

MEDICARE PRIVATE CONTRACT

This agreement is entered into by and between _____ (hereinafter called "Mental Health Provider"), whose principal medical office is located at _____

And _____ (a beneficiary enrolled in Medicare Part B, hereinafter called "Beneficiary"), who resides at _____.

Background:

A change in the Social Security Act, effective January 1, 1998, permits Medicare beneficiaries and Mental Health Providers to contract privately outside of the Medicare program. Under the law as it existed prior to January 1, 1998, a Mental Health Provider was not permitted to charge a beneficiary more than a certain percentage in excess of the Medicare fee schedule amount (limiting charge). The law now permits Mental Health Providers and Beneficiaries to enter into private arrangements through a written contract under which the Beneficiary may agree to pay the Mental Health Provider more than that which would be paid under the Medicare program.

However, beneficiaries and mental health provider who take advantage of this provision are not permitted to submit claims for payment or to expect payment for those services from Medicare. The Mental Health Provider has certain other obligations, such as filing an affidavit with the appropriate Medicare carrier(s), a copy of which is attached to this contract. The purpose of this contract is to permit the Beneficiary and the Mental Health Provider to take advantage of this change in the Medicare law, and it sets forth the rights and obligations of each. Furthermore, this agreement is limited to the financial agreement between Mental Health Provider and Beneficiary and is not intended to obligate either party to a specific course or duration of treatment.

Obligations of Mental Health Provider:

1. Mental Health Provider agrees to provide such treatment as may be mutually agreed upon by the parties and at mutually agreed upon fees.
2. Mental Health Provider agrees not to submit any claims for payment under the Medicare program for any items or services even if such items or services are otherwise covered by Medicare.
3. Mental Health Provider acknowledges that (s)he will not execute this contract at a time when the Beneficiary is facing an emergency or urgent healthcare situation.
4. Mental Health Provider to provide the beneficiary or his/her legal representative with a copy of this document before items or services are furnished to the beneficiary under its terms.
5. Mental Health Provider agrees to submit copies of this contract to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), upon the request of the CMS.

Obligations of Beneficiary:

1. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative agrees to be fully responsible for payment of all items or services furnished by Mental Health Provider and understand that no reimbursement will be provided under the Medicare program for such items or services.
2. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative acknowledges and understands that no limits under the Medicare program (including the limits under section 1848 (g) of the Social Security Act) apply to amounts that may be charged by Mental Health Provider for such items or services.

Obligations of Beneficiary:

3. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative agrees not to submit a claim for payment to Medicare and further agrees not to ask Mental Health Provider to submit a claim for payment to Medicare.
4. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative understands that Medicare payment will not be made for any items or services furnished by Mental Health Provider that would have otherwise been covered by Medicare if there were no private contract and a proper Medicare claim had been submitted.
5. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative enters into this contract with the knowledge and understanding that he/she has the right to obtain Medicare-covered items and services from Mental Health Providers and Practitioners who have not opted out of Medicare, and that the Beneficiary is not compelled to enter into private contracts that apply to other Medicare-covered services furnished by other Mental Health Providers or practitioners who have not opted out of Medicare.
6. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative understands that Medigap plans (under section 1882 of the Social Security Act) do NOT, and other supplemental insurance plans may elect not to, make payments for such items and services not paid for by Medicare.
7. Beneficiary or his/her legal representative acknowledges that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has the right to obtain copies of this contract upon request.

Mental Health Providers Status:

Beneficiary or his/her legal representative further acknowledges his/her understanding that Mental Health Provider [has/has not] been excluded from participation under the Medicare program under section 1128, 1156, 1892 or any other section of the Social Security Act.

Term & Termination:

This agreement shall become effective on _____ and shall continue until the physician's opt out status comes up for renewal on _____. Despite the term of the agreement, either party may choose to terminate treatment with reasonable notice to the other party. Notwithstanding this right to terminate treatment, both Mental Health Provider and Beneficiary or his/her legal representative agree that the obligation not to pursue Medicare reimbursement for items and services provided under this contract shall survive this contract.

Successors & Assigns:

The parties agree that this agreement shall be fully binding on their heirs, successors, and assigns. The parties hereto, intending to be legally bound by signing this agreement below, have caused this agreement to be executed on the date written below.

Name of Mental Health Provider (printed)

Name of Beneficiary (printed) or his/her Legal Representative

Signature of Mental Health Provider

Signature of Beneficiary or his/her Legal Representative

Date of Signature

Date of Signature