically significant (95% confidence interval).



RSA-r Survey Summary Continued

Cate Pederson, Interim Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Manager



*Inviting Space domain new in FY24 survey. Questions in this domain were previously included in the Individually Tailored Services domain.

What did we find out?

As seen in the chart above, the mean score for each of the six categories either stayed the same or improved in FY25 compared to FY24. Involvement and Individually Tailored Services were the only subcategories to represent a statistically significant increase (95% confidence interval). This improvement in the Involvement subcategory is especially meaningful given its historically low performance and the ongoing provider emphasis on promoting community participation, provider events and development of new groups since the COVID-19 pandemic. The Choice domain remains the highest scoring category at 4.71.

What does SWMBH do with the results?

- SWMBH benchmarks the results against similar organizations, as available, and past performances to determine how to maintain high scores and improve on items with lower scores.
- SWMBH analyzes the results by category and by provider to identify potential areas for improvement. The individual score from FY23-FY25 for survey questions in each subcategory was included to assist in determining potential action steps, especially for individual providers, as regional domain scores appear to have plateaued in recent years. Participating SUD providers and CMHSPs were asked to internally review their results, address low qualitative (member comments) and quantitative outcomes, and create actionable items to elicit improvement in those areas which SWMBH will review and monitor in FY26.

SWMBH Memo to Network Billing Staff

Anne Wickham, Chief Administrative Officer

Regarding HIDE-SNP's and Claims Check Dates

As you may be aware, the State of Michigan has ended the MI Health Link demonstration on December 31, 2025. The State has also begun utilizing HIDE-SNP's effective January 1, 2026, within our region. These health plans are a dual eligible, Medicare/Medicaid, specialty needs plan and there are 5 different health plans in Michigan that beneficiaries may be enrolled with. Those health plans are Aetna, Molina, Priority, United and Wellcare/Meridian. We have entered these new third party plans into SWMBH's Smartcare system with the prefix of HIDE-SNP Aetna, HIDE SNP Molina, etc. These plans do not cover all behavioral health services but similar to the former MI Health Link plan will cover outpatient behavioral health services that are not specialty level care. Please ensure that you verify and update coverage plans as needed.

Gentle Reminder: Several folks inquired about checks not being cut on the "correct day" during the week of New Year's. As a reminder, SWMBH cuts checks on a bi-weekly basis but there is no set day of the week that checks are cut. All claims must be paid within 30 days of receipt and approval, and we absolutely will meet those terms. While checks are typically cut on a Wednesday, that is not the only day of the week on which they may be cut. Please do not reach out about checks "being late" unless you have specific claims that have been approved and are past the 30-day contractual obligation.

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/>.

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!



**ONLINE
PROVIDER
DIRECTORY**

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/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.**



PIHP Procurement

MDHHS released a Request for Proposal (RFP) on August 4, 2025, moving to a competitive procurement process for awarding Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP) contracts. The RFP's structure, if implemented, would effectively abolish the existing PIHPs by making it impossible for CMH-created Regional Entities to fulfill their statutory role. Through the RFP, MDHHS has redrawn the regional boundaries to reduce the number of PIHP regions in the State from 10 to 3. MDHHS further prohibits bidders from submitting a bid for less than a full region. Thus, existing PIHPs are precluded from successfully bidding because PIHPs, as Regional Entities by statute, are limited to serve only their designated service areas.

On August 28, 2025, SWMBH joined two other PIHPs and three CMHSPs (collectively, the Plaintiffs) in filing a lawsuit in the Michigan Court of Claims, challenging the legality of the RFP. In conjunction with the filing, the Plaintiffs requested that the Court issue a Preliminary Injunction – an Order that would preserve the status quo and effectively pause the RFP while the Court considers the legal challenges raised in the lawsuit. The State filed a response to the lawsuit and moved the Court to dismiss the lawsuit altogether.

On October 9, 2025, the Court held a hearing to consider the Plaintiffs' request for a Preliminary Injunction and the State's motion to dismiss the case. Following the hearing, on October 14, 2025, the Court issued Orders concerning the Plaintiffs' request for Preliminary Injunction and the State's Motion to Dismiss. The Court held:

- There is a genuine issue of material fact as to whether the terms of the RFP violate Michigan law.
- MDHHS has authority to shift to a competitive procurement system and reduce the number of PIHP regions.



A hearing took place December 8, 9 & 10, 2025, to further address the legality of certain terms in the RFP and Plaintiffs have filed a Motion for Reconsideration as to whether MDHHS has authority to reduce the number of PIHP regions. Our case was joined with another case filed by a separate CMH. Court of Claims hearings are livestreamed and recorded for later viewing, via YouTube ([Michigan Court of Claims - YouTube](#)).

The Court issued an Order on the afternoon of January 8, 2026. The Court found that "**the RFP, as drafted, impermissibly conflicts with Michigan law in numerous respects, especially insofar as the RFP restricts CMHSPs from entering into financial contracts for the purpose of funding CMHSPs' managed-care functions.**" Now we wait to find out how the State will proceed in addressing the deficiencies noted by the Court. The Order can be found [here](#), for more details and reference.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Earning the Return: Breaking Barriers to Continued Care



in health systems, and cultural barriers to care, relational trust is not a bonus. It is the foundation.

MUST ATTEND PART ONE TO ATTEND PART TWO.

Total of **3.0 Social Work CE hours**, based on 90 minutes of live instruction per session.

Target Audience: Clinicians, paraprofessionals, and frontline support staff

Registration link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fWtJr5cfRpugehR-TCtOXO>

March 25th Wednesday, 2026 10:00am-11:30am

Why Don't They Come Back: Breaking the Barriers to Continued Care. Every day, someone courageously reaches out for help—and then never returns. Not because they stopped needing care, but because something in our system told them they didn't belong. This will help leaders see what's really happening underneath disengagement. 1.5 social work CEUs

Target Audience: Supervisors, Managers & Identified Trust Champions

Registration link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Uk4HOVtMO7C-LollZChX-w>

SWMBH is committed to expanding access, increasing engagement, and reducing disparities in behavioral health care for underserved communities across its eight-county region. This commitment includes a specific focus on improving outcomes for African American and Hispanic populations, who have historically faced significant barriers to care.

Rooted in cultural humility, trauma-informed practice, and actionable tools, this experience equips your teams to close engagement gaps, reduce drop-off, and foster long-term connection with the people you serve. We look forward to partnering with you to drive measurable, lasting change.

No cost for SWMBH Affiliates

A Certificate of Completion will be issued upon verification of attendance

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Quality and Excellence through Partnerships

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health
5250 Lovers Lane, Suite 200
Portage, MI 49002

Main Line Phone: 800-676-0423
Fax 269 441-1234
Direct Number: 269-488-8922



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

www.swmbh.org

Check out the Provider Documents page on the 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 Alison Strasser, SWMBH's Interim 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>