

OPTUMIST

V47. Spring 2025

Provider Services Department Message

Greetings and welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of the OPTUMIST Newsletter! In this edition we are highlighting several topics including the updated Outpatient Authorization Request (OAR) Form, authorization reminders, PAVE Medi-Cal enrollment, the upcoming outpatient open house, updates on psychological testing requests, documentation standards, Article 14 Information Privacy & Security training, claims processing procedures, and TERM updates including quality review reminders and the new mental health referral requirement under ACL 24-35 and the No Wrong Door initiative.

We continue to welcome your questions and feedback on how we can make our Newsletter valuable to you.

Best wishes,

Provider Services Department

Contact Numbers

San Diego Access
and Crisis Line (888) 724-7240

Medi-Cal Provider
Line (800) 798-2254

TERM Provider
Line (877) 824-8376



optumsandiego.com

Newsletter Content

- **P2:** Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers
- **P7:** QI Corner – New Provider Resources
- **P8:** Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal and TERM Providers
- **P10:** Information and Updates for TERM Providers
- **P13:** San Diego Access and Crisis Line
- **P14:** Recruitment for FFS Medi-Cal and TERM Provider Networks

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

Utilization Management Department Updates



Updated OAR Forms

Optum updated the Outpatient Authorization Request (OAR) Form to align with the needs of the County's new electronic health record.

What changed?

- An asterisk is now by Ethnicity indicating it is a required field
- The Optum only section

Please start using these updated forms, dated 04/14/25, for any requests. [Fee for Service Providers](#)

Any older versions of the forms received 06/01/25 forward will be returned with the updated form attached for resubmission.

1. Medication Services Form – **NEW**
2. Psychotherapy Form – **NEW**



Authorizations Reminder

For each Outpatient Authorization Request (OAR) form Optum receives, written follow up is sent to you as the provider. If you do not receive written follow up within 14 days of submission, please check with Outpatient Administrative Services at (800) 798-2254 option 3, then option 4 to ensure the OAR was received.

Authorization should be received prior to submitting claims for services rendered. Submitting claims without an authorization in place will result in a denial for no authorization



Outpatient Open House

Date:
Thursday 05/29/25
Time: 9:30-10:45am
RSVP with QR Code



If you have any questions, please contact our Provider Line, Monday thru Friday, 8am to 5pm, at (800) 798-2254, Option 3, then Option 4.

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal & TERM Providers

Emergency Department Professional Services Assembly Bill 1316



Dear Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants:

Historically, the County of San Diego, through Optum (Administrative Services Organization), has paid for psychiatric professional services associated with emergency department visits.

However, effective January 1, 2025, AB 1316 ([CHA-AB-1316-Fact-Sheet_Final-0228.pdf](#)) sponsored by the California Hospital Association, clarifies that Medi-Cal managed care plans must cover and pay for hospital and professional services claims for emergency department care provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries experiencing a mental health crisis.

With this clarification, Optum will begin denying emergency department professional services claims for dates of service starting July 1, 2025.

Psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and physician assistants have typically billed Optum for these services using CPT code 90792 (Psychiatric diagnostic evaluation with medical services) and place of service Emergency Department (23).

Providers may begin billing Medi-Cal managed care plans immediately. It is our understanding that these plans are prepared to pay and may already be paying for a subset of these services.

Have Questions?

Contact the Provider Services Department

(800) 798-2254, Option 7

sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

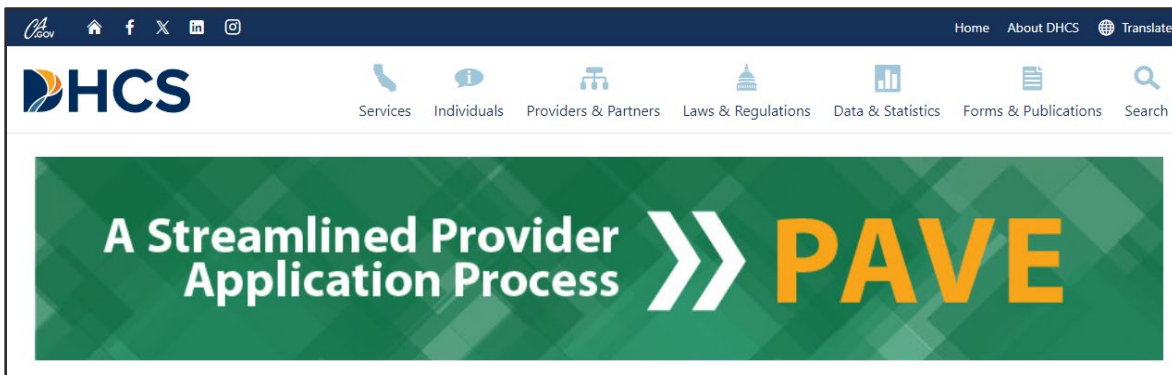
Medi-Cal Enrollment Through the Provider Application and Validation for Enrollment (PAVE) Portal

Medi-Cal Provider Enrollment:

As a reminder, all providers applying to render services to Medi-Cal Beneficiaries through the San Diego County Fee For Service (FFS) Medi-Cal Network must be enrolled in the Medi-Cal Program.

The Provider Services Department will assist in facilitating the enrollment process and a representative may be contacting you to enroll in the Medi-Cal program through the PAVE system.

We appreciate your cooperation and collaboration in this process as it is essential to ensure continued services to this vulnerable population which you serve.



What is PAVE?

The PAVE portal is the Provider Enrollment Division's (PED) web-based application designed to simplify and accelerate enrollment processes. PAVE is an interactive, web-based solution for the provider types who enroll with Medi-Cal through PED and manage their Medi-Cal accounts securely online. Providers can utilize the portal to complete and submit applications, report changes to existing enrollments, and respond to PED-initiated requests for continued enrollment or revalidation. PAVE features secure login, document uploading, electronic signature, application progress tracking, intuitive guidance, social collaboration and much more.

Click [here](#) to access PAVE Frequently Asked Questions

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

Updates on Psychological Testing Requests

On April 3, 2025, a notice was distributed to all Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service (FFS) Psychologists regarding updates on psychological testing requests.

Please note that this information does not apply to clients referred by Child and Family Well-Being through the TERM process.

Historically, some requests for psychological testing have continued to come through the Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) authorization process managed by Optum. We have observed that some of these requests do not meet criteria for SMHS. Per All Plan Letter 22-006 [APL 22-006 \(ca.gov\)](#), the provision of clinically appropriate and covered non-specialty mental health services (NSMHS) is the responsibility of the Medi-Cal managed care health plan (MCP).

Per APL 22-006, MCPs must provide or arrange for the provision of the following NSMHS:

1. Mental health evaluation and treatment, including individual, group and family psychotherapy.
2. **Psychological and neuropsychological testing**, when clinically indicated to evaluate a mental health condition.
3. Outpatient services for the purposes of monitoring drug therapy.
4. Psychiatric consultation.
5. Outpatient laboratory, drugs, supplies, and supplements.

To align with the appropriate service delivery system, effective April 1, 2025, Optum will begin to refer FFS psychologists to submit requests to the appropriate managed care plan for psychological and neuropsychological testing that fall under NSMHS. Before submitting a request for authorization of psychological testing services, please verify whether the beneficiary is assigned to a Medi-Cal managed care health plan (MCP). If the client is assigned to an MCP, please contact the Behavioral Health contact number for the appropriate managed care plan to request psychological testing covered through that service delivery system. You can find the contact information here: [Healthy San Diego](#) under the “Health Plan Contact Card”.

Requests for psychological testing under Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) must meet specific criteria. For further clarification on this criteria, please review the SMHS Psychological Testing Authorization Criteria located on the [Optum San Diego website](#) with the following pathway: BHS Provider Resources > Fee for Service Providers > SMHS Authorization Requests > SMHS Psych Testing Criteria 2025. Note: *For clients receiving services from TERM providers referred by Child and Family Well Being through Optum TERM Process please refer to the TERM Provider Handbook.*

Once it is determined that the service is not covered by the MCP and that SMHS criteria is met, a request can be submitted. When requesting pre-authorization for psychological testing, a completed FFS Medi-Cal Psychological Testing Request Form needs to be submitted to Optum Utilization Management. This form can be located on the [Optum San Diego website](#) with the following pathway: BHS Provider Resources > Fee for Service Providers > SMHS Authorization Requests > FFS Medi-Cal Psychological Testing Request.

Please note the FFS Medi-Cal Psychological Testing Request form has been updated. Please download the form from the Optum San Diego website. Optum will no longer accept prior versions of the form as of May 1, 2025.

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal Providers

Contact Us

The Provider Line is available for you from 8am – 5pm Monday through Friday.



(800) 798-2254

Press 2 for Claims/Billing Questions

Press 3, then 3 again for Clinical Questions

Press 3, then 4 for Authorization Questions

Press 7 for Provider Services



This information is also available to you on our website: optumsandiego.com



QI Corner: New Provider Resources

Esketamine (Spravato®), Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) and Injectable Documentation Standards



As mental health treatments evolve, documentation standards are crucial for providers administering TMS, esketamine (Spravato®), and injectable therapies. The templates below can help ensure accurate client records, adherence to clinical guidelines, and regulatory compliance. Additionally, these templates help mitigate risks associated with treatment errors and legal issues, ensuring that patient safety and ethical standards are upheld at all times. Providers are welcome to use the templates below.



New Provider Resources

- [Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation Template](#)
- [Esketamine \(SPRAVATO®\) Template](#)
- [Injectable Template](#)

Have Questions? Email us at: SDQI@optum.com

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal & TERM Providers

Article 14 Information Privacy & Security Requirements



Optum and the County of San Diego believe that providers participating in the Fee for Service (FFS) and Treatment and Evaluation Resource Management (TERM) Provider Networks are an integral part of protecting the privacy and security of County information that you may create, receive, access, store, transmit and/or destroy under your agreement.

As a provider on the FFS/TERM networks, you have access to the Information Privacy & Security training on the Health & Human Services Agency website (County website) and are expected to review it annually. The training can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

This communication serves to remind you of your responsibility to complete the County of San Diego Information Privacy & Security training for 2025.

Please note that the information and training materials indicate a date of 2021 as the information and materials remain unchanged.



If you have any questions, please contact the Provider Services Department at:
sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com

Information and Updates for FFS Medi-Cal & TERM Providers

Claims Processing Procedures



As a reminder, all claims must be submitted within sixty (60) days from the date of service. All claims will be processed within thirty (30) days of receipt. Processed means paid, denied, or returned for correction.

A denied claim that has been corrected must be resubmitted within sixty (60) days from the date of the Explanation of Benefits (EOB), but no later than four (4) months from the date of service.

All payments will be made based on the approved fee schedule in effect at the time services are rendered.

For additional information regarding claims and billing, please refer to the [Fee-for-Service \(FFS\) Provider Handbook](#) and [TERM Provider Handbook](#) located on the Optum website.

Have Questions?

Contact the Claims Department at
(800) 798-2254, Option 2

Submitting Updated Documents



Please submit the below documents to the Provider Services Department prior to their expiration. Updated documents can be submitted via email to the Provider Services Department at sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com or by fax to (877) 309-4862.

- Professional Liability Insurance (PLI)
- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Certifications (*Applicable to PNP's Only*)

Have Questions?

Contact the Provider Services Department at
(800) 798-2254, Option 7

Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Optum TERM At a Glance



TERM UPDATES

Protecting Against Unintentional Documentation

- Shares reminders and best practices to help TERM providers reduce instances of disclosure of unintended or inaccurate documentation on treatment plans
- Identifies steps TERM providers can take to mitigate and address the risk of unintended documentation

All County Letter 24-35

- Outlines new mental health referral requirements for Child Welfare agencies across California
- Announces CFWB's plan to implement the policy within San Diego County along with specific considerations for TERM providers



UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- April 15: [Sexual Identity Development & Acceptance](#) (CEUs available)
- April 16: [Jail Based Competency Restoration](#) (CEUs available)
- May 28: [AI for Social Work 101](#) (CEUs available)
- June 20: [Suicide Risk Assessment and Management in the Age of Telehealth](#) (No Cost, CEUs available)
- July 15: [Working with Immigrants and First-Generation Americans](#) (CEUs available)

*Listed trainings are for informational purposes only. While topics may be relevant to TERM providers, they are not 'TERM approved/recommended' offerings



QUICK LINKS

- [TERM Provider Handbook](#)
- [TERM Group Report Facesheet](#)
- [TERM Treatment Plan Documentation Resources](#)
- [IPV-V Group Treatment Standards](#)
- [CSA-NPP Treatment Standards](#)
- [Format & Required Elements of a CFWB Psychological Evaluation](#)
- [TERM Therapy Provider FAQ](#)
- [FAQ For CFWB Evaluations](#)
- [Claims Resources for TERM Providers](#)
- [TERM Therapy Provider Telehealth Best Practices](#)
- [Request for Additional CFT Meeting Units](#)
- [Temporary Change of Authorization](#)



TERM Advisory Board Provider Representatives

The TERM Advisory Board meets quarterly to provide professional input regarding the performance of the system and its policies, procedures, and protocols.

Representation on the Board includes San Diego County HHS Behavioral Health Services, Child Welfare Services, Probation Department, Juvenile Court, Public Defender Juvenile Delinquency Branch, District Attorney, County Counsel, Dependency Legal Services, Children's Legal Services, Optum, TERM Provider Panel, Youth and Parent Partners.

Current TERM Provider Representatives on the Board:

Michael Anderson, Psy.D.: drmike6666@gmail.com

Denise VonRotz, LMFT: dvonrotz@msn.com

Please feel free to contact your provider representatives for updates from the Advisory Board meetings, process improvement ideas, or to provide professional or client feedback.

Information and Updates for TERM Providers

Quality Review Reminders – Protecting Against Unintended Documentation

TERM providers treat clients within a forensic context and follow best documentation practices when completing treatment plans. Because treatment plans can be considered as direct testimony to the court, it is important that plans accurately describe the treatment rendered, the client goals, and the client's objective progress toward reaching those goals. It is also imperative that treatment plans are carefully reviewed prior to submission to ensure there is no unintended documentation included, such as information that is not specific to the client and/or relating to the associated case history.

To avoid unintended documentation, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not copy/paste
- Do not re-purpose another client's treatment plan
- Do not document PHI related to another person
- Do not disclose details related to a client's safety plan when IPV is present
- Do not include the details of any Atonement Letter interventions
- Do practice double-checking that all documentation is accurate and pertinent to the client across all collateral information

If you discover any errors after submitting a treatment plan to TERM and need to submit an updated copy, please include a cover page that draws attention to the amended information. Please also call TERM at (877) 824-8376 to verify that the amended treatment plan was received and that it supersedes TERM's previous submission to CFWB.



Information and Updates for TERM Providers

New Mental Health Referral Requirement Under ACL 24-35 and No Wrong Door Initiative

On July 12, 2024, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) issued [All County Letter \(ACL\) 24-35](#), requiring all county child welfare and probation agencies to refer all children and youth—regardless of case type—to the county Mental Health Plan (MHP) within three days of case opening.

The No Wrong Door for Mental Health Services initiative, published by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), ensures that all children and youth, including Medi-Cal recipients, receive timely mental health services without delays, regardless of where they seek care.

To implement this, Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB) Policy and Program Support (PPS) partnered with Behavioral Health Services (BHS), San Diego County's MHP, to eliminate the need for mental health screenings prior to referral. Under ACL 24-35, involvement in the Child Welfare or Juvenile Probation system automatically qualifies a child for referral to BHS and TERM providers who bill directly to Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) under Medi-Cal.

Implementation Timeline & Referral Process

CFWB implemented this policy effective April 1, 2025. Emergency Response (ER) and Court Intervention (CI) Social Workers must refer children/youth to a BHS or TERM provider within three days of a case opening.

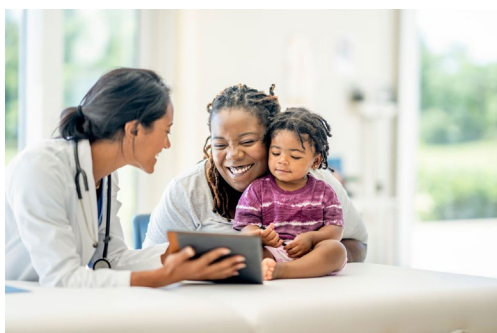
A referral to Optum TERM is required if the child/youth meets any of the following conditions:

- 300 cases: Severe physical abuse, death of another child, cruelty
- Highly Vulnerable Children (HVC)
- Primary concern related to physical or sexual abuse

A referral to Optum TERM may also be considered if the child/youth exhibits:

- Severe emotional or behavioral dysregulation impacting daily functioning across multiple domains (e.g., social, physical, cognitive, emotional)
- Behaviors such as self-harm, tantrums, impulsivity, or emotional instability

Please note that the CFWB Therapy Referral Forms are in the process of being updated to streamline the referral process, and you will start seeing the updated forms used for new referrals soon.



We would like to extend our gratitude for all the TERM child therapists that have responded to our outreach regarding availability for new referrals. Thank you for assisting us with planning for this implementation and for your ongoing collaboration in serving children involved with Child and Family Well-Being.

San Diego Access and Crisis Line

888-724-7240 TDD/TTY Dial 711



Free, confidential support in all languages

- 24 hours a day
- 7 days a week



Online Chat Services are available ;

- Monday through Friday
- 4pm – 10pm



optumsandiego.com

We are here for you

The San Diego Access and Crisis Line (ACL) is an outstretched hand to individuals or people they know, who are overwhelmed, depressed, or searching for answers.

A phone call will connect you with a compassionate counselor who is always standing by to provide hope and encouragement.

We can help you when:

- You need to talk to a professional who cares
- You do not feel you can cope with life
- You are looking for community resources
- You are concerned someone you know might hurt themselves
- You feel you might be in danger of hurting yourself or others



If you or someone you know is in crisis, help is available nationwide. Call or text **988**, or chat at 988lifeline.org



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Funding for services is provided by the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency.

We Are Recruiting!

Contracting for Two Networks:



Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medi-Cal Provider Network

Specialty Mental Health Services:

- Advanced Outpatient Services
- Psychiatric Consultations
- Medication Management
- Psychological Testing



Treatment & Evaluation Resource Management (TERM) Provider Network

Child and Family Well-Being & Juvenile Probation Systems Services:

- Specialized Therapy
- Forensic Evaluations

Growing our richly diverse provider networks

Seeking:

- Master's Level Clinicians
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners
- Psychiatric Physician Assistants

Gain Supportive Solutions:

As a Contracted Provider, Optum is with you every step of the way.

We are here for you through personalized:

- Collaboration
- Courtesy Reviews
- Referrals
- Claims Processing & Payments
- And more!

What providers are saying:

"Optum was positive and collaborative."

"I never have to wait on hold for long periods of time which is appreciated."

"Provider Services staff is always friendly, responds quickly and offers help with all situations/questions. Thank you."



Optum serves as the Administrative Service Organization for the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services.

Are You Ready to Be Part of the Solution? Learn More Today!



Tina Garcia, Provider Recruiter
(619) 641-5308

tina.garcia@optum.com

optumsandiego.com