

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Remuneration for Psychiatrists' Time Performing Utilization Review

Approved by the Board of Trustees, 2022
Approved by the Assembly, November 2022

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

For psychiatrists, the major areas of work for prior authorizations are for medications and certain other outpatient treatments such as ECT and TMS. Psychiatrists working with insured patients may have to contribute daily personal and staff time for medication authorization. For psychiatrists working with patients in a hospital setting, continuing stay in the hospital often requires frequent interaction with third-party payers for authorization. Psychiatrists in private practice often face challenges due to having much smaller office staff than physicians in other areas of medicine. Due to this, psychiatrists themselves may have to do the work of prior authorization. While there is a CPT code for this activity, it is not consistently or adequately reimbursed.

APA Position:

Physicians should be remunerated for actual time spent on case management, supervisory services, and prior authorizations, which should be minimized and streamlined.