



## Behavioral Health Benefits

### Key Points

- Behavioral health providers and facilities contract with United Behavioral Health (UBH) to participate in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Community Care Network (CCN).
- All outpatient behavioral health services must have an approved referral for treatment.
- VA must be notified within 72 hours of a Veteran seeking emergency behavioral health care without an approved referral from an in-network emergency department.

### General and Specialized Care

The UBH network provides a network of behavioral health and substance use disorder providers, facilities and services for VA CCN. The UBH network includes:

- Psychiatric hospitals
- Inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance use disorder programs
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Social workers
- Marriage and family therapists
- Counselors

UBH includes providers who perform some VA CCN Complementary and Integrative Healthcare Services, such as biofeedback, hypnotherapy, relaxation techniques and Native American healing.

UBH serves all areas, except Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. Those areas are covered by a leased network.



## Referrals for Behavioral Health Services

VA CCN providers will receive an approved referral containing a specific standardized episode of care (SEOC), the issued and expiration dates and a specified number of visits and/or services.

The referral packet will include the referral with a SEOC, consult/order with chief complaint, patient history and clinical findings related to the chief complaint.

An approved referral must be received from VA before the Veteran receives care, unless services are provided in an emergency room. VA CCN providers must contact VA within 72 hours of the Veteran seeking emergency behavioral health care without an approved referral from an in-network emergency department.

Providers must submit a Request for Services (RFS) Form 10-10172 to VA when a need is identified for additional care that falls outside the original referral and SEOC, or if there is a need to extend the duration of the referral.

This form is available at [provider.vacommunitycare.com](https://provider.vacommunitycare.com) > Documents & Links.  
A separate form is required for each service requested.

VA CCN providers can upload the form into VA's HealthShare Referral Manager (HSRM) or send to VA through secure email or fax. The form must include the provider signature, which is necessary as the RFS serves as physician orders. Information on HSRM is available at [va.gov/communitycare](https://va.gov/communitycare) > For Providers > Request and Coordinate Care > HealthShare Referral Manager.

VA will process all requests in 3 business days, and the provider will be notified of the decision or outcome through their preferred method of communication. The notification will also indicate if the care will be provided within VA or the community.

## Prescribing Medications

Before prescribing controlled substances for a Veteran, VA requires providers to check their states' prescription-monitoring program to see if the Veteran has been prescribed other controlled substances. This can help providers and Veterans help ensure the appropriate use of controlled substances.

VA CCN providers can write an urgent or emergent prescription, to be filled at a VA CCN retail pharmacy, for up to a 14-day supply without refills. Opioids may be filled up to a 7-day supply or to state limits, whichever is less. The prescription must be associated with an approved referral.

When urgent or emergent prescriptions are clinically needed for continued or maintenance treatment, beyond the initial urgent or emergent 14-day supply, providers must generate a second prescription for the additional days' supply within 1 hour of issuing the urgent or emergent prescription. Providers should submit the second prescription to the referring VA facility's pharmacy by electronic prescribing or fax.



A VA CCN provider may access the online formulary search tool at [pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp](http://pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp). This application provides formulary alternatives to non-formulary drugs in the same VA drug class.

VA CCN providers with an approved referral must submit a prescription for routine and maintenance medication to the authorizing VA facility's pharmacy to fulfill by fax or electronic prescribing. Prescribing providers need to include the following information when forwarding the Veteran's prescription to the VA facility's pharmacy:

- Veteran's full name
- Veteran's date of birth
- Veteran's integration control number (ICN) or Social Security number (SSN)
- Prescribing provider's full name
- Prescribing provider's National Provider Identifier (NPI) number
- Prescribing provider's Tax Identification number (TIN)
- Prescribing provider's own Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) number and expiration date (not a generic facility number)
- Prescribing provider's office address
- Prescribing providers office phone number
- Prescribing provider's fax number (if applicable)
- Prescribing provider's discipline (e.g., physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, etc.)

## Claims

- The claim with the approved referral number must be submitted within 180 days of the date of service. VA CCN providers must include the referral number (VA+10 digits) on all claims. VA CCN providers can review training on how to submit claims and check status of a claim at [provider.vacommunitycare.com](http://provider.vacommunitycare.com) > Medical/Behavioral Provider.
- If an approved referral for emergency room services isn't received, please submit directly to VA.
- Out-of-network providers must submit claims directly to VA.

## Resources

VA has collected key tools and resources for working with Veterans. This includes easy-to-access information about how to screen for military experience, understanding military culture and referring to VA, as well as tools for working with a variety of behavioral health concerns. Providers have access to VA's Community Provider Toolkit at [mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/about.asp](http://mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/about.asp).

Optum offers a provider toolkit to assist provider offices and office staff with essential tools and guidelines. The goal of this toolkit is to collaborate and streamline critical information that will further assist your practice and office in caring for Veterans. The Culturally Competent Toolkit for Treating Veterans is available at [provider.vacommunitycare.com](http://provider.vacommunitycare.com) > Training & Guides.