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ARIZONA HEALTH CARE COST CONTAINMENT SYSTEM

Date: August 30, 2011

To: Directors of Indian Health Service (IHS) Areas
Directors of Tribal Regional Behavioral Health Authorities
Directors of Tribal Health Programs Operated Under P.L. 93-638

From: Kristin Frounfelker, Behavioral Health Administrator, AHCCCS

Re: Clarification on Behavioral Health Service Provider providing services at 638/IHS facilities.

IHS providers and tribal health programs operated under P.L. 93-638, in accordance with the scope of services within their P.L. 93-638 contract or compact, may provide behavioral health services rendered by the following individuals:

Behavioral Health Technicians (BHTs) – AHCCCS requires BHTs to meet the following requirements:

As per the Arizona Administrative Code, Title 9, Chapter 20. (A.A.C R9-20-101) the definition of a Behavioral Health Technician is an individual who meets the applicable requirements in **R9-20-204** and:

- a. Has a master's degree or bachelor's degree in a field related to behavioral health or
- b. Is a registered nurse or
- c. Is a physician assistant who is not working as a medical practitioner or
- d. Has a bachelor's degree and at least one year of full time behavioral health experience or
- e. Has an associate's degree and at least two years of full time behavioral health work experience or
- f. Has a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma and:
 - i. 18 credit hours of post-high school education in a field related to behavioral health completed no more than four years before the date the individual begins providing behavioral health services and two year of full time behavioral health work experience; or
 - ii. Four years of full time behavioral work experience; or
- g. Is licensed as a practical nurse, according to A.R.S Title 32, Chapter 15, with at least two years of full time behavioral health work experience.

AHCCCS requires providers to ensure that BHTs are in compliance with all related ADHS/DBHS policies and procedures listed in the DBHS Provider Manual and Behavioral Health Covered Services Guide. This includes compliance with **R9-20-204**.

Behavioral Health Technician Billing – Services provided by BHTs can be billed by an IHS provider or tribal health program operated under P.L. 93-638 **under the facility** at the appropriate rate described for those services in the Medicaid State Plan if the IHS facility or tribal health program (638 providers) is registered as an AHCCCS Provider. AHCCCS does not register BHTs as providers.

Licensed Substance Abuse Technician (LSAT) – AHCCCS requires LSATs to meet the following requirements:

A LSAT requires an associate of applied science degree in chemical dependency with an emphasis on counseling, as determined by the credentialing committee of the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health

Examiners, from a regionally accredited college or university. Beginning January 1, 2009, the requirement includes a bachelor's degree in a behavioral science with an emphasis on counseling, as determined by the credentialing committee of the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners and the passing of the exam approved by the credentialing committee. The board may waive the education requirement for an applicant requesting licensure as a substance abuse technician if the applicant provides services pursuant to contracts or grants with the federal government under the authority of Public Law 93-638 (25 United States sections 450- 450(n)). A person who becomes licensed as a substance abuse technician shall only provide substance abuse services to those persons who are eligible for services pursuant to Public Law 93-638. A licensed substance abuse technician can only practice under the direct supervision as prescribed by the Board.

Licensed Substance Abuse Technician Billing – Services provided by LSATs can be billed by an IHS provider or tribal health program operated under P.L. 93-638 under the facility at the appropriate rate described for those services in the Medicaid State Plan if the IHS facility or tribal health program (638 providers) is registered as an AHCCCS Provider. AHCCCS does not register LSATs as providers.

Behavioral Health Paraprofessional (BHPP) – If an individual does not meet the requirements for a BHT, they may meet the criteria for a Behavioral Health Paraprofessional per A.A.C. Title 9, Chapter 20 (R9-20-101). A Behavioral Health Paraprofessional means an individual who meets the applicable requirements in R9-20-204 and has:

- a. An Associate's degree or
- b. A high school diploma, or
- c. A high school equivalency diploma.

Behavioral Health Paraprofessional Billing – BHPPs that provide behavioral health services at IHS facilities or tribal health programs operated under P.L. 93-638 can bill their services under the facility at the appropriate rate described for those services in the Medicaid State Plan if the IHS facility or tribal health program (638 providers) is registered as an AHCCCS Provider. AHCCCS does not register BHPPs as providers.

AHCCCS requires providers to ensure that BHPPs are in compliance with all related ADHS/DBHS policies and procedures listed in the DBHS Provider Manual and Behavioral Health Covered Services Guide. This includes compliance with **R9-20-204**.

Behavioral Health Professional (BHP) – Behavioral Health Professionals providing services at IHS facilities or tribal health programs operated under the P.L. 93-638 must meet the criteria as defined in A.A.C Title 9, Chapter 20 (R9-20-101). A Behavioral Health Professional is:

- a. **Arizona licensed:** A licensed psychologist, a registered nurse with at least one year of full time behavioral health work experience, or a behavioral health medical practitioner, or
- b. **Arizona licensed:** A social worker, counselor, marriage and family therapist or substance abuse counselor according to A.R.S Title 32, Chapter 33 or
- c. **Out of State:** An individual who is licensed or certified to practice social work, counseling or marriage and family therapy by a government entity in another state if the individual has documentation of submission of an application for Arizona licensure per A.R.S. Title 32, Chapter 33 and is licensed within one year after the submitting the application.

Per federal guidelines, AHCCCS recognizes out-of-state licensed behavioral health professionals (Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Counselors) and does not require Arizona licensure in order for the BHP to deliver services within their scope of licensure.

Behavioral Health Independent Biller – AHCCCS registers providers who are qualified to bill such as behavioral health medical practitioners, psychologists, and Independent Master's Level Therapists.

(Independent Master’s Level Therapists: Masters level behavioral health professionals who are licensed by the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health Examiners as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW); Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC); Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) or Licensed Independent Substance Abuse Counselor (LISAC). The scope of practice for LISAC includes evaluation and treatment of substance abuse disorders).

Behavioral Health Professional and Independent Billing – Behavioral Health Professionals that provide behavioral health services at IHS facilities or tribal health programs operated under P.L. 93-638 can bill their services under the facility at the appropriate rate described for those services in the Medicaid State Plan if the IHS facility or tribal health program (638 providers) is registered as an AHCCCS Provider. If the behavioral health professional is an Independent Biller, the facility can bill for the service or the Independent Biller can bill but not for the same service. AHCCCS does register Behavioral Health Independent Billers.

AHCCCS requires providers to ensure that Behavioral Health Professionals are in compliance with all related ADHS/DBHS policies and procedures listed in the DBHS Provider Manual and Behavioral Health Covered Services Guide. This includes compliance with **R9-20-204**.