

Physical and Behavioral Health Care Collaboration

Part of your recovery journey includes taking care of your physical health. Your providers can take better care of you when they understand all the important parts of your health history. “Providers” are doctors, therapists, and other health care professionals who take care of you.

You may have a number of different providers managing your health. This may include both behavioral health and physical health providers. Providers need your permission to share your health history with each other. Your permission is also needed to share specific information about any substances you might be using. Without your permission, little information can be shared between providers. If your medical records include substance use treatment information and you are OK with that information being shared, you must complete a separate release of information. Community Care has a release of information available on the website for anyone to use. Providers and your health plan should work together to provide you with the best possible care.

Concerns You Might Have

You might worry about stigma related to your behavioral health diagnosis. The best way to reduce stigma is to raise awareness about substance use disorder treatment. This means allowing providers to work with each other to help you when you are in substance use disorder treatment.

For example, you might worry that if you are in pain, you won't be prescribed pain medicine if a treatment provider knows about your substance use. Signing a Release of Information helps providers to work with you to make sure that your pain is managed.

Annual Physical and Tests

Everyone should get a physical (exam) once a year, and other health screenings based on age and risk factors. Physical health symptoms might not be recognized when you are having behavioral health symptoms. Physical symptoms often show up during substance use disorder treatment once your condition is managed.

Your substance use disorder treatment provider might order bloodwork or other screening tests. Depending on the test results, you may need to follow up with your doctor after you finish treatment or while you are still in treatment. Your medicine could also change. All treatment providers should know all the medicines you are taking, so they can make sure you don't take a medicine that might make you sick because of other medicines you take.

What Information Is Shared?

Sometimes, providers need to share information, to make sure that people receive quality care. Providers only discuss information that is medically necessary. You have the final say in the information that may or may not be shared with physical health providers. Specific details about things discussed in treatment are not shared with physical health providers, unless a person presents as a danger to themselves or someone else.

Your behavioral health treatment provider may send an introductory letter to your physical health treatment providers. The introductory letter will include that you are in treatment, with contact information in case there are any questions.

Reasons to Sign a Release of Information

Sometimes, your provider may talk to you about signing a Release of Information. For instance:

- When you start treatment
- If your primary care provider (PCP) is identified or has changed
- Your medicine has changed
- You need surgery
- You have been hospitalized and the treatment provider needs to continue care
- If you need a referral for specialists (for example, cardiologists, endocrinologists, gastroenterologists)

If you have questions about Releases of Information, talk to your provider. If you have questions about your care or how to get care, you can always call Community Care Member Services at the number for your county.

Adams	1.866.738.6849	Lycoming	1.855.520.9787
Allegheny	1.800.553.7499	McKean	1.866.878.6046
Bedford	1.866.483.2908	Mifflin	1.866.878.6046
Berks	1.866.292.7886	Monroe	1.866.473.5862
Blair	1.855.520.9715	Montour	1.866.878.6046
Bradford	1.866.878.6046	Northumberland	1.866.878.6046
Cameron	1.866.878.6046	Pike	1.866.473.5862
Carbon	1.866.473.5862	Potter	1.866.878.6046
Centre	1.866.878.6046	Schuylkill	1.866.878.6046
Chester	1.866.622.4228	Snyder	1.866.878.6046
Clarion	1.866.878.6046	Somerset	1.866.483.2908
Clearfield	1.866.878.6046	Sullivan	1.866.878.6046
Clinton	1.855.520.9787	Susquehanna	1.866.668.4696
Columbia	1.866.878.6046	Tioga	1.866.878.6046
Elk	1.866.878.6046	Union	1.866.878.6046
Erie	1.855.224.1777	Warren	1.866.878.6046
Forest	1.866.878.6046	Wayne	1.866.878.6046
Huntingdon	1.866.878.6046	Wyoming	1.866.668.4696
Jefferson	1.866.878.6046	York	1.866.542.0299
Juniata	1.866.878.6046	All Counties	
Lackawanna	1.866.668.4696	TTY (Dial 711) Request	1.833.545.9191
Luzerne	1.866.668.4696	En español	1.866.229.3187