Support for Reimbursement of Biofeedback Services

BIOFEEDBACK IS PREVENTATIVE CARE

As a cost-effective, preventative care method for treating specific disorders, biofeedback should be included as a core medical or mental health benefit in any health care reform program enacted by the Congress. Biofeedback is a safe, efficient and proven modality of treatment that aids in reducing the necessity for costly medical procedures and hospital or nursing home admissions.

As described in detail below, biofeedback is a treatment technique in which patients are trained to actually improve their health by using signals from their own bodies. Reimbursement for biofeedback should be provided to the licensed or certified health care professional administering the treatment following submission of appropriate claim documentation.

CLINICAL EFFICACY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

1. Background

Biofeedback is a modality of treatment for functional disorders wherein physiological measures are monitored and transformed into simple auditory or visual information. Through use of this information, the patient learns to control the specific physiology being measured. Biofeedback is used to treat such diverse disorders and health problems as migraine headache, incontinence, attention deficit and hyperactivity, GI problems, high blood pressure, Raynaud's Disease and stroke rehabilitation.

Biofeedback frequently enhances the effectiveness of other treatments by making patients more aware of their own role in health and disease. It is most commonly used in conjunction with other traditional therapies.

2. Cost Savings

The rising cost of health care must be met by realistic cost containment measures, and all covered services must be efficient and accountable. Biofeedback meets both of these mandates.

For example, clinical studies demonstrate substantial medical savings as a result of treatment through a multi-disciplinary behavioral and pain management program, which includes biofeedback - assisted relaxation therapy and cognitive stress management training. The effects of stress in the workplace and elsewhere cost millions of dollars annually in direct health care and associated decreased employee productivity. Biofeedback provides training in self-care, shifting responsibility for good health from delivery system to the individual. Because biofeedback is a multi-disciplinary modality, it can be used by psychologists, physicians or allied health professionals to treat stress related disorders.
Empirical data also demonstrates a decrease in the number of claims and/or costs to insurers in claims payment resulting from stress management and relaxation programs involving biofeedback. Similarly, a dramatic reduction in hospital stays and re-hospitalizations has been documented through the use of biofeedback programs involving chronic pain patients.

One of the most advantageous applications of biofeedback is in incontinence programs. Incontinence is one of the leading causes for nursing home admissions among our nation's rapidly expanding elderly population. The costs associated with long term care in a nursing home are staggering and on the rise year after year. Biofeedback has been proven effective in assisting patients to regain control over their systems and correct problems associated with incontinence. Expanded use of biofeedback in incontinence programs will help hold down the number of nursing home admissions and the related costs of long term care.

**BIOFEEDBACK SHOULD BE A COVERED SERVICE**

Biofeedback therapies incorporate a solid core of behavioral, cognitive and physiological self-regulation techniques that are effectively used by the patient to alleviate the underlying causes of the disorder. Increased use of this "self-help" treatment will dramatically reduce the need for more costly and invasive procedures.

For further information, please contact:

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www.aapb.org
RECOMMENDED CONSIDERATIONS FOR BIOFEEDBACK SERVICES

1. Provider:
   a. is credentialed by the Biofeedback Certification Institute of America (BCIA)
   b. or, is supervised by a BCIA certified provider
   c. or, meets similar qualifications as the BCIA, including:
      • documented minimum of 200 hours of training and closely supervised biofeedback experience by professional experts (preferably BCIA certified)
      • is licensed or certified by their state to provide independent clinical services
      • or is under direct supervision of such a credentialed professional

2. Treatment Plan includes:
   a. all diagnoses and the condition(s) being treated
   b. contraindications or potential side effects that should be monitored
   c. other concurrent interventions (medical, physical therapy, psychotherapy, etc.)
   d. specific biofeedback goals with symptomatic and physiological anticipated changes
   e. estimated number of sessions, or when treatment should be re-evaluated
   f. distribution to other providers

3. Charges:
   a. are by the unit of time, usually a clinical hour (45-60 minutes)
   b. usual and customary rates range from $75.00 to $125.00 ($100.00 average) per clinical hour depending on the case complexity and provider experience
   c. higher billing is usually justified and approved prior to delivering services

4. Reports:
   a. completed by session or periodically and distributed to involved providers
   b. reflect change as it relates to the treatment plan
   c. signed by provider and supervisor as appropriate, who are identified by their specialty

5. Additional information for patients, providers, managers and insurance companies is available from each of the professions who use biofeedback, as well as the National Professional Organization and the local affiliate listed below:
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