



April 11, 2020

**Documentation Guidance for Partial Hospitalization Programs
Regarding Emergency Response to COVID-19**

Introduction

As a result of the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency, service delivery across the system has transformed into a largely telemental health service modality. Although telemental health is a useful tool in these circumstances, it does pose challenges for Partial Hospitalization Programs. To address these concerns, the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) is issuing documentation guidance intended to reduce the administrative burden on program staff, while ensuring the best possible provision of ongoing care and support.

New York State is in the midst of a rapidly evolving public health emergency, and guidance and recommendations are being updated frequently. OMH is working closely with the Department of Health and Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services to put in place program expectations and reduced billing standards, which will be announced in guidance, as soon as possible. Providers should regularly review [OMH's Guidance Documents page](#) for updates.

Changes in Documentation Requirements during the Disaster Emergency :

For the duration of the disaster emergency, or until such time as supplemental guidance is issued:

- Assessments and service plans should be completed, to the extent possible. Signatures will not be required at this time, but agreement obtained from the client and others involved shall be documented. Service plans should continue to focus on the recipients' recovery and goals. In these current circumstances, services and interventions may be provided outside of those outlined in the service plan, when it relates to COVID-19 response and need.

Utilization Review

Providers may suspend their Utilization Review process for the duration of the disaster emergency. It is OMH's expectation that this process will resume once the disaster emergency is over.