



SPECIALITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (SMHS) UPDATED GRADUATE STUDENT AND TRAINEE INFORMATION SHEET

October 2023

San Francisco Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is working with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to clarify guidance for services provided by graduate students under Payment Reform. This memo outlines the most current information and supersedes previous communication disseminated in July 2023. BHS will update this memo and provide additional guidance as it becomes available.

Per the DHCS [FAQ](#), master's degree students and non-licensed PhD students who are working in a field practicum may provide clinical services within their scope of practice under the supervision of a licensed behavioral health professional. These students can bill the appropriate Common Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes. BHS is working to clarify information about the appropriate taxonomy code(s) for graduate students and will release updated guidance as soon as it is released by DHCS.

DHCS is expected to update the State Plan Amendment (SPA) to clarify the role of students as SMHS and DMC/DMC-ODS providers. Once the SPA is approved, the effective date will be retroactive to July 1, 2023.

Effective immediately, SMHS graduate students providing clinical interventions within their scope of practice should use the appropriate service codes. This means that graduate students will no longer use non-Medi-Cal codes (NMIND, NMGRP) for psychotherapy services. Graduate students working under a licensed supervisor are no longer restricted to only HCPCs codes and should use the correct service code for the service provided, including psychotherapy (INDPTY, GRTPY, 90847). Additional information about service codes can be found on the [BHS Provider Crosswalk](#).

Coding tip sheets by discipline are located on the [BHS Provider Billing and Documentation Website](#).

Need Additional Support?

SMHS Provider Crosswalk: <https://sf.gov/resource/2023/provider-billing-documentation-library>

SMHS Billing Manual: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/MedCCC-Library.aspx>

Billing Specific Questions: [Microsoft Forms](#)

All Other CalAIM Questions: bhscalaim@sfdph.org