

# New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative



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**DATE:** March 25, 2020

**TO:** Pamela Koster, CEO  
Falling Colors Corporation

**FROM:** Bryce Pittenger, Director, CEO   BP  
New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative (BHC)

Neal Bowen, PhD, Director,  Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD)

**RE:**      **Letter of Direction #011**

## **Purpose:**

This serves as a Letter of Direction (LOD) from the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative (The Collaborative) and the Human Services Department (HSD), Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD) to provide directive to Falling Colors Corporation (FCC) to:

## **FCC Responsibilities:**

FCC is directed to authorize codes for Behavioral Health Telephonic Visits through the duration of the public health emergency to assure the continuation of essential services to clients receiving behavioral health services.

Falling Colors is to allow behavioral health providers to bill for telephonic visits using the same codes and rates that are currently established for such services.

These services will be paid as if the client received services onsite and in person. This will remain an option for providers through the termination of the emergency declaration and applies to both initiation of care as well as treatment of established patients. Initiation of care can be for any reason, including client self-referral.

Providers are directed to bill for BH Telephonic Visits using the GT modifier on claims files to indicate telephonic services. All other normal modifiers should be included on the claim if otherwise required. The originating site HCPCS code Q3014 is not billable for these services since the normal office visit payment is to be made instead.

These visits will be considered as equivalent to in-person visits through the termination of the emergency declaration. In accordance with existing policy, providers are expected to maintain all appropriate medical records. Any medical records requiring in person

presence (e.g., height, weight, etc.) are to be noted in the record as “Excused per state declaration re: COVID-19”.

Telephonic BH visits must be synchronous; that is, consisting of live voice conversation with the patient. Asynchronous or “store and forward” visits are not payable under this provision.

Telephonic BH visits must take place during the provider’s normal business hours as if provider’s office were open and the member were able to attend the visit in person. Services must be provided by a practitioner within the practitioner’s normally allowed scope of practice.

Rules for determining the Fund Source should remain as they currently exist.

Providers who submit Workbooks should be required to indicate what services were provided via telephonic means within their spreadsheet.

For Encounters services, Falling Colors shall add a checkbox to indicate the service was provided via telephonic means.

Falling Colors shall draft and send a Provider Alert to vendors to explain billing changes, including which service codes to use, the use of GT modifier on claims, indication of the checkbox for Encounters, and indication on spreadsheet for Workbooks.

In order to provide the State of New Mexico with data showing Provider and Client reliance on telehealth during this crisis, Falling Colors shall provide weekly reports showing usage of the GT modifier by providers. The logic of these queries shall be made available to the BHSD Data Quality team in the event more frequent reporting is needed. This provision will apply through the termination of emergency declaration.

**NM Behavioral Health Collaborative Responsibilities:**

- Approve provider alert communication for FCC to issue to the provider network organizations.
- The Collaborative will not require FCC to revise or resubmit any previously submitted GM reports that cover this time period.
- The Collaborative shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless FCC from all actions, proceedings, claims, demands, costs, damages, attorneys’ fees and all other known or unknown liabilities and expense of any kind arising from, relating to or in connection with FCC’s performance of this LOD #011.

Any questions regarding this LOD should be directed to Neal Bowen, PhD, Director of Behavioral Health Services Division at [Neal.Bowen@state.nm.us](mailto:Neal.Bowen@state.nm.us)

CC: Dr. David Scrase, HSD Secretary