

# Glossary

**Acute in-hospital treatment** is the medical treatment provided in a hospital to a patient who has been admitted to the hospital due to an intense illness and/or an emergency situation.

**Anorexia Nervosa (Anorexia)** is an eating disorder characterized by voluntary starvation and overexercise. Anorexia is a complex disease involving psychological, sociological, and physiological elements. A person suffering from Anorexia is known as an **anorectic** (although the terms **anorexic** and **anorectic** are also used).

**Anxiety disorder** is a generalized term used to describe mental health disorders relating to fear, phobias, and nervousness. A person suffering from an anxiety disorder may have panic attacks and may be unable to pursue normal daily routines.

**Appeal** in this Guide refers to the process parents will follow when they seek to challenge a denial of mental health services. In most situations, there is a higher authority who can review a denial, and it is important for parents to learn about the appeal process and undertake an appeal if necessary.

**Assessment** is the process of measuring a child's knowledge, skills, or needs. Most assessments are performed by professionals. In schools, for example, an assessment can help determine whether a child needs special services.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** is one of the most commonly diagnosed mental disorders among children. Its symptoms include

inattention, overactivity, and a tendency to be too impulsive. Medication can help—but parents should avoid jumping to the conclusion that any child who is inattentive or overactive has ADHD.

**Behavioral problem or disorder** is a generalized term used when a child or teenager behaves—over a long period of time—in ways that are not socially acceptable for his or her age and situation or in ways that are destructive or self-destructive.

**Benefits** in this Guide refers to the services or payments provided for you, your family, or your child by private or public insurers or agencies.

**Bipolar disorder** is a mood disorder characterized by severe mood swings. A person with this disorder may go from being manic, extremely elated, and energetic to being depressed, sad, and sluggish. People with this disorder are sometimes known as **manic depressives**.

**Bulimia Nervosa** (commonly known as **Bulimia**) is an eating disorder characterized by extreme overeating or “binge” eating followed by intentional vomiting, excessive exercising, inappropriate use of laxatives or enemas, or fasting.

**Carve-out** in this Guide refers to a situation where a private insurer or government agency has made a private contractor responsible for the mental health services available through that insurer or agency. The private contractor is often known as the **carve-out company**, and the services under its control are **carved-out services**.

**Case manager** is someone who is trained to perform assessments and provide assistance to parents, families, and individuals who need to plan and manage patient services and care.

**CHINS (Child in Need of Services) petition** is a petition that a parent may file with the court when a child runs away from home, skips school, breaks school rules, or “refuses to obey the lawful and reasonable command” of his or her parent(s). However, filing a CHINS petition will trigger a complicated legal proceeding that may result in a transfer of custody to the Department of Children and Families. Parents should only file a CHINS petition as a very last resort.

**Clinician** is an individual who is trained to practice medicine or psychology and who works directly with people instead of in a laboratory.

**Community agency** in this Guide refers to a private nonprofit organization located in a particular city, town, or neighborhood, and dedicated to providing services to individuals and families in the surrounding community.

**Consultation** in this Guide means a meeting with a mental health professional to obtain advice and/or treatment for your child.

**Co-payment** in this Guide means a payment you must make as part of the total payment for a service which is mostly paid for by an insurance company.

**Coverage** in this Guide means the mental health services you and/or your child are entitled to receive under a private insurance contract or a government program.

**Crisis counseling** refers to intensive meetings between a professional and an individual who is experiencing overwhelming or traumatic mental health problems. Crisis counseling is usually short term, lasting for 1–3 months, and is not a substitute for long term psychological or psychiatric care.

**Crisis intervention and screening** in this Guide refers to a situation where a child is experiencing overwhelming or traumatic mental health problems and a professional (or team of professionals) steps in to provide some immediate help to this child. The professional will assess the child to try and identify the most appropriate treatment.

**Crisis stabilization** in this Guide refers to a brief (usually between 2–10 days) period of hospitalization during which a child who is experiencing a mental health crisis receives intensive treatment and is stabilized.

**Day Treatment** refers to an intensive program that involves the patient during the daytime hours but permits the patient to return home at night.

**Deductible** in this Guide refers to two situations: (1) the expenses that can be deducted from your income in calculating whether you qualify for government benefits; or (2) the amount in an insurance contract that you must pay out-of-pocket before your insurance policy provides for payment by the insurer.

**Depression (clinical)** is a mental health disorder characterized by a sad mood that is both prolonged and severe. Clinical depression can be treated with medication, therapy, and hospitalization if necessary.

**Developmental problem, condition, or disability** refers to a severe condition that stems from mental and/or physical impairments and is generally permanent. People with developmental disabilities have trouble with major life activities such as language, mobility, learning, self-help, and independent living.

**Diagnostic evaluation** in this Guide refers to when a clinician assesses the symptoms presented by your child in order to come to an informed opinion about what condition is causing those symptoms.

**Disability** is a general term referring to any condition that impedes a person's ability to complete daily tasks using traditional methods.

**Dual diagnosis** is a term used to describe a situation where one person is diagnosed with two different conditions and needs treatment for both. For example, a person who is clinically depressed and also addicted to drugs has two different mental health conditions.

**Eligibility** in this Guide means meeting all of the conditions set forth in state or federal law that must be met before you, your family, or your child can qualify for a particular program's benefits under that law.

**Emergency services team (EST)** refers to a team of mental health professionals that responds to emergencies. All children in Massachusetts are entitled to receive EST services. However, a child who is uninsured or covered by MassHealth, and who is experiencing a mental health emergency, must be evaluated by an EST. The Team can provide crisis intervention, stabilization, and referral services.

**Family stabilization services** in this Guide means intense, specific services provided to a family after an initial crisis has been addressed. It includes counseling and supervision to help at-risk families gain strength and stability.

**Grievance** in this Guide refers to a situation where a parent wants to formally complain about the quality of services being provided by an agency, the delay in providing these services, or a denial of services. Grievance processes are often internal, within an agency, and are typically less formal than appeal processes.

**Group insurance** refers to insurance that is purchased by a group (such as the employees of a company). As part of the group, individual members usually enjoy a reduced rate (compared to the rate charged to non-group individuals).

**Hearing** refers to a proceeding held in front of a decision-maker where you have the opportunity to present facts and arguments about why your child should receive the services you are seeking.

**Hyperthyroidism** is a disorder that results when the thyroid gland is more active than normal (or is overactive). Typical symptoms include weight loss, chest pains, cramps, diarrhea, and nervousness.

**Hypoglycemia** is a disorder that results when a person's blood sugar (or glucose) levels are too low. It can be caused by too much insulin in the body, too much exercise, or not enough food. Symptoms include fatigue, trembling, nervousness, hunger, or (in extreme cases) coma.

**Inpatient treatment** in this Guide refers to mental health services delivered in either a general hospital or a psychiatric hospital while your child is staying overnight at that facility.

**Insurance (private)** is a contract between an insurance company and an individual, an employer, or a group of individuals. The insurance company provides coverage for certain health care services (for example) and charges a monthly premium to the individual, employer, or group.

**Insurance (public)** is similar to private insurance but is provided under state and/or federal law and is typically intended for individuals and families who cannot afford to pay private insurance premiums.

**Licensed Social Worker** refers to someone who is licensed under state law to provide social work services. The license demonstrates that the person has completed sufficient education and training to satisfy the state's requirements for licensing and is therefore qualified to practice.

**Locked ward** refers to a section of a hospital or mental health treatment center where patients are confined to a specific area, hallway, or floor. Locked wards are generally for psychiatric patients who are so ill that (in the judgment of mental health professionals and/or a court) they present a threat of harm to themselves or others.

**Medication management** in this Guide refers to the process of monitoring a child's use of medication(s). Usually, the monitoring is done by a qualified professional such as a psychopharmacologist.

**Mental health network** in this Guide refers to a group of mental health professionals who are licensed to provide services and who have contracted with an insurance company (or carve-out company) to provide mental health services at a discount to people insured under that company's insurance policies.

**Mental health professional** refers to a person who is trained to provide mental health services and has been certified to do so by a licensing authority. This category includes psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers, and others with similar training.

**Mood disorder** is a generalized term referring to mental health disorders where a person's general mood is distorted or inappropriate given the circumstances. Clinical depression and bipolar disorder are both mood disorders.

**Nurse Practitioner** refers to a person with an Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) degree who manages patient care and provides primary care services as well as specialty services. Unlike most nurses, nurse practitioners can diagnose patients and prescribe medications.

**Open ward** in this Guide means a ward where patients are not confined involuntarily, but are free to leave without professional or court permission.

**Oppositional Defiant Disorder** is a mental health condition characterized by recurring disobedient and hostile behavior that persists for at least six months. A child with this disorder may often argue with adults, throw severe temper tantrums, deliberately break rules, and actively refuse to comply with requests.

**Out-of-network** refers to a mental health care provider, for example, who is not a member of your insurance company or HMO's network of providers. If you bring your child to an out-of-network provider, the insurance company or HMO will provide less coverage or no coverage of the mental health services you receive from that provider. Generally, exceptions are made for extreme emergencies or urgent care that is needed when you are traveling away from home.

**Outpatient** is a term used to describe patients who are receiving treatment at a hospital or health care center but who do not reside at that hospital or center.

**Partial hospitalization** refers to intensive day treatment programs (see definition above) where the patient spends nights at home.

**Phobia** is a mental health disorder characterized by extreme fear. A person who suffers from a phobia is often seriously disabled by the condition and unable to function under certain circumstances. Different phobias have different names. Arachnophobia, for example, is an extreme fear of spiders.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** is an anxiety disorder directly associated with a traumatic event. Symptoms include extreme guilt, reliving the trauma in dreams, numbness and lack of involvement with reality, or recurrent thoughts and images.

**Premium** refers to the monthly payment that you are required to pay your insurance company in order to receive benefits.

**Prior approval** in this Guide refers to the process under either private or public insurance where you seek approval from your insurer for mental health treatment that has been recommended for your child. In many cases, you must get prior approval for services or the services will not be covered by your insurer.

**Provider network** refers to a group of health care professionals who are licensed to provide services and who have contracted with an insurance company to provide health care services at a discount to people insured under that company's insurance policies.

**Psychiatric day treatment** refers to an intensive program that involves the patient during the daytime hours but permits the patient to return home at night.

**Psychiatrist** refers to a mental health professional who also has a medical degree and is able to prescribe medication.

**Psychological testing** is a kind of assessment based on small samples of behavior. The specialist performing the assessment observes a child's behaviors over a limited amount of time and then forms conclusions based on research and statistics.

**Psychologist** refers to a mental health professional who is not a medical doctor and who does not prescribe medication. Clinical psychologists have extensive training in therapy and psychological testing.

**Referral** in this Guide refers to a recommendation you receive from one health care professional suggesting that your child seek help from a different health care professional. For example, your child’s pediatrician might give you a referral to a mental health specialist if he or she feels your child needs specialized care. Some insurance companies require referrals before they will cover services.

**Residential treatment** in this Guide refers to treatment received in a setting where your child lives away from his or her home, usually for an extended period of time.

**School counselor** in this Guide refers to a trained professional at your child’s school whose duties include mental health counseling.

**Section 504 services** are services your child’s school is required to provide under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act if 1) your child has a disability and is having trouble learning and 2) additional services or reasonable changes in the rules or policies at the school will help your child learn.

**Self-insured** in this Guide refers to employers who provide coverage (see above) to employees and their families by taking direct responsibility for payment of the covered services (or a portion of the services) rather than buying an insurance policy.

**Social services agency** refers to a private organization, often funded with government dollars, which is dedicated to providing services (including mental health services) to individuals and/or families.

**Special education** is a kind of service provided to children age 3–22 who are in need of specialized services as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (a federal law that entitles children who are documented to have special needs to receive sufficient services to ensure that these children receive an adequate education).

**Summary plan description** refers to the detailed description of the health (and mental health) services that will be provided to you and your family by your employer or insurance company. The employer or insurance company is required by federal law to give you this summary plan description.

**Therapist** in this Guide refers to a mental health professional (typically a psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker) who provides mental health services through one-on-one meetings, group meetings, or family treatment.

**Therapy (individual, family, group)** refers to mental health treatment that relies on talking, medication, role-play, and other methods.

**Transitional care** in this Guide refers to care for patients who require a short-term phase intensive therapy or treatment following an acute hospital stay. It is meant for patients who are not ready to be at home, but who do not need to remain in a hospital.

**Traumatic event** refers to an emotionally overwhelming experience such as a serious injury, the loss of a loved one, or abuse (mental, physical, or sexual).

# Resource list

## Introduction

**T**here are many different places parents can go to for help with the problems identified in this Guide. The following list of agencies and organizations corresponds to the Guide's chapters and is a good place to start. As we mention elsewhere, there is also an increasing amount of mental health information available on the Internet. If you do not have an Internet connection at home, you may be able to get online at your local public library, adult education program, or community center.

## Parent Support and Advice Groups

Many people find that other parents are their best source of information and advice. Other parents can also help you decide which of the resources in this list may be most helpful for you and your family. There are several terrific parents' organizations in Massachusetts. The resources listed below can be contacted by phone or email and can help you find other resources and groups.

### ***Brockton Area Multi Services Inc.: 508-580-8700***

*www.bamsi.org — Comprehensive network of statewide services effective in supporting and sustaining individuals and families over time. Offers intensive mental health services, community resources and support, individual and family counseling, and more.*

### ***Federation for Children with Special Needs: 617-236-7210***

*www.fcsn.org — Statewide organization that helps parents of children with special needs; services include information and support groups.*

***The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Massachusetts: 781-938-4048***

*www.namimass.org* — Nonprofit grassroots organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of people affected by mental illness. Offers a number of support groups throughout the state to provide support and understanding for mental health consumers and the families that care for them.

***Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PAL): 617-542-7860***

*www.ppal.net* — Offers advice and support for parents and runs a hotline. PAL is the statewide chapter of The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. The FFCMH website also has useful information: *www.ffcmh.org*.

**Information about Mental Health Diagnoses**

There is a wide variety of information available on the Internet about mental health in general and also about specific conditions. Many of these websites have parent information sections, and a few have areas where parents can ask questions and get responses online.

**GENERAL SITES**

***American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry***

*www.aacap.org*

***National Institute of Mental Health***

*www.nimh.nih.gov*

***National Mental Health Information Center***

*www.mentalhealth.org*

*TalkListen.org (run by the Boston Public Health Commission)*  
[www.talklisten.org](http://www.talklisten.org)

#### *SPECIFIC DIAGNOSES*

*ADD/ADHD Information Library*  
[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)

*The Children’s Hospital Boston “Depression Experience Journal”*  
[www.experiencejournal.com](http://www.experiencejournal.com)

*Eating Disorder Referral and Information Center*  
[www.edreferral.com](http://www.edreferral.com)

*Families for Depression Awareness*  
[www.familyaware.org](http://www.familyaware.org)

*Keep Kids Healthy: Childhood and Adolescent Anxiety Disorders*  
[www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/conditions/anxiety\\_disorders.html](http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/conditions/anxiety_disorders.html)

*National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*  
[www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/facts\\_shts/fs\\_children.html](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/facts_shts/fs_children.html)

## **Finding a Provider**

If you have insurance, you should start by calling the member services number that is usually printed on your insurance card. Note that there may be a separate number to call for mental health services.

### ***Massachusetts Association of Social Workers: 617-720-2828***

*MASW has a therapy referral service that you can access at the number above. You will be contacted by a social worker who can help you locate a provider with the specialty, location, and service you need.*

### ***Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership: 800-495-0086***

*www.masspartnership.com — Can help many MassHealth members locate a provider and has useful contact information for emergency situations.*

### ***Massachusetts Psychological Association: 781-263-0080***

*MPA provides access to psychologists in Massachusetts through their members. Contact the office at the number above, tell them 1) the type of service you need, 2) your location, and 3) your insurance information, and they will email your request to their membership list.*

### ***Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children: 617-587-1500***

*www.mspcc.org — MSPCC runs a number of parent support and counseling programs across the state.*

## **Getting Access to Health Care**

Massachusetts has many organizations and state offices dedicated to helping parents find health care coverage. Several key starting points are listed below.

### ***Boston Public Health Commission: 617-534-5050***

*www.bphc.org — For people living in the city of Boston, the Public Health Commission maintains a wide range of resources to help you find care. The Mayor's Healthline provides information and referral services.*

### ***Commonwealth Care: 1-877-623-6765***

*www.commonwealthcare.com — Commonwealth Care is an independent state agency that helps you find the right health plan. It offers free or low cost health insurance to MA residents.*

### ***Employee Benefits Security Administration in the U.S. Department of Labor, Boston Regional Office: 617-565-9600***

*www.dol.gov/ebsa — Here, you will find information about self-funded ERISA plans as well as mental health parity law.*

### ***Health Care For All: 617-350-7279***

*www.hcfama.org — Health Care For All is the leading consumer advocacy organization in the state. It runs a helpline that can answer many of your questions about how to pay for health insurance.*

### ***Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy: 617-988-3125***

*This Division publishes a comprehensive guide to health programs available in Massachusetts. It can be downloaded from the internet at [www.mass.gov/dhcfp/pages/pdf/access.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dhcfp/pages/pdf/access.pdf).*

### ***Massachusetts Division of Insurance***

*www.mass.gov/doi*

## **MassHealth Information**

There are many resources that provide information about the MassHealth program. In addition to those listed above under “Getting Access to Health Care,” you may want to look at:

### ***Community Health, Inc.***

*www.compartners.org — This is a website with good information about the different MassHealth programs, and it includes some links to local organizations that can help with applications.*

### ***MassHealth Main Information***

*www.mass.gov/dma — This is the main website for the state office that runs MassHealth, and it includes application information, forms you can download, and contact information.*

### ***Office of Medicaid Board of Hearings: 800-655-0338***

*To appeal a decision through the Fair Hearings Board process, fax your request for a hearing to 617-210-5820.*

## **Legal Assistance**

If you need legal advocacy or information, the following organizations may be able to help:

### ***Children’s Law Center of Massachusetts, Inc.: 781-581-1977***

*www.clcm.org — Provides free representation and advice to young people in a variety of legal and administrative proceedings, often when mental health issues are involved. Also gives resource information and training to parents and other child welfare workers.*

***Disability Law Center: 617-723-8455***

*www.dlc-ma.org — Provides protection and advocacy for the rights of Massachusetts residents with disabilities, and has expertise in mental health advocacy.*

***Health Law Advocates: 617-338-5241***

*www.hla-inc.org — Provides legal advice and representation to income-eligible Massachusetts residents seeking access to health insurance coverage or medical treatment, including for mental health issues.*

***Massachusetts Advocates for Children: 617-357-8431***

*www.massadvocates.org — Has a special expertise in school issues.*

***Massachusetts Legal Help***

*www.masslegalhelp.org — This website is run by legal services offices in Massachusetts, and it has a great deal of information on health care and other issues. The website has a complete listing of legal services agencies in the state, and you can use this list to find an advocate in your area.*

***Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee: 617-338-2345***

*www.mass.gov/mhlac — This state-funded program helps with mental health issues and has a number of publications on the legal rights of people with mental health problems.*

## **School Services and Information**

Because special education is run by each city or town's school system, the best starting place is often your own school's special education coordinator. If you are having difficulties or want more general information about special education in Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is a good starting point.

### ***Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education — Special Education***

[www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents.html) — The parent information section of this website includes a number of useful guides as well as links to services in your community.

### ***Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care — Services for Children with Disabilities and Special Needs***

[www.eec.state.ma.us/ChildrenWithSpecialNeeds.aspx](http://www.eec.state.ma.us/ChildrenWithSpecialNeeds.aspx) — The EEC oversees preschool special education and transitions from Early Intervention.

### ***Section 504: Free Appropriate Public Education***

[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/edlite-FAPE504.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/edlite-FAPE504.html)

### ***Special Needs Advocacy Network***

[www.spanmass.org](http://www.spanmass.org) — Provides information and resources on special needs to parents and professionals.

## **Other State Departments and Agencies (Massachusetts)**

### ***Bureau of Substance Abuse Services: 617-624-5111***

*[www.mass.gov/dph/bsas/bsas.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dph/bsas/bsas.htm) — For help locating substance abuse services.*

*[www.maclearinghouse.com/PDFs/SubstanceAbuse/SA1066.pdf](http://www.maclearinghouse.com/PDFs/SubstanceAbuse/SA1066.pdf) — A guide to substance use treatment services for Massachusetts teens.*

### ***Department of Mental Health: 617-626-8000***

*[www.mass.gov/dmh](http://www.mass.gov/dmh) — Applications can be downloaded.*

### ***Department of Mental Retardation: 617-727-5608***

*[www.mass.gov/dmr](http://www.mass.gov/dmr)*

### ***Department of Public Health: 617-624-6000***

*[www.mass.gov/dph/dphhome.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dph/dphhome.htm)*

### ***DPH Community Support Line: 1-800-882-1435***

### ***Department of Children and Families (DCF; formerly known as Department of Social Services or DSS): 617-748-2000***

*[www.mass.gov/dcf](http://www.mass.gov/dcf)*

### ***Department of Youth Services: 617-727-7575***

*[www.mass.gov/dys](http://www.mass.gov/dys)*

### ***Office of Patient Protection: 1-800-436-7757***

*[www.mass.gov/dph/opp](http://www.mass.gov/dph/opp) —*

*For filing complaints about your managed care company.*

## Juvenile Justice System

### ***Citizens for Juvenile Justice: 617-338-1050***

*www.cfjj.org* — Publishes a useful guide called “From a Parent’s Perspective: A Handbook for Parents of Children Committed to the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services.” This guide is available on their site at: <http://cfjj.org/Pdf/103-Handbook2.pdf>

***Parent/Professional Advocacy League*** (See contact info on page 158) has also developed a “pocket guide” that helps parents talk to police officers about their child’s mental health issues. The “Pocket Police Guide: Responding to Youth with Mental Health Needs” is available at [www.ppal.net/downloads/PPG\\_6-10-2002.doc](http://www.ppal.net/downloads/PPG_6-10-2002.doc).