



Request for Proposal

Third Party Billing Clearing House

Proposal Due Date:

Monday, August 14, 2023

James.Imprescia@briencenter.org

Subject line – RFP – Clearing House

Director of Revenue Cycle Management

(413) 629-1131

James.imprescia@briencenter.org

Proposals for Third Party Clearing House solutions are requested by the Revenue Cycle Management Committee of The Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Inc. (“Brien”). All proposals should be submitted to Jim Imprescia, Director of Revenue Cycle Management on or before **4:00 p.m. August 14, 2023**.

The information contained in this RFP is provided in nine sections:

1. Brien Center Staff Organization and Responsibilities
2. Scope of Clearing House Services
3. RFP Timeline
4. Description of Brien Center
5. Financial and Billing Information Systems
6. Scope of Work
7. Minimum Qualifications
8. Proposal Requirements
9. Submission of Proposal Instructions
10. Clearing House Selection Process

1. Brien Center Staff Organization and Responsibilities

Volume – 6,744 claims per year (~200 paper claims with BCBS per week)

Brien Organizational Members

- 1 - SVP of Finance and Administration
- 1 - RCM Director
- 1 - Data entry
- 1 - Billing Manager
- 1 – Billing Coordinator
- 2 - Billers
- 1 - Submit claims
- 1 - Data Analytics (Dashboard of Real-time information)

2. Scope of Clearing House Services

The Brien Center is seeking to contract with a Clearinghouse for billing and claiming to health insurance companies to allow Brien to transmit electronic claims to insurance

carriers in a secure way that protects patient health information, or protected health information in accordance with HIPAA compliance requirements.

The purpose of the Clearinghouse is to streamline and improve the process of electronic billing and claims submission by increasing processing times, providing improved accuracy, and reducing errors, reducing claims rejections, and providing cost savings.

3. RFP Timeline

Monday, July 24, 2023	RFP available online at https://www.briencenter.org/ Located under News - RFP
Friday, July 28, 2023	Questions due via email by 4:00 PM <u>EST</u> to: James.Imprescia@briencenter.org Subject – RFP – Clearing House
Friday, August 4, 2023	Responses to Question via e-mail by 4:00 PM
Monday, August 14, 2023	Proposal due via email by 4:00 PM EST: Subject – RFP – Clearing House Email: James.Imprescia@briencenter.org
Friday, August 25, 2023	Notification of Decision: Following Presentations.

4. Description of Brien Center

The Brien Center is Berkshire County’s largest provider of behavioral health and addiction services. We employ dedicated, compassionate people who work at 26 locations county-wide. Our impact is experienced and appreciated by individuals – whose lives are saved, whose illnesses are successfully treated, and who continue as successful members of our community.

We are proud of our comprehensive programs and services for highly complex problems, and continue to hear from clients, years later, that their lives and families remain intact because of our care.

Mission

Our mission is to provide high quality, comprehensive behavioral health services to Berkshire residents through community-based services that promote the highest possible degree of recovery, independence, and quality of life of those served. We will provide access and support to meet the behavioral health needs of individuals of all ages, race, and cultures, and culturally competent care to promote recovery. We will accomplish this by working in partnership with state agencies, individuals, families, and other providers.

Vision

The Brien Center will distinguish itself as a leader in Community Behavioral Health and will be recognized for the passion of its people and partners in providing a continuum of dynamic and innovative recovery services.

Access and Affordability

Our professional staff work tirelessly to ensure all Berkshire County residents have access to the high-quality, affordable behavioral health services they need—when they need them, where they need them—right here in our community. We provide care without regard to age, race, culture, intellect, socioeconomic status, or insurance status in a manner that supports every person’s ability to live, work and participate in community life.

Clinical Excellence

Our comprehensive, integrated treatment methods are based on a sound clinical foundation of advanced, evidence-based practices that incorporate the whole person—including their voice, their preferences, and their personal support network—throughout the process.

Philosophy

Our treatment philosophy is based on a comprehensive care model that incorporates recovery, resiliency, and rehabilitation principles; promotes individual and family choice; is evidence-based; and utilizes family, team, and natural supports that promote stabilization, recovery and wellness within the person’s community setting whenever possible. Our utmost priority is keeping people safe and supporting their choices and their voices throughout their treatment and recovery.

Organization

The Brien Center is led by a Board of Directors representing the populations and communities of Berkshire County. Officers are elected each year from among the members of the Board and by the Board at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors held in September. The Board meets six times per year. For more information on the Board of Directors, board meetings, or other board-related matters, please call our Administrative Offices at 413-499-0412.

Organizational Culture

Brien employees serve Berkshire County residents with quality behavioral health and addiction services. Our agency’s culture thrives on trust, respect, and cooperation. Our employees are hard-working, dedicated individuals who strive to bring hope and recovery to those living with mental health and substance use disorders.

Quick Stats for FY 2022

- 546 Employees
- 6,700+ Clients Served
- 26 Locations, including Pittsfield, North Adams, and Great Barrington
- Fiscal year ends June 30

- Total revenue is \$32,176,253.

5. Financial and Billing Information Systems

The Brien Center for Mental Health & Substance Abuse currently uses Sage Intacct cloud-based for its general ledger/financial accounting system. It is used to process accounts payable transactions.

Brien also uses ARPlus application billing, coding, auditing, claims management, and compliance software. We are currently in the process of migrating ARPlus from an internal server into the cloud. Expected completion date is August 31, 2023.

Brien is also in the process of migrating its electronic health records (EHR) system from iCentrix to eHana. This process is over 50% complete and is expected to be completed by September 30, 2023.

6. Scope of Work

The Brien Center for Mental Health & Substance Abuse is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) responsive and responsible Bidders for the purpose of procuring a clearinghouse for billing services to third party health insurance companies.

Community Behavioral Health Center (CBHC)

The CBHC will serve as an entry point for Mass Health clients who will receive timely, high-quality, and evidence-based treatment for mental health conditions and substance use disorders, including routine appointments, urgent visits, and 24/7 community-based crisis intervention as an alternative to hospital emergency departments. CBHCs will provide the following services, in person and via telehealth:

- Integrated mental health and addiction treatment
- Same-day access to intake and brief assessment, urgent and crisis treatment including medications, and drop-in treatment and support (e.g., group sessions, peer supports)
- 24/7 mobile and community crisis response with Community Crisis Stabilization for youth and adults
- Telehealth and flexible service delivery locations (e.g., home, school, etc.)
- Peer support.
- Care coordination
- Ability to serve all ages, including child and family-specific treatment models and models for older adults.
- Evidence-based and evidence-informed treatments to meet individual needs, including interventions and close coordination for individuals with behavioral health needs who are involved with other systems, including the justice system or children in the care and custody of the Commonwealth.

Adult Mobile Crisis Intervention (AMCI) / Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention (YMCI)

The Brien Center's AMCI/YMCI Team provides crisis assessment, intervention, and stabilization services around-the-clock, every day of the year to individuals of all ages who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis and who may be at risk of harming themselves or others. The purpose of the AMCI / YMCI is to respond rapidly, assess effectively, and deliver a course of treatment that will promote recovery, ensure safety, and stabilize the crisis. Most frequently, individuals will continue their recovery through the Brien Center's outpatient services. In some cases – when medically necessary – the individual will be hospitalized.

Adult Community Crisis Stabilization Programs (CCS) – Pomeroy House @ Seymour

The Adult CCS provides staffed, secure, safe, and structured crisis stabilization and treatment services in a community-based program that serves as an alternative to inpatient psychiatric hospitalization for individuals with mental health and/or substance use disorders. Services at this level of care include crisis stabilization; initial and continuing assessment; care management; psychiatric evaluation and medication management; peer-to-peer support; and mobilization of natural support and community resources.

Adult Respite Services Program – Brenton House

Funded by the Department of Mental Health, this program provides adults with behavioral health needs with a temporary group living arrangement and support services as they stabilize and integrate into the community. The services include assessment, treatment planning, and intensive case management for those stepping down from inpatient care and serve as respite for emergencies or as a bridge to some permanent arrangements. The program is designed to provide high levels of support during a time of crisis and helps individual's access appropriate long-term support and services to sustain them when they return to the community.

Outpatient Services

Today, adults face greater challenges and problems than ever before that often disrupt their lives. Difficulties and stress affect everyone's ability to cope and manage day-to-day needs. The Brien Center is here to help you and your family cope with the impact that mental health and substance use disorders can have on all your lives.

We provide comprehensive, integrated, and culturally competent counseling, psychotherapy and psychiatric services for individuals and families. Our goal is to help you succeed at work, at home, and in relationships. Most of all, we can help you live a balanced life once again.

Often, people who live with mental health problems also have addiction issues. The next two tabs describe our behavioral health and addiction services, but many people benefit from a plan of care that includes programs from both areas.

Child & Adolescent Services

Outpatient Treatment Services

The Brien Center offers a range of therapeutic interventions including:

- Individual, group and family therapy
- Psychiatric evaluation and medication management
- Substance disorder treatment and prevention programs

Our treatment plans are evidence-based, proven interventions that treat the full range of child and adolescent disorders. Our specialty areas include:

- Trauma evaluation and treatment
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Mood disorders, including depression and bipolar disorder.
- Substance Use Disorders
- Opposition Defiant Disorder
- Anxiety Disorders
- Obsessive-compulsive disorders
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Disruptive behavior disorders

The Continuum/Intensive Home-Based Therapeutic Care (IHBTC)

The Brien Center provides a “continuum” of community-based wraparound services.

Referrals for Continuum services are made by the Department of Children and Families, and referrals for IHBTC are made by the Department of Mental Health.

The same treatment team follows the youth along at various placement levels, ensuring family and youth choices and a voice in treatment decisions. This fully integrated model provides smoother transitions between levels of service and greater continuity of care. Family and youth choice and input are key to treatment decisions. A treatment plan remains in place throughout the continuum.

We don't just serve children and adolescents. We serve entire families by calming the crisis and providing strength and support for better days ahead.

Children's Behavioral Health Services

Include home-based family therapy, home-based behavioral therapy, and mentoring. Through this program, home-based family therapy provides intensive, structured,

strength-based outreach counseling in the home to stabilize behaviors. We combine family therapy with therapeutic mentoring by trained counselors who assist the family in implementing plans.

The primary goal of the program is to stabilize the child's symptoms and behavior sufficiently to prevent an out-of-home placement. In-home behavioral therapy consists of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) by an ABA-trained clinician and a behavioral plan implemented by a Behavior Monitor who visits the home several times per week.

Mentoring is provided in the community with the mentor focusing on teaching skills to achieve success.

Community Service Agency

The CSA serves youth who are experiencing serious emotional disturbances, with two primary functions:

- Intensive Care Coordination, which creates a family-driven treatment plan for the young person that, integrates other agencies and providers.
- Family Support with "family partners" who have experience caring for a child with special needs and who provide one-on-one support, education, and coaching for caregivers that is geared to each child's unique behavioral health needs.

The CSA employs a process called "Wraparound" – a team-based planning process that provides individualized, coordinated, family-driven care to meet the complex needs of youth served.

What separates the Brien Center is a staff that is specialty-trained to work with youth in providing high quality and successful mental health and substance use services.

Options for Youth Therapeutic Day Services

Central County, South Forty and North County

This therapeutic after-school program in two Berkshire County locations (Pittsfield and North Adams) seeks to improve the quality of life for children and youth aged 5-18 with serious mental illness or severe emotional disturbance who often also have substance use disorders and associated behavior problems in the home, school, and community.

Treatment is individualized and services include:

- Day treatment
- Crisis management
- Outreach
- Monitoring and behavior management

- Group counseling

Adult Clinical Community Support (ACCS)

The ACCS model of care and treatment is designed and funded through the Department of Mental Health to provide service to individuals who are eligible and referred by the agency. The ACCS program offers a clinically based model of care comprised of evidence-based interventions. The goal of the ACCS model is to promote:

- Engagement
- Around-the-clock clinical coverage, every day of the year
- Assessments and plans to assist individuals in achieving their goals.
- Behavioral and physical health monitoring and support
- Family engagement, peer support and recovery coaching
- Housing
- Referrals to Mass Rehabilitation

Residential and Integrated Team Structure

The ACCS has three levels of care:

1. For eligible individuals living in Berkshire County, ACCS offers 24-hour staffed residential services in homes located in Pittsfield and Williamstown. The Brien Center has partnered with Viability which offers substance use focused care through the residential setting.
2. The second level of ACCS care is outreach support from the Integrated Care Teams, which offer a psychiatric rehabilitation approach that includes teaching through skill building interventions. The teams offer housing assistance, medication skill building, money management skills, supporting individuals at medical and behavioral health appointments, employment, connecting with natural social support in the community, and more. All individuals are provided with a clinical team leader who helps the individual define desired goals and level of care specific to his/her needs.
3. In addition to ACCS, individuals may also receive BHCP support, and Elder Services support to maximize all areas of treatment options.

7. Minimum Qualifications

The Bidder shall provide electronic clearinghouse services to the Brien Center for Mental Health & Substance Abuse, enabling the submission of electronic invoices to third-party health insurance companies for outpatient services rendered at the Brien Center Facilities as well as services rendered in community-based locations.

The submissions of the invoices are to result in reimbursement to the Brien Center by the insurance company by electronic payments or checks sent to the Brien Center, P.O. Box 4219, Pittsfield, MA.01201 and information necessary to apply patient specific

remittances to the Brien Center billing system (thru Electronic Remittance or EOB). All services supplied must be HIPAA compliant and accredited by the Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission (EHNAC). All internet-based systems will be designed to be compatible with Brien Centers version of Chrome. If the Brien Center should change its version of Chrome, the Contractor shall make any adjustments, at their cost, to their system to maintain compatibility with the Brien Centers version of Chrome.

8. Proposal Requirements

Eligibility Verification: The Contractor shall provide verification of a patient's insurance eligibility. Verification shall be performed prior to the billing being submitted to the insurance company using the standard Eligibility and Benefit Inquiry (270) format or any future standard that is adopted. The response should be in the Eligibility and Benefit Response (271) format.

Set-up: As part of the initial set-up, the Contractor will review the Brien Center's list of insurance companies that currently insure Brien patients. It is the Brien Center's expectation that an EDI connection will be created with insurance companies that the Brien Center currently does business with and identified as requiring an EDI connection. Additionally, if EDI connections are required for additional insurance companies in the future, the Contractor will be able to establish these connections at the Brien Center's request.

EDI Connections: The Contractor will have established EDI connections with the insurance companies detailed as requiring an EDI connection or will establish an EDI connection within 60 days of Contract execution. At the Brien Center's discretion, the Contractor will establish an EDI connection with additional specified insurance companies, within 30 days of receiving the request from the Brien Center during the term of the contract.

If there is an inability to establish EDI connection within the timeframes listed above, the Brien Center will require paper bill submission at no cost to the Brien Center.

Billing: On a monthly basis (or more often when necessary), the Contractor will process bills for the Brien Center patients for which third-party insurance has been verified. This task includes, but is not limited to, the following: Acceptance of the electronic claim data file, 837 format or a future standard if adopted. Making appropriate edits to the claim files as needed for compliance with HIPAA regulations or as required by specific insurance companies, before being submitted for payment. Voiding or adjusting claims as necessary (as initiated from the 837). Printing and mailing paper claims CMS 1500 paper bill for those companies with which an EDI connection has not been established by the Contractor. If the Contractor does not receive notification from the insurance company that it has received a claim, it will re-transmit the claim. If the Contractor does not receive notification of the receipt of the claim after the second attempt, then the Contractor staff will contact the insurance company and attempt to resolve the situation. The Brien Center staff will also be notified of the situation and its resolution by email within 30 days from the first submission of the claim. If an insurance company does not provide payment of a

specific claim within 30 days, the Contractor will notify the Brien Center of the situation by email and assist the Brien Center in contacting the insurance company to determine the reason for lack of payment.

Data Scrubbing: The Contractor's system will automatically scrub the claims data input into the system and identify any deficient or incorrect information before being submitted to the insurance company. Brien Center staff should be notified if claims are not sent, and the information should be available to be fixed and the claim resubmitted.

Electronic File Transfers (EFTs): EFTs shall be transmitted directly, and paper payments sent to the Brien Center Finance Office. Corresponding information necessary to apply the payments to patient specific accounts needs to be available to the Brien Center in either electronic or paper ERAs or EOBs.

EDI Task Requirements: All ERAs shall be formatted in the most current Electronic Remittance Advice (835) adopted as the national HIPAA standard and any future HIPAA EDI standards when adopted. The cost for any required changes to HIPAA EDI standards shall be incurred by the Contractor.

Data Access / Reports: The Contractor will provide a HIPAA compliant secure internet-based reporting system. At a minimum, the system will supply the following data access and reports: Able to download the standard 835 either using an FTP or Web portal. Provide ability to download the standard 271 either using an FTP or Web portal. The ability to identify patients and claims using all of the following methods: patient name, social security number. Individual claim status and history such as claims submitted, claims acknowledged, bills resubmitted, voided, or adjusted, payments, denials, etc. Provide audit log of all clearinghouse activities (data transfers).

Denial reports: Accounts receivable reports by: Service/location Providers; Patient type; Insurance payer; Insurance type; Date of service; Age of account; Balance range; and Aging report sorted by delinquency period Task Requirements: The system will include suitable password protection that will only allow authorized Brien Center users access. Reports and data shall be able to be downloaded in MS Excel format. The Electronic Remit Advice (ERA) is available for download in the 835 national HIPAA ERA standard. The Brien Center requires the capability to download data to develop custom reports when necessary, using user-defined queries.

Clearing house should be able to accept csv files from our billing platform AR Plus and electronic health record e-Hana.

Clearing House should have a set-pay invoicing process, and self-pay payment portal and the ability to accept a self-pay csv file from our current Billing platform.

Customer Support, User Access, and Training: The solution should offer user control administration and differentiate users. The Contractor should also provide necessary training to all system users and administrators. The proposed solution should offer customer support that will be responsive and provide timely resolution to claim processing errors.

User Task Requirements: Allow multiple users to use the system simultaneously.

9. Submission of Proposal Instructions

References: The Bidder must provide references relevant to any of the requested services, as outlined below. References must include company name, contact person (name, title, phone number, email address and mailing address), and a general statement of the type of engagement performed for this reference. a. Bidder, submit three (3) references to obtain a complete understanding of the Bidder's performance and experience.

Provide a Work Plan and Timeline: It should address the execution of the work required if awarded a Contract through this solicitation. The Work Plan and timeline shall address the Bidder's approach to the following: Describe the proposed approach for performing the work and accomplishing project objectives as described in Section 3 (Scope of Work) of the RFP. Provide a detailed scope of services which describes by task what will be done, by whom, and when. Describe the steps involved to ensure that insurance eligibility is accurately verified. Describe the firm's ability to set up new EDI connections within the deadlines stated in the Scope of Work

Customer Support Available and the Hours Available: Describe each, such as phone in-service, online chat, etc. Describe the online access available, including any limitations to the number of simultaneous uses per account. Provide your company's security protocols for accessing, sending, and storing your client's data. Explain in detail the steps you anticipate will be needed to ensure smooth implementation. Include a definition of specific activities and a detailed timetable of events. Please provide an implementation timeline. The timetable should include the number of days/weeks/months needed for setup.

Claims Management: Describe how the clearinghouse facilitates claims transactions with payers that have different formats for claims, remittance status reports and other electronic files. Describe how the clearinghouse provides reconciliation down to the claim level. Describe in detail your company's balancing and reconciliation process for importing/exporting claim files. Outline the payer claim reconciliation process that ensures claims are never lost. Explain how often the clearinghouse transmits claims (i.e., hourly, once daily, twice daily). Please explain in detail. Describe the turnaround time from claim submission to clearinghouse-to-clearinghouse notification of acceptance/rejection of each claim. Describe how long the clearinghouse retains historical claim data Explain how the clearinghouse maintains compliance with the HIPAA-adopted ASC X12 837 transaction guides. Explain how testing is done with payers when a new version of the ASC X12 837 is adopted under HIPAA. Explain your process for managing troubleshooting and requests for changes.

HIPAA Agreement: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) mandates the compliance and confidentiality of all information and records

included and related to the policies, procedures and records of a facility or site and any future rules and regulations of HIPAA.

Form of Contractual Agreement Following notification of award, the successful Bidder will be expected to sign a contract with The Brien Center for Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, Inc.

Please include:

Attachment 1 with your proposal with estimated costs.

Attachment 2 - List of Current Insurance Plans

Submit Proposals to: James.Imprescia@briencenter.org with the Subject Line – “RFP Clearing House”.

10. Clearinghouse Selection Process

Brien will choose the vendor whose proposal is determined to be the most beneficial to the organization. All submitted proposals meeting the minimum eligibility requirements defined herein shall be evaluated by representatives of the Revenue Cycle Management Committee, the Clearinghouse Selection Committee and the SVP of Finance and Administration.

The selection will be based on the following:

- A. Competitiveness of cost proposal
- B. Quality of references and their responses.
- C. Does the vendor charge monthly or per submission?
- D. Are the insurances you bill on their payer list?
- E. Does the vendor offer online access for tracking and updating submitted claims?
- F. What type of support does the vendor provide once claims are submitted?
- G. What type of contract does the vendor require and what happens if you later choose to switch to another provider?
- H. Does the vendor offer analysis for rejected claims?
- I. If insurance providers require paper-based claims, will the clearinghouse mail them for you?
- J. How does the clearinghouse update Brien when payers process claims or send financial transactions?
- K. What is the vendor’s experience in the behavioral healthcare industry?
- L. What type of support does the vendor provide once claims are submitted?

E. The vendor's ability to provide accurate, relevant, and timely services.

Following a review and evaluation of the submitted proposals, Brien anticipates inviting finalist clearinghouse vendors to meet with select members of the Revenue Cycle Management Committee and Clearinghouse Selection Committees. Upon their recommendation, the Revenue Cycle Management Committee will select one of the vendors and make a recommendation to the SVP of Finance and Administration to sign an agreement with the selected vendor.