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## New Medicaid Coverage for Screening and Brief Intervention Services

The Alaska Medicaid program announces the implementation of coverage for Screening and Brief Intervention services, effective November 1, 2008.

The target population is clients with nondependent substance abuse. Screening and Brief Intervention Services are incorporated into the normal routine in primary care, clinical or other medical setting. Early, brief intervention has been shown to:

- decrease the frequency and severity of drug and alcohol use;
- reduce the risk of trauma; and
- increase the percentage of patients who enter specialized substance abuse treatment.

## Core Components

**Screening:** To be eligible for Medicaid reimbursement, you must use a valid **screening** instrument such as self-report questionnaires and/or structured interviews to detect substance abuse problems. The screening must identify those at risk and determine the level of risk. Those identified with a moderate risk are provided brief intervention services. Those who qualify as severe or dependent and those who are non-responsive to an initial brief intervention or treatment must be referred to specialty care.

**Brief intervention:** Screening result indicates moderate risk, and involves motivational discussion focused on raising individuals' awareness of their substance use and its consequences. Successful brief intervention encompasses support of the client's empowerment to make behavioral changes.

Brief interventions are time-limited (between 15 to 45 minutes) facilitated interactions between a practitioner and a patient focused on addressing the harmful effects of substance abuse and motivating positive change.

Brief Interventions include feedback, goal setting, coping strategies, and identification of risk factors, information and advice.

To be considered clinically relevant, progress notes must include the active staff intervention, client's response to the intervention, and progress toward the goal being addressed.

## Codes and Descriptions: \*

- **99408** — Alcohol and/or substance abu
- **99409** — Intervention services, greater

## Rates:

- Physician rate for **99408** = \$43.80
- Physician rate for **99409** = \$85.82
- Other providers will be paid the appropriate percentage of these rates or the designated encounter

Eligible providers of Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) services include general medical settings where most people regularly go for treatment, and include the following Medicaid provider types:

**Physicians** — services may be provided by or under the direction of the physician. As distinct services, SBI can be reported in addition to Evaluation and Management Services.

**Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) providers** — as distinct services, SBI can be reported in addition to preventive screening services.

**Rural Health clinics**

**Federally Qualified Health Centers**

**Advanced nurse practitioner services** — services may be provided by or under the direction of the nurse practitioner. As distinct services, SBI can be reported in addition to Evaluation and Management services.

**Community Health Aides**

**Tribal clinics** — services do not constitute a separately billable encounter unless they are provided directly by a physician or nurse practitioner.

**Community Mental Health Clinics** and **Physician Mental Health Clinics** — services will be included as covered in the revised integrated regulations.

If you have any questions about the new coding, please call Teri Keklak at (907) 269-2050, or e-mail, [teri.keklak@alaska.gov](mailto:teri.keklak@alaska.gov).

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**Note:** This flyer can also be found online at: <https://alaska.fhsc.com/providers/provupdates.asp> .