

PARTNERS

BlueCare Tennessee Managed Long-Term Services and Supports Program

News and tips to support MLTSS partners and enhanced care for our members

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Quality Corner: Depression

Depression impacts millions of people in the United States. But some people don't want to talk about their depression symptoms because of the stigma around it. This can make diagnosis and treatment challenging for providers.

Depression has short- and long-term impacts on health and can contribute to decreased quality of life. Depression increases members' risks for other health conditions, including cardiovascular and metabolic diseases. That's why we need your help maintaining our members' mental health while also making sure everyone can get high-quality treatment.

Social, biological and psychological factors can increase the chances of depression. For example, women are more likely to have depression symptoms than men. Other risk factors include:

- Personal or family history of depression
- Major life changes
- Stress, trauma and adverse childhood experiences
- Certain health conditions

Depression symptoms

The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies depression as symptoms that last most of the day and take place daily for at least two weeks. Depression can look different for everyone, but there are some common symptoms, including:

- Decreased concentration
- Excessive feelings of guilt or low self-esteem
- Hopelessness
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Increase or decrease in weight or appetite
- Feeling very tired or having no energy
- Loss of interest in hobbies or usual activities

Treatments

Just as depression looks different for everyone, depression treatments are tailored to each person's specific needs. Providers can assist with finding treatment options that work best. Some treatments don't involve medications. These treatments include:

- Speaking with a mental health provider. Many providers now offer a telehealth option in addition to an in-person office visit.
- Cognitive behavior therapy and problem-solving therapy. They help teach new ways of thinking and coping.

For many people, medication in addition to the above treatments may be the best route for treating depression. There are lots of medication options available for depression.

Tips that can help with depression

- Help members with resources for medication adherence such as pill boxes, phone alarms or app reminders. Smart technology may also be an option.
- Review all medications during each appointment. Don't forget to include vitamins and over-the-counter medication.
- Encourage timely refills of medications. Plan ahead before any holidays.
- Don't forget about self-care like physical activity, healthy eating habits and hydration, developing a sleep routine, and using relaxation techniques.



We're here to help

We can assist with transportation to medical appointments. Our pharmacy specialists are also available to answer questions about medications.

Resources:

- [Mental Health Care Health Professional Shortage Areas \(HPSAs\) | KFF](#)
- [Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations \(Welcome to TAMHO\) - All-hands-on-deck.pdf](#)
- [State and County Dashboard | Mental Health America](#)
- [Depressive disorder \(depression\) \(who.int\)](#)
- [Health Workforce Research | Bureau of Health Workforce](#)
- [Depression | NAMI](#)

Support Your Team with the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) E-Badge Program

Direct support professionals (DSPs) and paid caregivers have an important role in the lives of many Tennesseans. But the profession doesn't always get the recognition it deserves. To help support these roles, the Division of TennCare, in partnership with the managed care organizations (MCOs), introduced the NADSP E-Badge program in 2023. This program offers nationally recognized certification to DSPs and caregivers that elevates the profession, enhances the quality of care and supports retention efforts.

The program has been successful so far, with 900 seats given to 47 participating provider agencies across Tennessee. Approximately 500 DSPs have achieved certification so far. And a total of \$760,000 dollars has been distributed to provider agencies and their certified staff.

The NADSP E-Badge Program is a priority for the state of Tennessee this year. Agencies can use this program to support recruitment and retention efforts, build internal career pathways, encourage further training and create a culture that values the DSP role. Agencies that offer this program and provide special recognition for certification are seeing higher participation rates and greater overall impact.

For more information about the program, please contact our Statewide Workforce Development Manager, Christian Ceccotti at Christian_ceccotti@bcbst.com or call **(423) 290-9284**.

Changes to the Electronic Visit Verification Process

As of **Aug. 1, 2025**, TennCare has switched from a closed Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) model to an open EVV model. That means you can choose to use our EVV vendor or use a third-party EVV vendor that connects to our aggregator system. This change offers providers more autonomy while maintaining compliance and data integrity.

Important Billing and Claims Deadlines

- All billing must be submitted within **120 days** of the date of service to be sure it's processed timely.
- As of **July 31, 2025**, all dates of service from **Aug. 1, 2025**, and on must be sent through Carebridge, our new EVV vendor.
- **Dec. 31, 2025**, will be the last day providers can access Sandata to reconcile billing or submit corrected claims.
- Starting **Jan. 1, 2026**, any corrected claims for dates of service on or before **July 31, 2025**, must be submitted using the paper 1450 claim form.

Corrected Bills

Corrected bills must be submitted within **120 days** of the original BlueCare Tennessee remittance. Corrections to a claim should only be submitted if the original claim information was wrong or incomplete. Exceptions to the 120-timely filing period will be made for:

- Recovery of overpayments as required under Section 6402 of the Affordable Care Act and TennCare policy
- Retrospective adjustments of a nursing facility's per diem rates
- Any other actions taken by BlueCare Tennessee after the date of the original BlueCare Tennessee remittance requiring a provider to submit a corrected bill



A true corrected bill includes additional/changed dates of service, procedure or diagnostic codes, units, member name, or Member ID, and/or charges that weren't filed on the original claim. Claims returned or rejected shouldn't be submitted as corrected claims. Only claims that have completed adjudication should be submitted as corrected bills.

When sending a corrected/replacement claim, you must re-send the claim, including the corrections, in its entirety. All corrected claims for dates of service on or before July 31, 2025, or claims not submitted with a date of service on or before July 31, 2025, should be submitted on the CMS-1450 form. Mail claim forms to:

CHOICES/ECF CHOICES

1 Cameron Hill Circle, Ste. 0002
Chattanooga, TN 37402-0002

Need help?

Contact the LTSS Provider Relations team at ChoicesProviderRelations@bcbst.com.



Recruiting New Graduates to Your Workforce

With many high school and college graduates entering the job market, now's a great time to think about your recruiting strategies. These strategies may include a focus on your dedication to development, adding more presence on social media or engaging with candidates at career fairs and on-campus events.

It's important to think about timing, as this may be the first time many graduates are looking for a job. Recent graduates are often eager to start their careers and may be more open to relocating or accepting different roles. Using multiple channels for recruiting can help you find more candidates. Consider using multiple channels, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, college job boards and virtual job fairs.

Delays in the hiring process may lead to missing out on candidates, so it's important to communicate with candidates consistently and frequently. It's important to connect with candidates and develop relationships early. And focus on being direct, clear and honest throughout the recruitment process. Streamlining application and interview steps can help speed up the hiring process.

Using tools such as the Tennessee Realistic Job Preview and Career Pathways can help give candidates a better idea of the job duties and experience. And be sure to clearly let candidates know about your organization's culture, values, mission and team environment. That way, candidates can see if your values and mission are a match for their own.

Reminder to Join the Reportable Event Management Provider Investigator Mentor Program

Don't forget about your chance to participate in the Provider Investigator Mentor Program. This program lets Provider Investigators conduct a Tier 2 Investigation with a Department of Disability and Aging (DDA) Investigator as a mentor. Provider Investigators will gain insight into the investigative process from a tenured DDA Investigator, including interview techniques, documentation requests, tips for writing an analysis and more. DDA employs 45 investigators across the state, so availability is limited, but the DDA is making every effort to ensure all requests are answered.

You can submit your request to participate in the Provider Investigator Mentor Program via email at DIDD.REMHelp@tn.gov. Please include your contact information in your message.

Reportable Events and Interventions

Your compassion while serving our members is invaluable to their experience, but so are your observations. Reportable Event Management (REM) is one important component of an overall approach for ensuring the health, safety, individual freedom and quality of life of members receiving home- and community-based services and intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities services.

When members are at risk, you're required to Report It Now. When you report these issues, they can be addressed, which helps keep the members you serve safe. Documenting the risk also helps protect you if there's ever a question in the future.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Report It Now and who to contact for a Reportable Event.



Committed to Service

As your partner in serving our CHOICES and ECF CHOICES members, we're committed to providing you unmatched service and support. Stay current with the most current news and program guidance. Visit us at bluecare.bcbst.com to find resources, updates and the most recent version of the CHOICES newsletter.

How Are We Doing?

As a valued BlueCare Tennessee provider, we welcome your feedback and want to hear from you. If you have questions and/or concerns about a process, or if there's an individual that you'd like to point out for good service, please email us at: CHOICESProviderRelations@bcbst.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Provider Network Manager and Workforce Development Contacts

Manager	Region	Phone	Email
Britney Douglas, Provider Relations Supervisor	Statewide	(615) 427-3782	britney_douglas@bcbst.com
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Aimee Rogers, Employment Services & Supports Specialist	Statewide	(423) 362-2562	aimee_rogers@bcbst.com
Kathryn Walters, Technology Champion	Statewide	(865) 340-1363	kathryn_walters@bcbst.com
Evy Boyer, Housing and Transition Manager	Statewide	(615) 218-2642	evelyn_boyer@bcbst.com

Where to Turn for Help

Your Service Need	Operational Area	Contact
Eligibility Services, Claims, Inquiries	BlueCare Provider Services/ Eligibility Service Line	1-888-747-8955
General Contracting/ Credentialing Questions	Provider Network Services/ Credentialing	1-800-924-7141, ext. 5775 (Provider Network Services) 1-800-357-0395 (Credentialing)
Member Related Questions/Supports, Member Emergencies (After Hours/Weekends Only) During Regular Hours Contact Coordinator Directly	Support/Care Coordination	1-800-262-2873
Sandata/EVV Tech Support	Sandata Client Relations (EVV)	1-855-389-4843
Availity Claim Submission Tech Support	Availity	1-800-282-4548
CHOICES Web Portal Claims Tech Support	e-Business	(423) 535-5717, select option 2
Provider Education, General Provider Support, Assistance with Contracting/Credentialing	CHOICES/ECF Provider Relations	CHOICESProviderRelations@bcbst.com
Authorizations Support, General Billing – Release of Units	Provider Inquiry Specialist Team	ProviderAuthIssues@bcbst.com OR call 1-888-747-8955, select option 2
Change of Ownership Notifications, Questions/Concerns	Provider Relations	Provider_CHOW@bcbst.com
EVV Exceptions	Provider Specialist Team	EVV_Exceptions@bcbst.com

You may also log in to Availity to check your claims status, eligibility and benefits.

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