



Southwest Michigan
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATOR

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Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health Board Ends

The Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) Board is excited to declare that they have adopted a revised set of Board Ends. These Ends reflect the organization's vision. The Ends direct SWMBH on the benefits to be provided, for whom and at what cost. Developing revised Ends included many contacts with each of our eight Community Mental Health (CMH) Boards. This is to ensure their values are stated through our Ends. In the next step, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) develops Ends Interpretations and how to measure the Ends success.

Global End: As a benefits manager of state and federal funds, SWMBH assures that member agencies and providers create long lasting programs and provide specialty services. They ensure that persons in the region have access to the resources they need. Needed resources can help with improved health status and quality of life. This can boost self-support, recovery, and family unity. 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, Executive Officers, 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.



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About SWMBH

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health is committed to providing behavioral health and substance use benefits in compliance with all federal rules through Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. SWMBH does not use financial incentives to encourage barriers to care and services and/or decisions that result in underutilization. SWMBH does not reward practitioners, or other individuals conducting utilization review for issuing denials of coverage or service. All utilization management decision-making is based only on the presence of coverage and suitability of care and service. Clinical decisions are based on the clinical features of the individual case and the medical necessity criteria.

Contact from members after normal business hours are returned on the next business day and contact received after midnight Monday-Friday except for holidays are responded to the same business day. Typical hours of operation for member services are from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

SWMBH also provides members with a quarterly newsletter no less than three times a year if they have received services within the last 90 days. To obtain a copy of the Customer Communicator Newsletter by mail call us at 1-800-890-3712 or to view our electronic version you can visit our website at <https://swmbh.org>.

How to reach us:

Customer Service: 1-800-890-3712
 SWMBH Substance Use Disorder Access Line: 1-800-781-0353
 Compliance Hot Line: 1-800-783-0914
 TTY: 711 (MRC)
 5250 Lovers Lane, Suite 200, Portage MI 49002
www.swmbh.org



Major Changes 42 CFR Part 2 Final Rule

The Department of Health and Human Services through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrative (SAMSHA) announced a change to the Final Rule which allows sharing of information while coordinating care for beneficiaries who receive publicly funded behavioral health services.

• **Patient Consent**

- Allows a single consent for all future uses and disclosures for treatment, payment, and health care operations.
- Allows HIPAA covered entities and business associates that receive records under this consent to redisclose the records in accordance with the HIPAA regulations.

• **Other Uses and Disclosures**

- Permits disclosure of records without patient consent to public health authorities, provided that the records disclosed are de-identified according to the standards established in the HIPAA Privacy Rule.
- Restricts the use of records and testimony in civil, criminal, administrative, and legislative proceedings against patients, absent patient consent or a court order.
- **Penalties:** Aligns Part 2 penalties with HIPAA by replacing criminal penalties currently in Part 2 with civil and criminal enforcement authorities that also apply to HIPAA violations.
- **Breach Notification:** Applies the same requirements of the HIPAA Breach Notification Rule 3 to breaches of records under Part 2.
- **Patient Notice:** Aligns Part 2 Patient Notice requirements with the requirements of the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices.
- **Safe Harbor:** Creates a limit on civil or criminal liability for investigative agencies that act with reasonable diligence to decide whether a provider is subject to Part 2 before making a demand for records during an investigation. The safe harbor requires investigative agencies to take certain steps in the event they discover they received Part 2 records without having first obtained the requisite court order.

For more information about how the new rule affects how your services are coordinated, you can follow the link below.

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/regulatory-initiatives/fact-sheet-42-cfr-part-2-final-rule/index.html>



**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**

Enhancing the health and well-being of all Americans





New Providers in Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health Network

The following providers have been added to the Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health Provider Network

Barry County:

- Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services
– Adrian Ave. AFC Home

Berrien County:

- Cornerstone Empowerment Program
- Senior Services DBA Milestone Senior Services
- Ripple Effects Community Inclusion Center
- MRC Industries
- Gage Consulting for Challenging Behaviors
- Logan Center at LMC
- Rebound Home and Community Therapy
- Willow Behavior Specialists

Branch County:

- Open Arms Link – West Willow Haven Home

Calhoun County:

- Behavior Alliance, LLC
- Cornerstone Empowerment Program

Kalamazoo County:

- Cornerstone Empowerment Program
- Ryder 1 (CLS provider in residential setting)

Substance Use Disorder Providers:

- Healthy House (Recovery Housing)

Substance Use Disorder Summary

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) provides substance use disorder (SUD) screening and referral services. The region is made up of 8 counties; Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren. For fiscal year 2024, SWMBH received 11,585 total incoming calls. Of those calls, SWMBH made 6,731 referrals to SUD treatment. SWMBH helps people connect to services such as outpatient treatment like individual and group therapy, withdrawal management, and residential treatment.

If you or someone you love is misusing substances,
please call 1-800-781-0353 for information about getting help.





“Flip the Script” on Mental Health

Mental health stigma is the negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes people can have about those with mental health issues. It is a type of social judgement that can have a negative effect on a person’s mental health. Stigma creates shame, fear, or silence. This can stop people from getting help. SWMBH and our friends at King Media, started an anti-stigma media campaign in September 2023. The goal is to shrink the stigma about mental health and substance misuse in our community. The message is to “flip” negative beliefs into positive. Our team has used billboards, social media, radio, and brochures to create a powerful campaign. Since the full release of the campaign in January 2024, there has been a total of 3,280,830 social media views and 13,757 website views.

In 2025, we are making new efforts to not only include the African American community, but also Latino and Hispanic communities as the focus of the campaign. You will start to see the campaign with new images, new voices, and even new language in the region. Please see the example of our Spanish language brochures that will be out in the community soon.

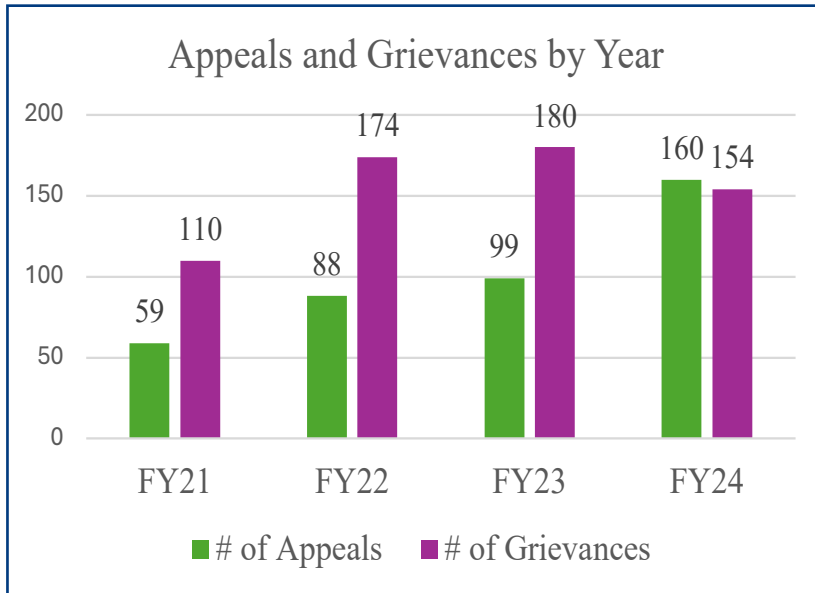


In 2025, let us talk about mental health and spread positivity. If we can lower stigma, we can create a community for all people to get the help and health they deserve.



Grievance and Appeals Overview

We gather and review Medicaid and Healthy Michigan Plan grievance and appeal information every few months. Below are highlights from this past fiscal year, October 2023-September 2024. This data includes all 8 Community Mental Health (CMH) agencies and cases filed with Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) directly.



The number of grievances has lowered in the past two years. But we are seeing more complex concerns. We need to take more steps to look into and resolve the issues. Of the 154 complaints filed in FY24, 104 were about interactions with staff. The other two main types of complaints were access and quality of care (clinical concerns).

In our region, the number of appeals filed continues to grow from year to year. This could be due to several factors. Our counties are doing careful reviews of service amounts and levels of care needed. We have had some

customers lose Medicaid or waiver status. We have had more providers file appeals. We have sent more notices when customers do not go to their services.

We had 6 cases go to a State Fair Hearing with an Administrative Law Judge. Of these cases, we had 4 dismissed during the hearing process, and 2 decisions that were supported by the Judge.

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

SWMBH Medicaid Verification Summary

The Medicaid Services Verification Audit is a required audit of paid claims conducted by Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH). It is required by SWMBH's contract with the State. This audit is to ensure that services billed are valid. The compliance team is pleased to share the results of the FY24 Medicaid Services Verification Audit. Our final overall compliance rate is 95.5% for FY24. This rate reflects the percentage of valid claims out of all claims received.

Integrated Care Update

Integrated Care at Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) looks at coordinating care for all parts of a person's health. SWMBH has a team that helps improve the health of our members. Our support focuses on member outreach, providing education and awareness to providers, and improving access to services. Below you will see who our team is and what we do!

Priority Population Transition Navigator

Members who use substances are "priority population" if they are injecting, pregnant and injecting, at risk of losing their children, or under the supervision of Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). In 2024, the Navigator outreached to 556 members.

Level of Care Transition Navigators

These positions provide care coordination and recovery support to members with severe mental illness and co-occurring disorders following an inpatient admission. The goal is to improve follow-up to aftercare.

In 2024, the Navigator supporting members after a psychiatric admission worked with 421 members. The Navigator supporting co-occurring members following SUD residential care worked with 470 members in 2024.

Integrated Healthcare Specialist II

The focus of this role is to work with the Medicaid Health Plans (MHP) in the region to improve the health of our members. Members with complex behavioral and physical health issues often have more emergency room visits, or hospital stays than most. SWMBH and the MHPs meet about these high need cases to better support the member's needs. 363 cases were reviewed in 2024.

Health Disparities Project Coordinator

This role works to reduce stigma around behavioral health, identify any gaps in care, and increase service engagement for minority groups through trainings and outreach.

With the help of a media company, SWMBH launched the "Flip the Script" anti-stigma campaign. The campaign focuses on spreading positivity about seeking mental health services. From January to September 2024, we have had a total of 3,280,830 social media impressions and 13,757 website views. SWMBH also hosted a virtual Health Equity Series and an in-person conference for providers in the region.

Emergency Services

If you are experiencing a life-threatening or medical emergency, unable to transport yourself to an emergency room, or if you are experiencing a life-threatening or medical emergency after hours, always call 9-1-1 right away.

A “**mental health emergency**” is when a person is experiencing symptoms and behaviors:

- that can reasonably be expected in the near future to lead him/her to harm self or another.
- his/her inability to meet his/her basic needs.
- he/she is at risk of harm.
- the person’s judgment is so impaired that he/she is unable to understand the need for treatment and that his/her condition is expected to result in harm to him/herself or another individual in the near future.

You have the right to receive emergency services at any time, 24-hours a day, seven days a week, without prior authorization for payment of care.

If you have a mental health emergency, you should seek help right away. You can call the emergency number for your CMH office, you can go to any hospital that offers emergency care, or you can call 911.

Emergency Assistance is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from CMH:

Barry County	269-948-8041 or 1-800-873-0511
Berrien County	269-925-0585 or 1-800-336-0341
Branch County	517-279-1193 or 1-888-725-7534
Calhoun County	269-966-1460 or 1-800-632-5449
Cass County	269-445-2451 or 1-800-323-0335
Kalamazoo County	269-373-6000 or 1-888-373-6200
St Joseph County	269-467-1000 or 1-800-622-3967
Van Buren County	269-657-5574 or 1-800-922-1418



You can walk-in to any CMH office during business hours and ask for assistance with an emergency.

Post-Stabilization Services

After you receive emergency mental health care and your immediate needs are met, you may receive ongoing mental health services to make sure your condition continues to stabilize and improve. Examples of post-stabilization services are crisis residential, case management, outpatient therapy, and/or medication reviews. Prior to the end of your emergency-level care, your local CMH will help you to coordinate your post-stabilization services.

Privacy and Your Health Information

You have the right to have information about your behavioral health care kept private. If you receive substance use care, you have certain rights related to the privacy of substance use records. Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health (SWMBH) has a Notice of Confidentiality and Privacy Practices that describes your rights and how we can use your health information. This Notice can be found on our website at

<https://www.swmbh.org/members/member-documents-from-swmbh/>. You can ask for a copy to be sent to you. You can call Customer Service at 1-800-890-3712 or email us at customerservice@swmbh.org.

You have the following rights:

- You have the right to review and to get a copy of your health records.
- You can ask us to limit the way we use or share your health information. We do not have to agree to your request except in a few circumstances.
- You can ask us to alter or fix information in your health record. We do not have to agree to your request. If we do not agree we will tell you why in writing.
- You can ask for private communications.
- You can ask for a list of who we have shared your health information with. We are not required to track this information for certain types of uses and disclosures.
- You have a right to choose someone to act for you.
- You have a right to get a Notice of Privacy Practices from any provider where you receive care.
- You have a right to file a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated.

We may use or share your health information to:

- Help manage your health care treatment
- Run our organization
- Pay for your health services
- Manage your health plan
- Help with public health and safety issues
- Do research
- Follow the law
- Follow up with requests under a Release of Information that you signed



If you have questions about the privacy of your health information, you can call our Compliance team at 1-800-783-0914 or email swmbhcompliance@swmbh.org.





Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health complies with applicable Federal and State civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, color, sex, disability, religion, age, height, weight, familial status, partisan considerations, or genetic information. Sex-based discrimination includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, sex characteristics, and pregnancy. Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health does not exclude people or treat them differently because of any of these categories.

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - o Qualified sign language interpreters
 - o Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, Braille, other formats)

- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English or have limited English skills, such as:
 - o Qualified interpreters
 - o Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact Customer Services.

If you believe that Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with:

Customer Services
5250 Lovers Lane, Suite 200, Portage, MI 49002
P: 800-890-3712 (TTY: 711) | F: 269-441-1234
customerservice@swmbh.org

If you are an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing, you may contact the MI Relay Service at 711 to request their assistance in connecting you to Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health. You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, Customer Services is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

You may also file a grievance electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C., 20201
1-800-368-1019.



