

Health Insurance Providers Facilitate Broad Access to Mental Health Support

Key Results of Industry Survey on Behavioral Health Care

August 2022

Survey Methodology

Format

A 14-question survey was distributed to AHIP members offering commercial (individual market and group health plans) major medical coverage. Responses were received in May and June 2022, from plans covering 95 million commercial enrollees.

Calculation

AHIP researchers estimated the average number of providers per 100,000 enrollees by dividing the total number of providers in each category by the total enrollment. We estimated the changes in provider networks as a weighted average in reported changes in provider networks by category. For the remaining questions, we estimated the share of plans selecting a given response option.

Key Takeaways

Health Plans Offer Broad Access to a Wide Range of Mental Health Professionals, With Networks Growing and Reimbursements Rising

Health Insurance Providers are Equipping Primary Care Providers to Provide Mental Health Support

Health Insurance Providers are Actively Supporting Consumers Seeking Mental Health Support

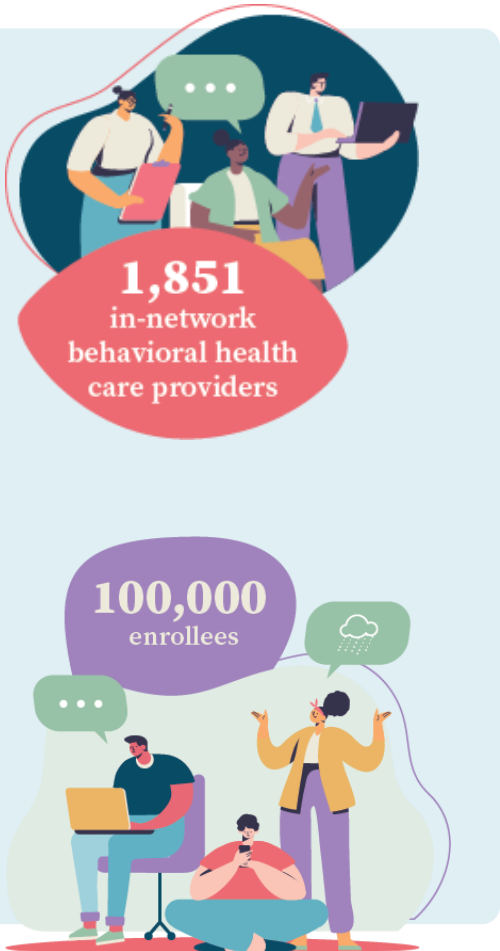
Key Findings

- The number of in-network behavioral health providers has **increased by an average of 48% in 3 years** among commercial health plans.
- All plans (100%) provide coverage for **tele-behavioral health services**.
- The **overwhelming majority of health plans (89%) are actively recruiting mental health care providers**, including practitioners who **reflect the diversity of the people they serve (83%)**, and **78% have increased payments to providers** in efforts to recruit more high-quality professionals to their plan networks.
- The number of providers eligible to prescribe **Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT)** for substance use disorder, including opioid dependence, has more than doubled – growing **114% over three years**.

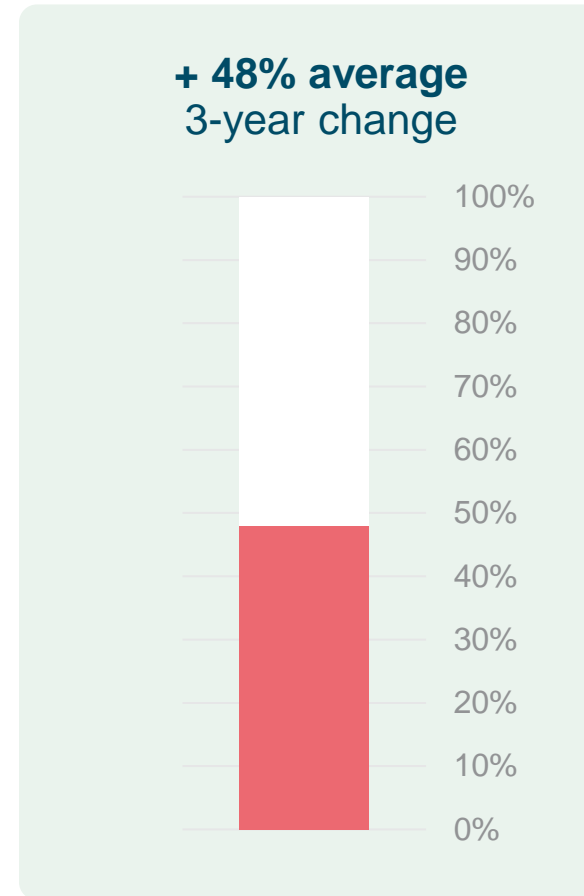


- A large majority (72%) of plans are **training and supporting PCPs to care for patients with mild/moderate behavioral health conditions**.
- A vast majority (83%) of plans report they **assist enrollees with finding available behavioral health appointments**.
- A majority (78%) **use specialized case managers for follow-up after emergency room and inpatient care and/or starting new medications**.

Behavioral Health Care Providers — *By Type and Growth Rate*



Provider Type	Providers per 100K	3-year Change
Psychiatrists	161	21%
Child or Adolescent Psychiatrists	37	19%
Psychologists	228	11%
Licensed therapists (e.g., counselors, social workers)	1,161	52%
Psychiatric nurse practitioners	74	87%
Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Specialists	109	135%
Providers eligible to prescribe MAT	31	114%
Other behavioral health providers	50	84%



Behavioral Health Care Facilities —*By Type and Growth Rate*

Health insurance providers have continued to contract with more health care facilities dedicated to evidence-based medical treatments for behavioral health conditions, including inpatient psychiatric hospitals and residential or inpatient facilities for the treatment of mental health and substance use disorders.

These figures represent the number of licensed facilities that participate in commercial health plan networks offered by AHIP member health insurance providers.

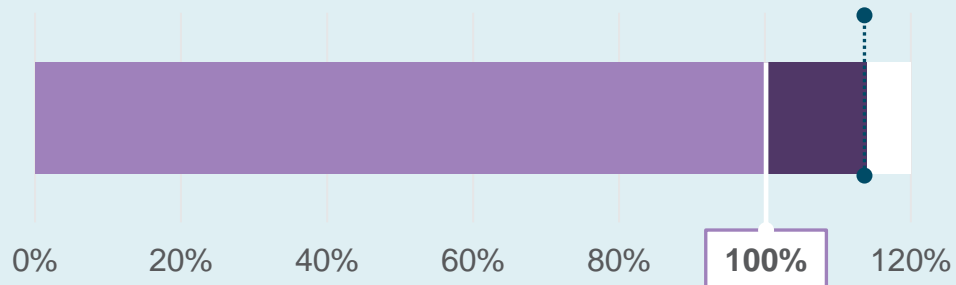
Provider Type	Providers per 100K	3-year Change
Inpatient psychiatric hospitals	15	40%
Residential/inpatient treatment facilities (MH/SUD)	37	34%

Adding More Providers Eligible to Prescribe MAT

Providers eligible to prescribe MAT

31 per **100,000** enrollees

Change over 3 years: **114%**

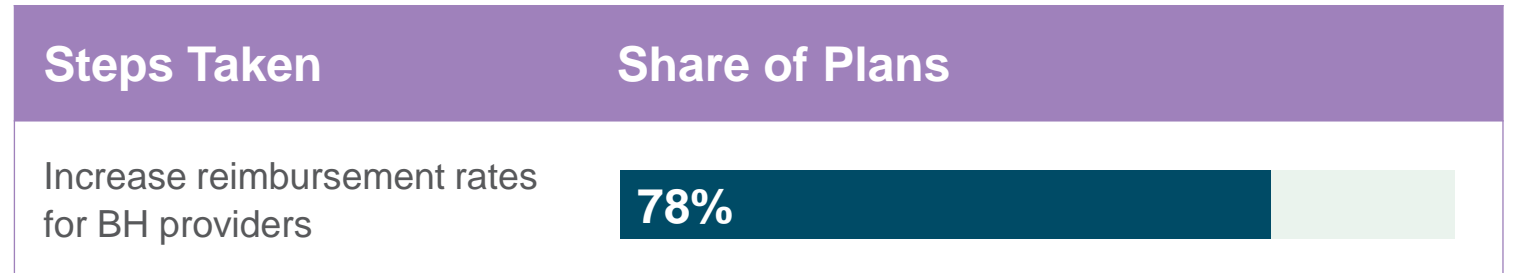


Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the use of medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a “whole-patient” approach to the treatment of substance use disorders. Medications used in MAT are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and MAT programs are clinically driven and tailored to meet each patient’s needs. MAT is primarily used for the treatment of addiction to opioids such as heroin and prescription pain relievers that contain opiates.

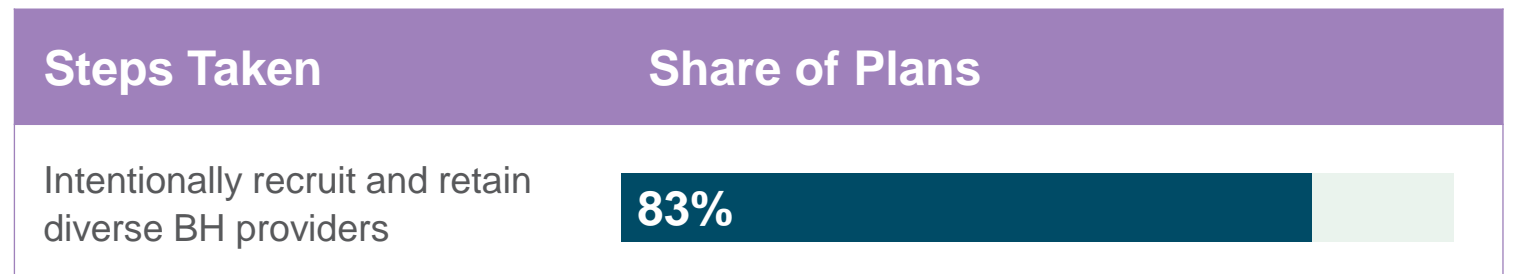
Increasing Reimbursement Rates for Behavioral Health Care and Recruiting a Diverse Provider Network



Health insurance providers report increasing reimbursement rates for contracted behavioral health providers to attract high quality professionals for mental health support.



Does your organization intentionally recruit and retain diverse behavioral health providers that reflect the diversity of the enrolled population?



Assisting Enrollees in Connecting With the Right Mental Health Support



What steps has your organization taken to expand/improve access to your behavioral health provider network?

Steps Taken	Share of Plans
Assist enrollees with finding available behavioral health appointments	83%
Assist patients with care navigation and support (e.g., helping patients find the right level of care, connecting patients with community -based organizations for SDOH support, providing transportation or other support, etc.)	83%
Use specialized case managers for follow-up after emergency and inpatient care and/or starting new medications.	78%

Adding Mental Health Support to Primary Care

What steps has your organization taken to expand/improve access to your behavioral health provider network?



Steps Taken	Share of Plans
Train and support PCPs to care for patients with mild/moderate behavioral health conditions	72%
Assist PCPs with finding behavioral health specialist referral partners	72%
Offer PCPs telehealth or telephone consults with behavioral health specialists.	56%