



Fallon Community Health Plan/Beacon Health Strategies
CANS Provider Network Alert
November 10th, 2008



Dear Colleague:

As previously communicated, beginning **November 30, 2008**, MassHealth in conjunction with Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan, Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP), Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership, Neighborhood Health Plan, and Network Health will require a uniform behavioral health assessment process for MassHealth members under the age of 21 that includes a comprehensive needs assessment using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool.

This Network Alert is to remind you about key information concerning the CANS tool, including steps clinicians must take to complete CANS training and certification and steps provider organizations must take to enroll in the Virtual Gateway (VG). It also provides new and clarifying information regarding CANS requirements.

This Network Alert updates the information provided to you in a prior Network Alert regarding CANS, dated July 31, 2008.

CANS Action Checklist for Network Providers

Network providers will need to take the following steps to meet their obligations concerning the CANS:

- [] Ensure that all clinical staff members who are required to use the CANS are CANS-trained and certified. Information on the CANS certification and training can be found on the web at <https://masscans.ehs.state.ma.us>
- [] Ensure that your organization is enrolled with the Virtual Gateway (VG). This will be necessary to access the web-based CANS application. *Enrollment with the VG for other business applications (such as STARS, EIM/EIS, etc.) does not satisfy this requirement.* For information on how to enroll, email the VG customer service group at, VirtualGatewayCBHI@state.ma.us
- [] If you are a provider of outpatient services, billing the code 90801 for behavioral health assessments, you may optionally begin to use the CANS and bill the enhanced rate for 90801 at any time prior to November 30, 2008. Until the CANS application becomes available (sometime in early 2009), you simply complete the CANS on paper and include it in the client record, then bill 90801 with the HA modifier. (See "[Payment for CANS in Outpatient Therapy](#)", below.) Once the web-based CANS application is functional, you should continue to include documentation of each CANS administration in the client record.
- [] CANS forms for completion on paper may be obtained at the CBHI website, www.mass.gov/masshealth/childbehavioralhealth and at www.beaconhealthstrategies.com under the FCHP **Provider Tools** section.

Services That Require the Use of the CANS Tool

Effective **November 30, 2008**, the use of the CANS tool will be *required* as part of an initial behavioral health assessment in the following services for members under the age of 21 and **must be updated** at least every 90 days when the treatment plan is reviewed:

- Outpatient Therapy (diagnostic evaluations and individual, family, and group therapy); and
- Family Stabilization Team (FST) services.

In addition, the CANS must be completed as part of the discharge planning process in the following 24-hour level of care services:

- Psychiatric inpatient hospitalization;
- Community-Based Acute Treatment (CBAT); and
- Intensive Community-Based Acute Treatment (ICBAT).

Services That Do NOT Require Use of the CANS Tool

The CANS tool will not be required for the in following circumstances:

- Psychopharmacology evaluations;
- Psychological/Neuropsychological testing;
- Emergency Services Provider (ESP) evaluations;
- Acute treatment services for substance abuse;
- Community support services for substance abuse;
- Ongoing medication management;
- Psychiatric day treatment;
- Partial hospitalization;
- Structured Outpatient Addiction Program (SOAP);
- Community Support Program (CSP); and
- DPH-licensed substance abuse providers (even if they are billing 90801 code).

The CANS Requirement Applies to Behavioral Health Clinicians with the Following Credentials

The following types of clinicians are required to pass the on-line CANS certification examination and use the CANS: psychologists, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, LCSWs, unlicensed Master's-level clinicians working under the supervision of a licensed clinician, and Master's-level clinical interns in psychology and social work working under the supervision of a licensed clinician.

Psychiatrists, psychiatric residents, and psychiatric nurse mental-health clinical specialists who provide outpatient therapy to members under the age of 21 also must pass the on-line CANS certification examination and use the CANS. Please note that psychiatrists, psychiatric residents, and psychiatric nurse mental-health clinical specialists who only provide medication management are NOT required to use the CANS or pass the CANS certification examination.



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Completion of the CANS is NOT Required for Members Who Currently Are Involved in Outpatient Treatment with a Provider

If a member has an existing relationship with a provider before November 30, 2008, the provider will not be required to perform another initial assessment, including a CANS, for that member. These providers also are not required to perform a CANS update every 90 days when the treatment plan is reviewed. However, if the member leaves treatment but subsequently returns to the provider for a new course of treatment, the provider must perform a new initial assessment using the CANS and an update every 90 days.

Payment for CANS in Outpatient Therapy

The initial behavioral health assessment using the CANS for outpatient therapy (diagnostic evaluations and individual, family, and group therapy) is provided during a psychiatric diagnostic interview evaluation that is billed with the CPT code 90801 with modifier HA.

Effective September 1, 2008, FCHP through its behavioral health partner Beacon Health Strategies (Beacon) will reimburse Providers at an enhanced rate for billing CPT 90801-HA. A diagnostic evaluation that includes a CANS assessment may require two sessions and providers may bill accordingly.

The review and updating of the CANS required every 90 days for members in ongoing individual, group or family therapy is part of treatment planning and documentation and, as such, is not a separately billable service and will not receive an enhanced payment.

Payment for CANS in Other Services

Data-gathering and documentation required for discharge planning (including use of CANS) are included in the per-diem rate for CBAT and psychiatric inpatient hospitalization. No rate changes are contemplated at this time for these services.

For FST providers, the behavioral health assessment using the CANS is part of the FST service and the time spent conducting the assessment is billable using the current FST codes.

Release Timeline for the Web-Based CANS Application

Development and testing is progressing for the web-based CANS application that will be accessible via the Virtual Gateway. Please note the following important information on EOHHS' release timeline for the CANS application. The CANS application will be now be rolled out in two stages, with the first release to occur by the end of December 2008 and the second release to occur in spring 2009. Please note that providers who are required to use the

CANS are also required to utilize the web-based system when it becomes available. Providers who have registered with the Virtual Gateway for the CANS application will receive an e-mail when the system is operational.



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This first release, which will allow providers to develop familiarity with the system, will ask providers to document certain member demographic information and to answer the questions that determine whether a child has a Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED). For those who have used the paper CANS form, the information requested will mirror the SED questions found in the first three pages. The second release will add the questions from the CANS evaluation tool.

If you have any questions about the information contained within this CANS Alert, please contact:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Friedman".

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