

EVALUATION:

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity

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OPM**

OPM /AAHP Carrier Conference, October 17-18, 2000



Background

- **Movement within FEHB toward parity**
 - Elimination of lifetime and annual maximums prior to 1996 Mental Health Parity Act
 - Consider pharmacotherapy visits part of “medical” benefit
- **Panel presentation at 1998 Carrier Conference**
- **OPM review of NIMH and SAMHSA research**
- **June 7, 1999 White House Conference on Mental Health**
- **Informal meetings with DHHS workgroup**

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EAP/Carrier Meeting

- OPM wants to ensure successful coordination of EAPs and health plans
- On Monday, EAP representatives met with
 - carriers
 - managed behavioral health care vendors

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Coordination with EAPs

- Discussed how plans will implement parity and the role of EAPs
- We need plans to continue dialogue and follow-up with specific information such as provider directories

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Where We Are

- **Contracts have been signed.**
- **Integrating Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity into contracts has gone smoothly**
- **Brochures successfully convey changes resulting from parity**

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What Is Next?

- **Implementation**
 - **Look forward to the roll out of parity**
 - **OPM realizes that issues will arise during first year of implementation**
 - **OPM will work with plans on these issues and concerns, while being responsive to enrollees at the same time**

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MHSA Parity Evaluation

- **Kevin Hennessy from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at HHS is here to tell you more about the evaluation.**
- **Margaret Blasinsky, VP, ROW Sciences, Inc. and Dr. Howard Goldman, University of Maryland are here to answer specific questions.**

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