

To: All Providers

From: Khristine Brewington, VP of Network Management, MS, LCMHC, LCAS, CCS, CCJP

Date: December 7, 2020

Subject: Temporary Rate Increases during COVID-19 UPDATE, COVID-19 6-Month Follow-Up Survey Announcement, State-Funded respite during remote learning (JCB#382), JCB376-Session Law 2020-80 Coronavirus Relief Funding for Group Homes, Important NCTOPPS Reminders, Important NCSNAP Reminders

TEMPORARY RATE INCREASES DURING COVID-19 UPDATE

Trillium will be extending some of the rate increases that were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, and reducing others, through *March 31, 2021*. The increases are to be used for services that may require providers to pay overtime for staff when other staff cannot work due to COVID-19, OR due to paying direct care staff a higher rate for hazard pay during this event.

The rates will be extended in all applicable contracts through *March 31, 2021*. Trillium may audit records for providers that bill these codes to assure compliance with the billing and to ensure these enhanced rates do go to direct care staff. This bulletin impacts many services and rates, therefore, in order to view the specific rates please go to:

 [COVID-19 Rate Table FY 2019-2021](#)

For Psychiatric Inpatient Hospitalization service, rates vary by hospital. The current rate increase of 20% will end on 1/31/21, and then a 5% increase will be applied to all applicable contracts through 3/31/21. This will be in addition to the permanent 5% increase that was applied effective 7/1/20.

Please allow up to two weeks for Trillium to update the rates in all applicable contracts. We will send out a Network Communication Bulletin once this process is complete. For providers to receive the rate enhancements, the codes will need to be billed with the CR modifier, with the exception being the Psychiatric Inpatient Hospitalization service, which will be increased using the usual billing code.

If you have any questions regarding this communication, please email RATESFinance@TrilliumNC.org. Please use email only, as we are experiencing higher than normal call volume at this time.

JCB376-SESSION LAW 2020-80 CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUNDING FOR GROUP HOMES

Trillium has received an allocation related to Session Law 2020-80 Coronavirus Relief Funding for Group Homes. This funding is allocated on a one-time basis to group homes for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illness, or both, to support the implementation of recommended Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance for preventive measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding is for expenditures through December 30, 2020.

 [JCB376- Session Law 2020-80](#)

To receive the funding, eligible providers will need to contact the LME/MCO by submitting an attestation. For the attestation, and how to submit, please click:

 [Trillium Attestation Invoice](#)

COVID-19 6-MONTH FOLLOW UP SURVEY ANNOUNCEMENT

PROVIDING SUPPORT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS SURVEY

Direct support professionals, like the people with disabilities they support, face a high risk of infection during the coronavirus pandemic. They also face financial hardship, exhaustion, and challenges in supporting their families.

The Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, in partnership with the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals, is conducting a survey on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on direct support professionals. After more than eight months since a national emergency was declared, we want to know how DSPs are doing and identify the most effective ways to protect DSPs and the people they support.

[Please forward this survey to the direct support professionals that you employ.](#) Their answers will be anonymous. National and state-specific results from the survey will be shared widely in March 2021.

A similar survey of DSPs was conducted by ICI and NADSP in the spring of 2020 and completed by more than 9,000 DSPs. [those results are available here.](#) The new survey is for both DSPs who completed the earlier survey and those who did not.

The Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota is a designated University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, part of a national network of similar programs in major universities and teaching hospitals across the country. ICI's collaborative research, training, and information-sharing ensure that people with disabilities are valued by, included in, and contribute to their communities of choice throughout their lifetime.

The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals is a national non-profit whose mission is to elevate the status of direct support professionals by improving practice standards; promoting system reform; and advancing their knowledge, skills, and values.

Our vision is a world with a highly qualified and professional direct support workforce that partners with, supports, and empowers people with disabilities to lead a life of their choosing.



 [Survey results HERE](#)

STATE-FUNDED RESPITE DURING REMOTE LEARNING (JCB#382)




The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) continues to coordinate with the Division of Health Benefits (DHB) to support flexibility in service delivery, the continuation of quality, medically necessary services and supports for behavioral health consumers and stabilizing and sustaining provider networks.

In September, NC Medicaid received federal approval of additional flexibilities during the COVID-19 public health emergency for the NC Innovations Waiver, for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). In an effort to apply the same flexibilities to the state-funded IDD services as those allowed under the NC Medicaid Innovations Waiver, DMH/DD/SAS will allow the use of respite during school hours during the public health emergency that necessitates remote learning as funding is available and approved by the LME-MCO.

It is important to note that:

-  Respite **cannot** be used to assist with academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to, educational instruction, completion of educational activities, etc.
-  Respite **can** be utilized to support with logging on to remote learning and school-related Tele-therapy sessions, asking for technical assistance and managing the individual's non-academic support needs. This may include paying attention to the task at hand, behavior management, personal care needs, etc.

State-funded respite services require prior approval by the LME-MCO. The LME-MCO may request documentation that includes:

-  The individual's school schedule;
-  The hours that Respite will be used to support the member during the remote learning; and
-  The individual's needs that are being supported during remote learning.

If you have any additional questions, please contact LaToya Chancey at LaToya.Chancey@dhhs.nc.gov or (984) 236-5044.

 [Joint Communication Bulletin # J382](#)

IMPORTANT NCTOPPS REMINDERS

Every NC TOPPS provider site account must have at least one Superuser. (It is highly recommended each site have 2 Superusers for backup purposes.)

- 🌱 [Superuser Request Form](#) can be found on Trillium's website and should be submitted to the NC TOPPS Help Desk, nctopps@ncsu.edu.

NEW SITE REQUESTS

- 🌱 New site requests will only be approved for Trillium contracted sites; if a site is not in your Trillium contract, the site request will be denied.
- 🌱 Wait until you receive the email from Trillium's Contracting Unit that the site and codes have been added before you request an NC TOPPS site addition in the system
- 🌱 Once the site has been approved, contact the NC TOPPS Help Desk, nctopps@ncsu.edu, to establish a Superuser

APPROVING NEW USERS AT PROVIDER AGENCIES

- 🌱 Agency Superusers are responsible for approving and deleting users on the agency account. (Trillium staff have no way of knowing when agencies hire or terminate staff.)

NC TOPPS submissions are required for adults and children ages six years and above who are receiving publicly-funded services for mental health and/or substance use disorders. A list of qualifying service codes can be found on the Trillium website on the [NC TOPPS Services page](#).

- 🌱 All updates should be completed online through the [NC TOPPS Database](#).
- 🌱 Initial updates must be completed at the first visit but no later than the second visit. **Trillium highly recommends providers complete the Initial update during the first visit.**
- 🌱 Updates must be completed at initial visit, 3 months, 6 months, annual, 18 months, and Bi-annually after the initial submission. Updates can be done up to 2 weeks prior to or after the initial submission date.
- 🌱 Episode Completion Submissions must be completed when a member completes or terminates services.
- 🌱 If a member states they are transferring to a new provider and you have not been contacted to by the new providers within 2 weeks to release and share information, complete an Episode Completion.
- 🌱 NC TOPPS submissions **are not required** for Health Choice members and Medicare-only members.
- 🌱 NC TOPPS submissions **are not required** for members that are only receiving: Unmanaged outpatient therapy and/or medication management, Crisis Services, Inpatient hospitalization psychiatric services, IDD services and supports.

UNABLE TO ACCESS MEMBER'S NC TOPPS RECORD?

1. Check Name Format
 - a. NC TOPPS requires First Initial of the first name and the first 3 initials of the last name

2. Check Trillium Record Number
 - b. NC TOPPS uses the Trillium record number and must be 6 digits, if Trillium record number is less than 6 digits try a zero at the beginning.
3. Check the CNDS Number
 - c. The CNDS number should be the same as the member's Medicaid number.
4. If you are still unable to access the record, send a secure email to: NCTOPPS@TrilliumNC.org
 - d. Include: Member's name, Trillium Record Number, and Date of Birth. State that you are unable to access member's record.
 - e. If you get a message that the member has an open episode with another provider, see below for NC TOPPS Transfer Procedure.

NC TOPPS TRANSFER PROCEDURE

1. For dual service members, check the hierarchy of services to determine which provider is responsible for the NC TOPPS. The service hierarchy can be found in Section II, Provider Agency Responsibilities, in the NC TOPPS Guidelines.
2. Submit request via zicemail to: NCTOPPS@TrilliumNC.org
3. Include in the body of the email:
 - a. Member's name, Trillium record number, date of birth
 - b. Name and address of the provider location will member will be served
 - c. Name of QP/Clinician that will be responsible for the NC TOPPS
4. Attach a copy of a Release of Information signed by the member or their legal guardian.

NC TOPPS INITIALS REPORT

- 🌱 Sent weekly includes 3 months of newly authorized members for NC TOPPS services based on claims report (Includes 3 months due to claims lag) ***If you have not billed a new NC TOPPS authorized service you will not receive a report***
- 🌱 The report is a provider tool to ensure that members that should have an NC TOPPS record have one
- 🌱 No response back to the NC TOPPS staff is required, unless you are unable to access the member's record or need to request a transfer, or did not complete the initial because the member did not follow up with a second visit. ***(A claims check will be done to ensure that the member did not have a second visit)***
- 🌱 A random sample of members from the weekly Initial reports will be reviewed each quarter to ensure compliance. If your agency is found to be out of compliance; action will be taken including technical assistance or a Plan of Correction.

NC TOPPS UPDATES NEEDED REPORT

- 🌱 Sent twice per month at the middle of the month and the end of the month.
- 🌱 The report is a provider tool to remind providers of updates that are coming due within 2 weeks or are currently due. **(Provider Superusers can also run this report for their agency)**
- 🌱 No response back to the LME is required unless the update is at least one day past due
 - a. Provider should respond back to the NC TOPPS staff, NCTOPPS@TrilliumNC.org, with the date the NC TOPPS was completed for members past due 1-14 days within 3 days of receiving the report.
- 🌱 A quarterly Updates Needed report will be checked at the end of each quarter to ensure compliance. If your agency is found to be out of compliance, action will be taken including technical assistance or a Plan of Correction.

When & How to contact the NC TOPPS Helpdesk

- 🌱 Questions about adding new users to your provider account
- 🌱 Setting up a Superuser account
- 🌱 Technical Issues within the NC TOPPS system including not able to access your user account
- 🌱 NC TOPPS Help Desk: nctopps@ncsu.edu

NC TOPPS CONTACT INFORMATION

- 🌱 Main Email for anything regarding NC TOPPS: NCTOPPS@TrilliumNC.org
- 🌱 NC TOPPS Contact: Stephanie Wilson, Network Coordinator, 1-866-998-2597
- 🌱 NC TOPPS Guidelines, Forms, FAQs and other Documents are available on the Trillium website

Please use zixmail for all secure email contact regarding NC TOPPS; [Trillium Zixmail Account Information](#)

If you feel your agency needs a refresher on NC TOPPS usage please contact NCTOPPS@TrilliumNC.org.

IMPORTANT NCSNAP REMINDERS

All Persons served by the State's Developmental Disabilities (DD) System Require an NC SNAP:

- 🌱 Assessments should be completed and submitted upon initial contact with the I/DD service system (Provider)
- 🌱 Assessments should be updated annually and anytime a significant change has occurred in the individual's needs/level of support

NC SNAPs Must be submitted via Email or Fax:

- 🌱 Email: NCsnap@trilliumnc.org
- 🌱 Fax Number: 252-215-6874; 910-353-4954

Ensure NC SNAPs are Filled-Out Completely Prior to Submission:

- 🌱 Assessments missing pertinent information (Consumer ID Number, Type of Assessment, etc.) will be returned to the provider for correction
- 🌱 Individual's Case Number should be the member's Trillium Case/Record Number
- 🌱 Assessments may be completed "by hand" but should be written in clear/legible handwriting (please do not use cursive handwriting)
- 🌱 Members' social security numbers should not be recorded on NC SNAPs

Each Page of the NC SNAP must be Submitted for Initial and Annual Assessments:

- 🌱 NC SNAP Summary Report & Supplemental Information forms may be sent in isolation for Discharge NC SNAPs only
- 🌱 Incomplete assessments will not be processed, and will be returned to the provider (via email)

Discharge NC SNAPs Should be submitted as promptly as possible:

- 🌱 Please do not wait until the member is due for an annual NC SNAP update to submit discharge NC SNAP
- 🌱 If a member has changed providers, the new provider should be listed on the Summary Report & Supplemental Information page of the NC SNAP

NC SNAPs submitted via email must be sent securely:

- 🌱 Members' names/initials should not be listed within the subject line of the email (this is an electronic HIPAA violation)

The Date of NC SNAP Assessment Should Reflect the Date That Assessments are completed:

- 🌱 Assessments listing a future date cannot be entered into the database
- 🌱 Assessments containing a future date will be returned to the provider for correction

Past-Due NC SNAP Notifications are Sent-Out Weekly:

- 🌱 Please respond to requests for updated NC SNAPs as promptly as possible
- 🌱 A Plan of Correction will be issued for providers that fail to submit assessments after the third request has been sent

Necessary Corrections to a Member's NC SNAP Utilizing the Following Procedures:

- 🌱 Corrections should be made by the individual who completed the assessment
- 🌱 One single line shall be drawn through the error, making sure the original entry is still legible
- 🌱 The corrected information shall be recorded legibly above or near the original entry
- 🌱 An explanation as to the type of documentation error shall be included whenever the reason for the correction is unclear
- 🌱 Correction fluid or tape shall not be used for the correction of errors

Any questions about this Communication Bulletin may be sent to the following email: NetworkManagement@TrilliumNC.org. These questions will be answered in a Q&A format and published on Trillium's website.