



May 9, 2007

Dear Prescribing Clinician:

United Behavioral Health (UBH) is committed to partnering with you to achieve the best treatment outcomes for our members and your patients. Reflecting industry trends toward an increasingly consumer-driven market, our new clinical model, ALERT<sup>®</sup> (Algorithms for Effective Reporting and Treatment), is scheduled to begin July 1, 2007.

ALERT is built on the combined strengths of two existing behavioral health clinical models, following the merger and acquisition of PacifiCare Health Systems Inc., by UnitedHealth Group. This model maintains a confidential, reliable and validated means of identifying targeted risk issues through a review of Wellness Assessment (WA) and claims data.

For psychiatrists and prescribing nurses, use of the Wellness Assessment is strongly encouraged but not required. Research has shown that this tool can help identify issues of importance in the treatment process, and can assist the patient and clinician in developing goals and discussing issues. Importantly, change in functioning over time can be assessed. Certification for routine medication management services is not required.

### **What is New?**

- The Wellness Assessment is:
  - A one-page assessment tool that you ask the member to complete at the first visit (or prior to the first visit) and then review with the member before faxing to UBH
  - Administered again by you and completed by the member on session 3, 4 or 5 and again reviewed by you and faxed to UBH
  - Completed a third time (in some cases) based on identified risks
  - Sent directly to the member by UBH, at 4 months after the first visit. The member returns this directly to UBH. We will make the results available to you
- Care Advocacy outreach is accomplished by a combination of letters and/or phone calls based on identified risks
- Clinician participation rates in administering the Wellness Assessment are included in reviews of clinician performance; psychiatrists and prescribing nurses are eligible for recognition for voluntary participation in ALERT
- Member outcomes will be reported back to you in aggregate (in addition to any member-specific follow-up you may receive) and will become part of your quality profile with UBH

### **Benefits to You and Your Patients**

The ALERT algorithms offer opportunities for earlier intervention on potential treatment complications. The combination of letters and/or calls “alerting” you to targeted risk factors allows us to work together more efficiently to focus on those individuals in outpatient treatment with the greatest potential for benefit from such collaboration.

The one-page WA, completed at multiple points rather than at a single point in treatment, offers more immediate feedback on changes in health status and functioning that may inform further treatment planning, including level of care changes or coordination with medical professionals.

## Reminders

**There is no change to the certification of benefits requirements for psychiatrists and prescribing nurses.** UBH no longer requires the submission of Outpatient Treatment Progress Reports (OTPRs). We are continuing to use the Open Certification process. UBH members contact UBH to obtain referrals and, when the member's benefit plan requires it, a certification is generated that covers routine outpatient services. This open certification is valid for one year from the date of issue, subject to the member's continued eligibility and terms of his or her benefit plan. All treatment certified by UBH must be clinically necessary and evidence-based.

## Looking Ahead

UBH is establishing the Clinician Quality Index (CQI), a program to track quality and performance measures of importance to clinicians and to members. These measures will include clinical outcomes, member feedback, and administrative metrics. CQI will also track participation in UBH initiatives such as ALERT. Performance benchmarks will be established and resources provided, helping you to meet or to exceed these benchmarks. Additional communications, including requests for input or participation in pilot programs, will be forthcoming.

## Resources

We strongly encourage you to register for a conference call providing an overview of ALERT by accessing our clinician Web site, [www.ubhonline.com](http://www.ubhonline.com). From the home page, go to the Clinical Learning menu and select "ALERT registration". You may also register by calling 1-800-287-9849, ext 3494.

Conference calls are scheduled for the following dates and times:

Date	Time	Phone Number
June 19, 2007	12:00 p.m. Eastern / 11:00 a.m. Central / 9:00 a.m. Pacific	1-800-552-8408
June 28, 2007	2:00 p.m. Eastern / 1:00 p.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Pacific	1-800-552-8408
July 10, 2007	12:00 p.m. Eastern / 11:00 a.m. Central / 9:00 a.m. Pacific	1-800-552-8408
July 20, 2007	2:00 p.m. Eastern / 1:00 p.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Pacific	1-800-552-8408

A later mailing will include a copy of the new Wellness Assessment (Adult and Youth versions) and instructions for completion. You may also visit [ubhonline](http://ubhonline.com)<sup>®</sup> for additional resources about ALERT, including a list of Frequently Asked Questions or to download WAs as needed. Please note that over time, photocopying diminishes the quality of the WA form, potentially rendering it unreadable. Therefore, it is recommended that you download forms on a regular basis.

We appreciate your continued dedication in providing quality clinical services and optimizing outcomes. If you have additional questions, please contact Network Management for further assistance by calling 1-800-711-6089, and selecting option 5, then option 4.

Sincerely,



Michelle Brennan-Cooke, PhD  
Vice President, Clinical Network Services

## **ALERT: Routine Outpatient Care Advocacy Process**

- Member calls UBH or accesses [liveandworkwell.com](http://liveandworkwell.com), our Member Web site, to request certification (when the benefit plan requires prior certification for outpatient treatment). If the benefit plan does not require prior certification for outpatient services, member will still be able to call for referrals.
- UBH provides referrals to in-network clinicians based on clinical and geographic needs. An “open” certification is generated, allowing the member to see any UBH-contracted clinician for routine outpatient psychotherapy services.
- Member calls the clinician directly to schedule an appointment. When applicable, the UBH member brings a copy of the certification letter or the Certification Request document to the initial appointment. If the member does not bring the letter or has not already obtained certification (and certification is required), you should contact UBH to obtain a copy or to initiate an open certification. Registered users of [ubhonline](http://ubhonline.com), may use the certification inquiry and certification request functions. Or you may call the number on the back of the member’s insurance card.
- Clinician provides the one-page Wellness Assessment (WA) to each new UBH member, or to the parent/guardian of a child or adolescent patient.
- Clinician promptly returns each completed WA to UBH as instructed on the form.
- A second WA is administered, preferably at session 3 but may be administered at session 4 or 5 instead.
- UBH reviews the WA and alerts the clinician if a targeted risk is identified. The treating clinician will either be notified by letter, or contacted by a Care Advocate to discuss the case or assist in coordinating additional services.
- Some targeted risk factors identified after the review of the second WA, may result in your being asked to administer a third WA at a later point in treatment.
- A follow-up WA will also be sent directly to the member approximately four months after the initial evaluation.