

Services Management Communication Bulletin #4 (11/17/04)

Dear Case Responsible Providers:

Here are some updates on issues that we have received inquiries about:

Language Translation; Deaf & Hard of Hearing Interpretation – Providers may contract directly with persons or agencies in order to offer Spanish language—and under special circumstances, other language translation—(YP460) or deaf/hard of hearing (YP450) interpretation services. Providers should request authorization for these codes from the Services Management Department. If either service is needed as part of the initial assessment, the provider should request authorization from the Access Department at the time of referral for the assessment.

The rates for translation services are bundled, that is, they are inclusive of travel/mileage. Providers may negotiate rates with interpretation/translation providers but will be reimbursed by Western Highlands at a single rate:

Language: \$8.75 per 15 minute unit

Deaf & Hard of Hearing: \$12.50 per 15 minute unit

The rate for Deaf and Hard of Hearing interpretation reflects the fact that Deaf and Hard of Hearing interpreters are required to be certified.

This policy is effective 11/1/04; providers may begin to contract directly for language translation and deaf/hard of hearing interpretation immediately and request service authorizations from Western Highlands Network.

Western Highlands Network maintains a contract with Blue Ridge Interpreting Associates, Inc., and Elizabeth Langrell for Deaf/Hard of Hearing translation. We will continue to use these contracts to provide deaf/hard of hearing interpretation for providers who wish to use them until 12/31/04, at which time Western Highlands Network will no longer directly contract for interpretation for clinical services.

Note: We have been asked to clarify the use of CPT “interactive” codes for translation services. As an example, this is the CPT code manual’s definition of 90810:

“Individual psychotherapy, interactive, using play equipment, physical devices, language interpreter, or other mechanism of non-verbal communication, in an office or outpatient facility, approximately 20 to 30 minutes face-to-face with patient.”

We interpret this to mean:

If the therapist signs in order to conduct the therapy session (rather than using an interpreter), the interactive CPT code may be used for the therapy session.

When a language translator is used in the therapy session (in addition to the therapist himself or herself), the therapist may use the interactive CPT code for the therapy session.

Please contact Darlyne Sahara in the Provider Network Development office if you would like these two codes (YP460 and YP450) in your contract.