

Qualified Mental Health Provider Action Needed ASAP

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is shifting to a more person-centered approach to serving Michiganders with mental health needs.

Overview of the Mental Health Framework

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is implementing a **person-centered approach** to Medicaid mental health care under the **MIHealthyLife** initiative (launched in 2022). This aims to improve access and coordination through the Comprehensive Health Care Program (CHCP) by working with Medicaid Health Plans (MHPs), Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs), and providers.

Key Changes Starting October 2026

- **MHPs** will cover most mental health services for enrollees with **lower levels of mental health need**.
- **PIHPs** will cover all mental health services for those with **higher levels of mental health need**.
- A **standardized assessment tool** will determine the level of need and which payer (MHP or PIHP) is responsible.
- **Referral processes** across systems will be standardized to improve access.

Implications for Providers (Beginning October 2025)

- All **qualified mental health providers** contracted with MHPs or PIHPs must:
 - Use standardized assessment tools:
 - **MichiCANS** for children and youth under 21.
 - **LOCUS** for adults 21 and older.
 - Adopt a **standardized referral process** using a shared referral platform.

Additional Provider Responsibilities by October 2026

- MHPs will begin covering more intensive services (e.g., inpatient psychiatric care, partial hospitalization, crisis residential, case management) for enrollees with lower-level needs.
- Providers offering these services should prepare to **contract with both MHPs and PIHPs**.

Next Steps for Providers

- **Complete the form** at the provided link to receive information and training on standardized assessments.
 - Training is **free** and may qualify for **CME/CEU credits**.
- Direct questions to: MDHHS-MentalHlthFramework@michigan.gov
- A dedicated website and listserv are in development.
- [Complete the training interest form here](#)

Regards,
Provider Experience
Aetna Better Health of MI