

# MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAM

For Empire Plan enrollees

Mental health plays an important role in our overall well-being, yet finding the right support can sometimes feel challenging. You don't have to navigate this process alone. The Empire Plan's Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) Program, administered by Carelon Behavioral Health, provides confidential support for stress, anxiety, depression, substance use concerns and more.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR COVERAGE

### Network vs. Non-Network Providers

The Carelon Behavioral Health network includes over 155,000 provider locations across the country. When you use a **network provider**, you pay only a \$25 copayment at the time of your visit. Inpatient stays in approved network facilities are paid in full.

When you use a **non-network provider**, your out-of-pocket costs are higher. Deductibles and coinsurance apply. In many cases, you must pay the full cost of the service upfront and submit a claim form for reimbursement. If you receive care that is determined not to be medically necessary, you will be responsible for the entire cost of care.

### Carelon Member Portal

Keep track of copayment, deductible and coinsurance amounts and other MHSU benefit details in the member portal. Visit [carelonbh.com/empireplan](https://carelonbh.com/empireplan) to create an account.

## NEED HELP?

### CLINICAL REFERRAL LINE

1-877-769-7447 (Option 3)

Available 24/7

### CHAT ONLINE



Scan the QR code  
or visit [nyship.ny.gov](https://nyship.ny.gov)

All conversations are confidential.



**In a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go immediately to the nearest hospital emergency department.** You should call the MHSU Program within 48 hours or as soon as reasonably possible after an emergency inpatient admission.



Department of Civil Service  
The Empire Plan



# GETTING CARE

## Find a Provider

There are several different ways to find an MHSU network provider:

- **Clinical Referral Line**

The MHSU Clinical Referral Line is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. It is staffed by licensed clinicians who will help you find the right care and answer benefit questions. To reach the Clinical Referral Line, call 1-877-769-7447 and press or say 3 at each prompt.

- **MHSU Provider Directory**

Use the MHSU directory at [nyship.ny.gov](http://nyship.ny.gov) to search for network providers in your area by name, specialty and type of service.

- **Virtual Care and Telehealth**

Carelon's provider network includes several virtual care and telehealth options, making it easier to access behavioral health services from wherever you are. Avoid commuting challenges while receiving the same quality of care as an in-person visit on your own schedule and from the comfort of your own space. One option is TalkSpace, which provides access to licensed network therapists and psychiatrists through text, voice and video. Register for TalkSpace at [carelonbh.com/empireplan](http://carelonbh.com/empireplan) or call the Clinical Referral Line to ask about additional virtual care and telehealth options.

## Guaranteed Access to Network Benefits

You have **guaranteed access to network benefits** under the MHSU Program. If there are no network providers in your area, you will receive network-level benefits if you call the Clinical Referral Line and ask for help locating an appropriate provider.

| WAIT TIME SCHEDULE FOR IN-PERSON AND TELEHEALTH VISITS<br>WITH MHSU NETWORK PROVIDERS: |                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Initial outpatient facility or clinic appointments                                     | Within 10 business days |
| Initial appointments with other behavioral health professionals                        | Within 10 business days |
| Follow-up appointments after a hospital discharge or ER visit                          | Within 7 calendar days  |

If you are unable to schedule an appointment with a network provider within these time frames, submit an access complaint form to Carelon and you may be approved to receive network-level benefits from a non-network provider who can. Complaint forms are available at [carelonbh.com/empireplan](http://carelonbh.com/empireplan).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional MHSU resources on [nyship.ny.gov](http://nyship.ny.gov) and [carelonbh.com/empireplan](http://carelonbh.com/empireplan) include:

- The *At A Glance* publication (a detailed overview of covered benefits and copayment/cost sharing amounts)
- MHSU provider directory
- Videos, articles, assessments and podcasts on mental health topics
- Claim and access complaint forms



### Before Receiving Care:

Call the plan at 1-877-769-7447 (Option 3) to ensure MHSU precertification requirements are met. Failure to precertify when necessary could result in higher out-of-pocket costs.

