

Tribal Support for AHCCCS Reimbursement of Traditional Healing Services

NATIONAL INDIAN HEALTH BOARD
Tribal Public Health Summit
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Introductions/Presentation Focus

- Overview of Social Security Act authorities
- Traditional Healing Arizona Section 1115 Demonstration/SPA Proposals (2015-2020)
- Current use of Traditional Healing services in IHS, Tribal 638 and Urban Indian Health Programs
- Existing Managed Care Opportunities
- Role of Traditional Healing Workgroup
- Proposed Traditional Healing Service Parameters
- Proposed Traditional Healing Payment Methodology

Social Security Act

- Medicaid is a federal program authorized in the Social Security Act (SSA) that provides aid to Blind, Disabled, Pregnant Women, Children and at risk populations.
- The Medicaid program is administered by the states “to allow state flexibility to address the health care needs of populations unique to each state in a manner they wish to demonstrate,” in accordance with the SSA.
- Section 1115 of the SSA allows states to submit a waiver of certain SSA provisions for CMS approval, to demonstrate how it will deliver Medicaid services.
- A state *pilot or a demonstration* can be approved to operate for up to 10 years. Waivers, as well as State Plan Amendments (SPAs) require Tribal Consultation.

Current Use of Traditional Healing Services

Traditional Practitioner Services

- Traditional Practitioner services are established at several IHS/638/UIO facilities and programs in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978), updated IHS policy to comply with patients' requests for the services of native practitioners and IHCIA amendments.
- Traditional Practitioners may be employed at facilities, contracted, or supported through tribal funds, pilot programs, grants, and individual personal resources.
- The Tribal Traditional Healing Workgroup (2015-2017) examined the intersection of traditional and western modalities of healing to advise the submission of a AHCCCS Waiver.
- The workgroup found traditional healing services operating in parallel to, as part of the continuum of care, or more fully integrated as an option for patients in clinical or behavioral health care settings.

Arizona Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver

Arizona 1115 Demonstration Renewal (2021-2026)

- Per the approval of CMS, AHCCCS shall deem a traditional healing service as medically necessary and billable at 100% FFP whether or not it's conducted in outpatient or inpatient settings by the IHS, a tribal organization (638), or an Urban Indian Health Center.
- Traditional healing services must be included in the member's care plan in order to be deemed medically necessary. The goal is to improve health outcomes for specified medical or covered behavioral health services.
- At present a Managed Care Plan/Regional or Tribal Behavioral Health Authority in AZ may institute traditional healing services with state-only dollars, alternative health plan value payments or SABG/MHBG block grant funds via the MCO provider network.

Pro Traditional Healing Workgroup Process

Tribal Workgroup Advisement

Background

To demonstrate positive health outcomes, a proposed TH Waiver will assure that an AI/AN AHCCCS member that's requested such services obtains reimbursable TH services coordinated through I/T/U facilities.

- December 2015 – A Traditional Healing Workgroup was first established to develop recommendations for a Waiver .
- June 2016 - AHCCCS submitted Traditional Healing waiver to CMS
- January 2017 - CMS responded State Plan Amendment (SPA) preferred method to cover TH services.
- February 2017 - TH Workgroup reconvened to refine SPA language and develop crosswalk to “covered services.”
- May 2017 - AHCCCS submitted TH SPA to CMS.

(NOTE: TRIBAL CONSULTATION CONDUCTED ON WAIVER & SPA)

Workgroup Purpose

To developed Waiver language seeking authority for AHCCCS reimbursement of Traditional Healing services.

The workgroup was requested to:

- 1) Develop service parameters to include the following:
 - a. What kind of qualified providers will provide the services?
 - b. What services will be included?
 - c. What services will be covered or not covered?

Workgroup (1) Participants

Chair: Violet Skinner, Utilization Review Director, TCRHCC

Co-Chair: Terrilynn Chee, Director of Revenue Cycle Management, Tséhootsooí

Participants Included:

Traditional Practitioners, Tséhootsooí (638), Tuba City (638), Pascua Yaqui Tribe (638), Navajo Nation Dept. of Behavioral Health Services (TRBHA), Navajo Nation ALTCS, Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care (RBHA), Representatives of Navajo, Phoenix & Tucson IHS Areas, Advisory Council on Indian Health Care (AACIHC), Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) and AHCCCS Tribal Liaison & DFSM.

Workgroup Efforts

- Extensively researched American Indian traditional healing services structures in Arizona, New Mexico and nationwide
- Reviewed Federal law, tribal and state insurance payor policies, VA services & one Arizona pilot program.
- An insurance payer increased their existing traditional healing value-based payment amount as a result of consultation with the workgroup.
- Waiver was written to accommodate Tribal variations
- Majority of facilities already meet the proposed Waiver service parameters

Renewed Tribal Consultation

Arizona's Section 1115 Waiver Renewal Request (2021-2026)

October 2, 2020 - AHCCCS Waiver renewal timeline started. Incorporated review of the Traditional Healing Waiver language by subject matter experts from Tribal communities. Reimbursement by AIR and/or equated professional fees examined.

November 30, 2020 – AHCCCS public comments accepted through this date.

December 22, 2020 – AHCCCS Waiver renewal submitted on this date to CMS.

Service Parameters

Traditional Healing Waiver: Service Parameters

- a. What kind of providers will provide the services?
- ✓ Qualified Traditional Counselors/Healing Providers
 - Endorsed by a Qualifying I/T/U Entity
 - Endorsement letter signed and dated
 - ✓ Qualifying Entity
 - Facility governing body (Hospital Board, Medical Executive Committee, Traditional Healing Program Director)
- Or
- A Tribal entity designated by the facility (Tribal traditional healer/medicine association, Tribal Health Board, etc.)

Traditional Healing Waiver: Service Parameters

b. What services will be included?

- ✓ Services determined by the facility with input by their employed Traditional Healers.
- ✓ Services in accordance with an individual Tribe's established and accepted traditional healing practices as identified by the Qualifying Entity.
- ✓ Services that align with medical necessity and covered services, i.e., diagnostic, screening, preventative, rehabilitative, behavioral health counseling and psychological support services.

Traditional Healing Waiver: Service Parameters

c. What Services will be “covered?”

- ✓ Practices approved by the facility to be performed and billed by the facility.
- ✓ Services part of the comprehensive plan of health care that includes specific individualized goals.
- ✓ Examples include ceremonial consultation, medical interpretation, traditional counseling, traditional ceremonial services, diagnostic ceremonies, smudging, purification, blessing & protection prayers, traditional childbirth support.

Traditional Healing Waiver: Service Parameters

d. What Services are not covered?

- ✓ Restricted practices
- ✓ Contraindicated; potential to cause harm
- ✓ Not a part of the patient's plan of care
- ✓ Lacking patient consent
- ✓ Lacking signed release of liability

Payment Methodology

Reimbursement Options

- a. Per Encounter Payment
 - ✓ Facility reimbursed published All Inclusive Rate (AIR)
 - ✓ Preferred method
- b. Fee for Service Payment
 - ✓ Facility reimbursed fee schedule
- c. Member Benefit Allowance
 - ✓ AHCCCS member is paid and chooses how to use money in obtaining traditional healing services

State Plan Amendment Considerations

State Plan Amendment

In 2017, CMS asked AHCCCS to consider a State Plan Amendment (SPA) as an alternative to establish traditional healing services.

(10/1/17 – Language submitted to CMS)

Traditional Healing Services: A system of culturally appropriate healing methods developed and practiced by generations of Tribal healers who apply methods for physical, mental and emotional healing. The array of practices provided by traditional healers shall be in accordance with an individual tribe's established and accepted traditional healing practices.

- BHT's and BHPP's in IHS/638s would be limited to providing this service under the direction and supervision of a physician or licensed behavioral health professional.
- Traditional Healing Services must be medically necessary and part of the member's plan of care.

Waiver versus SPA?

- Will the new Administration have renewed interest to approve the Waiver or the SPA?
- Waiver demonstrations are time limited, but more detailed in terms of service and payment parameters.
- SPA's are not time limited per se, but can be amended.
- Both Waivers and SPA's require Tribal Consultation and CMS approval. Tribes may invoke consultation with CMS.

Questions

THANK YOU!

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