

**Affected Programs:** BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid  
**To:** All Providers, HMOs and Other Managed Care Programs

## **New Substance Abuse Screening and Intervention Benefit Covered by BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid**

Effective for dates of service on and after January 1, 2010, BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid will cover a substance abuse screening and intervention benefit known as Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). This *ForwardHealth Update* describes the policies for the SBIRT benefit.

### **Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus Rate Reform Project**

The addition of the benefit described in this *ForwardHealth Update* is a result of the Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus Rate Reform Project and the 2009-2011 state biennial budget (2009 Wisconsin Act 28).

### **Definition of the Substance Abuse Screening and Intervention Benefit**

This *Update* introduces a new benefit called Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for members enrolled in BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan, BadgerCare Plus Core Plan, and Wisconsin Medicaid. The SBIRT benefit is effective for dates of service (DOS) on and after January 1, 2010. Members enrolled in an HMO must receive the services through the HMO. This benefit applies to members who are 10 years of age or older on the DOS.

The purpose of the SBIRT benefit is to identify and assist members at risk for substance abuse problems. The benefit has two components:

- Screening for substance abuse problems.
- Brief preventive substance abuse intervention for members identified as being at risk for having a substance abuse disorder.

The substance abuse screening and intervention services are designed to prevent members from developing a substance abuse disorder. These services are not intended to address tobacco abuse. Smoking cessation products and services are covered under a different benefit. These services are also not intended to treat members diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder or to treat members already receiving substance abuse treatment services. Members identified through the screening and intervention process as needing more extensive or specialized treatment should be referred to an appropriate substance abuse program. Providers are reminded that a physician's prescription is required for all substance abuse services with the exception of emergency services. A physician's prescription is not required for SBIRT services.

To be reimbursable, SBIRT services must be provided on a face-to-face basis (either in person or via simultaneous audio and video transmission). Telephone and

Internet-based communication with members is not covered.

### **Substance Abuse Screening**

Substance abuse screening is a method for identifying people who use alcohol or drugs in a way that puts them at risk for problems or injuries related to their substance use. Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus cover substance abuse screening in a wide variety of settings to increase the chance of identifying people at risk. Screening is also a part of primary prevention aimed at educating members about the health effects of using alcohol and other drugs.

Providers are required to use an evidence-based screening tool to identify members at risk for substance abuse problems. A few brief questions about substance use may be asked to identify those individuals likely to need a more in-depth screening. Those brief screening questions, however, do not meet the criteria for reimbursement for this benefit. The screening tool must demonstrate sufficient evidence that it is valid and reliable to identify individuals at risk for a substance abuse disorder and provide enough information to tailor an appropriate intervention to the identified level of substance use. The areas that must be covered include:

- The quantity and frequency of substance use.
- Problems related to substance use.
- Dependence symptoms.
- Injection drug use.

The screening tool should be simple enough to be administered by a wide range of health care professionals. It should also focus on the frequency and the quantity of substance use over a particular time frame (generally 1 to 12 months).

The following is a listing of evidence-based substance abuse screening tools that meet the criteria for reimbursement for this benefit. Providers may choose tools that are not included on the list as long as they meet the criteria above. In addition, providers are

required to obtain prior approval from the Department of Health Services (DHS) before using a tool that is not listed below. Contact the DHS at [DHSSBIRT@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSSBIRT@wisconsin.gov) for additional information. The approved tools include the following:

- The Alcohol Use Disorders Inventory Test (AUDIT). This screen is a reliable tool for use to determine the level of alcohol use. The AUDIT screen is available through the World Health Organization (WHO) Web site at [whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2001/WHO\\_MSD\\_MSB\\_01.6a.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2001/WHO_MSD_MSB_01.6a.pdf).
- The Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST). This screening tool is a reliable tool to use to determine the level of drug use. The DAST screen is available through the Dr. Alan Tepp, Ph.D., Web site at [www.drtepp.com/pdf/substance\\_abuse.pdf](http://www.drtepp.com/pdf/substance_abuse.pdf).
- The Alcohol, Smoking, and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST). This screen is available through the WHO Web site at [www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/activities/assist/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/activities/assist/en/index.html).
- The CRAFFT screening tool developed by John Knight at the Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research (CeASAR). The CRAFFT screening tool is available through the CeASAR Web site at [www.ceasar-boston.org/CRAFFT/index.php](http://www.ceasar-boston.org/CRAFFT/index.php). This screen is valid for use with children and adolescents.
- The Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT). This screen is valid for use in adolescents in a medical setting. A POSIT PC tool is available through the Power Train, Inc. Web site at [www.powertrain.com/positpc/index.html](http://www.powertrain.com/positpc/index.html).

Providers may use more than one screening tool during the screening process when appropriate; however, there is no additional reimbursement for using more than one screening tool.

### **Substance Abuse Intervention**

Brief substance abuse intervention services are covered for members who are identified through the use of an

evidence-based screening tool as being at risk for a substance abuse disorder(s). The purpose of the intervention is to motivate the member to decrease or abstain from alcohol consumption and/or drug use. Brief intervention may be a single session or multiple sessions using a motivational discussion that focuses on increasing insight and awareness regarding substance use and increasing motivation toward behavioral change. Brief intervention can also be used for those in need of more extensive levels of care, as a method of increasing motivation and acceptance of a referral to specialty substance abuse treatment.

Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus cover brief intervention services provided during the same visit as the screening or during a separate visit. The brief intervention is not covered for members who have not had a substance abuse screen.

Providers are required to use effective strategies for the counseling and intervention services although BadgerCare Plus and Wisconsin Medicaid are not endorsing a specific approach.

Examples of effective strategies for the intervention services include the following:

- The SBIRT protocols, which are available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) at [sbirt.samhsa.gov/about.htm](http://sbirt.samhsa.gov/about.htm).
- “Helping Patients Who Drink Too Much,” A Clinician’s Guide, Updated 2005 Edition, available through the HHS at [pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Practitioner/cliniciansGuide2005/guide.pdf](http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Practitioner/cliniciansGuide2005/guide.pdf).

### **Services for Pregnant Women**

Members who are pregnant are eligible for substance abuse screening and intervention services through a separate benefit designed specifically for pregnant women, defined by Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) procedure codes H0002 (Behavioral health screening to determine eligibility for admission to treatment program) with modifier “HF”

and H0004 (Behavioral health counseling and therapy, per 15 minutes) with modifier “HF.” ForwardHealth will not cover both benefits during the member’s pregnancy. Providers are required to use either the benefit for pregnant women or the SBIRT benefit for the substance abuse screening and intervention services. Refer to the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Screening for Pregnant Women chapter of the Covered and Noncovered Services section in the relevant service areas of the Online Handbook for more information about this benefit.

### **Training and Requirements for Eligible Providers**

Early detection of substance abuse problems is crucial to successfully treating members. It is also important for members to obtain referrals for follow-up care when appropriate. In order to accomplish these goals, BadgerCare Plus and Wisconsin Medicaid are allowing a wide range of Medicaid-certified providers to administer these services.

Refer to Attachment 1 of this *Update* for a list of providers eligible to receive reimbursement for the screening and the substance abuse intervention services.

Providers are required to retain documents showing that staff providing substance abuse screening and intervention services meet the training, education, and supervision requirements.

### **Requirements for Licensed Individuals**

Licensed health care professionals must complete the DHS-approved training to directly deliver the screening and intervention services. Training for licensed professionals must extend at least four hours and may be conducted in person or via the Internet. The DHS may exempt licensed professionals with expertise in the field of substance abuse screening and motivational enhancement or motivational interviewing on a case-by-case basis.

Providers should contact the DHS via e-mail at [DHSSBIRT@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSSBIRT@wisconsin.gov) for more information about the required training or to find out if they can be exempted from the training requirements.

### ***Requirements for Unlicensed Individuals***

Unlicensed individuals may provide screening or brief intervention services if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Successfully complete at least 60 hours of training related to providing screening and brief intervention for alcohol and substance abuse (other than tobacco). This training includes the DHS-approved training to deliver the screening and intervention services. At least 30 hours of training must be conducted in person.
- Provide the screening and intervention services under the supervision of a licensed health care professional.
- Follow written or electronic protocols for evidence-based practice during the delivery of screening and intervention services. Protocols must be consistently followed, so the licensed health care professional must ensure that quality assurance procedures are in place for the written or electronic protocols.

### **Procedure Codes and Diagnosis Codes**

The new benefit will correspond with two HCPCS procedure codes and require specific diagnosis codes.

Procedure code H0049 (Alcohol and/or drug screening) will be used for the substance abuse screening. Diagnosis code V82.9 (Unspecified condition) is required on claims for procedure code H0049.

Procedure code H0050 (Alcohol and/or drug service, brief intervention, per 15 minutes) will be used for substance abuse intervention services. Diagnosis code V65.42 (Counseling on substance use and abuse) is required on claims for procedure code H0050.

Refer to Attachment 2 for tables listing valid place of service codes and procedure codes for the benefit.

### **Coverage Limitations**

#### ***Substance Abuse Screening***

For members enrolled in Medicaid or the Standard Plan, the screening is limited to one unit of service per rolling 12 months. For members enrolled in the Benchmark Plan and the Core Plan, the screening is limited to one unit of service per enrollment year. A unit of service is equivalent to the total amount of time required to administer the screening.

The screening is not considered part of the mental health and substance abuse services available under BadgerCare Plus or Wisconsin Medicaid. The screening is not counted towards any service limitations or prior authorization (PA) thresholds for those services.

#### ***Substance Abuse Intervention***

For members enrolled in Medicaid and the Standard Plan, the intervention services are limited to four hours per rolling 12 months. For members enrolled in the Benchmark Plan and the Core Plan, the intervention services are limited to four hours per enrollment year. A unit of service is 15 minutes, so the four-hour limit is equal to 16 units of service.

Only one hour (up to four units of service) can be billed on one DOS. The intervention services may be provided on the same DOS or on a later DOS than the screening.

The intervention services are not considered part of the mental health and substance abuse services available under BadgerCare Plus or Wisconsin Medicaid and are not counted towards any service limitations or PA thresholds for those services.

### **Documentation Requirements**

In addition to documenting the service provided, providers are required to keep a copy of the completed

screening tool(s) in the member's medical record. Providers using electronic medical records should make a note of which screening tool was used if they do not have an electronic version of the tool, and note the member's responses to the screening questions. Providers are also required to retain documents concerning the provider's education, training, and supervision.

Refer to the appropriate service area of the Online Handbook for more information about additional documentation requirements.

### **Prior Authorization**

These services do not require PA.

### **Copayments**

These services are not subject to copayment under BadgerCare Plus and Wisconsin Medicaid.

### **Reimbursement**

Providers will be reimbursed the lesser of the provider's usual and customary charge or the BadgerCare Plus and Wisconsin Medicaid maximum allowable fee for the service.

Refer to Attachment 3 for BadgerCare Plus and Wisconsin Medicaid maximum allowable fees for the substance abuse screening and substance abuse intervention services.

### **Information Regarding Managed Care Organizations**

This *Update* contains fee-for-service policy and applies to services members receive on a fee-for-service basis only. For managed care policy, contact the appropriate managed care organization. Managed care organizations are required to provide at least the same benefits as those provided under fee-for-service arrangements.

The *ForwardHealth Update* is the first source of program policy and billing information for providers.

Wisconsin Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, SeniorCare, and Wisconsin Chronic Disease Program are administered by the Division of Health Care Access and Accountability, Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). The Wisconsin Well Woman Program is administered by the Division of Public Health, Wisconsin DHS.

For questions, call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 or visit our Web site at [www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/](http://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/).

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# ATTACHMENT 1

## Providers Eligible for Reimbursement of Substance Abuse Screening and Intervention Services

The following table lists providers eligible for reimbursement for administering substance abuse screening and substance abuse intervention services under the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) benefit for members enrolled in the BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan, and Wisconsin Medicaid.

Provider Type	Eligible for Reimbursement of Services Provided Under the SBIRT Benefit?
Advanced practice nurse prescribers with psychiatric specialty	Allowed
Crisis intervention providers	Allowed
HealthCheck providers	Allowed
Master's-level psychotherapists in outpatient mental health or substance abuse clinics	Allowed when provided in conjunction with a primary care, hospital, and/or emergency room visit
Nurse practitioners	Allowed
Physicians	Allowed
Physicians assistants	Allowed
Prenatal care coordination providers	Allowed
Psychiatrists	Allowed
Psychologists in outpatient mental health or substance abuse clinics	Allowed when provided in conjunction with a primary care, hospital, and/or emergency room visit
Substance abuse counselors in outpatient mental health or substance abuse clinics	Allowed when provided in conjunction with a primary care, hospital, and/or emergency room visit

# ATTACHMENT 2

## Procedure Codes for Substance Abuse Screening and Substance Abuse Intervention Services

The following tables list the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) procedure codes and applicable diagnosis codes that providers are required to use when submitting claims for substance abuse screening and substance abuse intervention services under the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) benefit for members enrolled in the BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan, or Wisconsin Medicaid.

<b>Place of Service Codes (Submitted on the 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form)</b>	
03	School
11	Office
12	Home
21	Inpatient Hospital
22	Outpatient Hospital
23	Emergency Room — Hospital
99	Other Place of Service

<b>Substance Abuse Screening and Intervention Services</b>					
<b>Procedure Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Limitations (Medicaid and the Standard Plan)</b>	<b>Limitations (the Benchmark Plan and the Core Plan)</b>	<b>Allowable Place of Service</b>	<b>Allowable Diagnosis Code</b>
H0049	Alcohol and/or drug screening	Limited to one unit per member, per rolling 12 months.	Limited to one unit per member, per enrollment year.	03, 11, 12, 21, 22, 23, 99	V82.9
H0050	Alcohol and/or drug service, brief intervention, per 15 minutes	Limited to 16 units per member, per rolling 12 months.	Limited to 16 units per member, per enrollment year.	03, 11, 12, 21, 22, 23, 99	V65.42

# ATTACHMENT 3

## Maximum Allowable Fees for Substance Abuse Screening and Substance Abuse Intervention Services

The following table includes maximum allowable fees for the substance abuse screening and substance abuse intervention services for members enrolled in the BadgerCare Plus Standard Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Benchmark Plan, the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan, or Wisconsin Medicaid.

Procedure Code and Description	Providers	Maximum Allowable Fee
<b>H0049</b> Alcohol and/or drug screening	All Medicaid-certified providers eligible for reimbursement for the screening (see Attachment 1 of this <i>Update</i> )	\$35.35 (flat rate)
<b>H0050</b> Alcohol and/or drug service, brief intervention, per 15 minutes	Advanced practice nurse prescribers with psychiatric specialty	\$20.23 per 15 minutes
	Crisis intervention providers	\$14.70 per 15 minutes
	HealthCheck providers	\$12.20 per 15 minutes
	Master's level psychotherapists	\$13.89 per 15 minutes
	Nurse practitioners	\$20.23 per 15 minutes
	Physicians	\$20.23 per 15 minutes
	Physician assistants	\$18.21 per 15 minutes
	Prenatal care coordination providers	\$12.20 per 15 minutes
	Psychiatrists	\$20.23 per 15 minutes
	Psychologists	\$16.41 per 15 minutes
	Substance abuse counselors	\$8.07 per 15 minutes