

Mental Health Outpatient Therapy and Psychiatry Prior Authorization Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Who can see a Kaiser Permanente member for mental health outpatient therapy or psychiatry services without first obtaining prior authorization?

A1. Any provider who is contracted in that member's specific contracted network can see the member for these services without prior authorization.

Q2. If a provider is contracted in the PPO network, but the member is in the HMO network, can the provider see the member for mental health outpatient therapy or psychiatry services without prior authorization?

A2. No, not without an exception. If you are outside the member's contracted network, the provider or member must request an exception from Kaiser Permanente to see the member. If granted, the provider will be authorized to provide a specific number of sessions and will need to request reauthorization for additional sessions if the need arises.

Q3. Are there a limited number of sessions for providers to see Kaiser Permanente members without prior authorization?

A3. No. However, Kaiser Permanente may conduct a review of claims, and may reach out to a provider if there are unusual billing practices.

Q4. Will a provider have to request reauthorization to renew services each year?

A4. No. This new policy will remain in effect unless and until otherwise terminated.

Q5. Can non-contracted mental health providers see a Kaiser Permanente member?

A5. Yes and no. If the member is on a PPO plan, the benefit extends to non-contracted providers and there is no restriction on services. If the member is on an HMO plan, the provider or member must request an exception from Kaiser Permanente to see the non-contracted provider. If an exception is granted, the provider will be authorized to provide a specific number of sessions and will need to request reauthorization for additional sessions if the need arises.

Q6. Do other mental health services still require prior authorization?

A6. Yes. The only services that no longer require prior authorization are mental health outpatient therapy and psychiatry.