

**Office of Medicaid
BOARD OF HEARINGS**

Appellant Name and Address:



Appeal Decision:	Denied	Appeal Number:	2512288
Decision Date:	11/13/2025	Hearing Date:	October 20, 2025
Hearing Officer:	Stanley Kallianidis		

Appellant Representative:

Pro se

CCA Representative:

Cassandra Horne, Appeals and Grievances
Supervisor



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
Board of Hearings
100 Hancock Street, Quincy, Massachusetts 02171*

APPEAL DECISION

Appeal Decision:	Denied	Issue:	Managed Care Organization Appeals
Decision Date:	11/13/2025	Hearing Date:	October 20, 2025
CCA Rep.:	Cassandra Horne	Appellant Rep.:	Pro se
Hearing Location:	Virtual		

Authority

This hearing was conducted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 118E, Chapter 30A, and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

Jurisdiction

The appellant received a Notice of Denial of Level 1 Appeal from Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA)¹ dated August 15, 2025 for psychotherapy with [REDACTED] (Exhibit 1). The appellant appealed the action in a timely manner on August 22, 2025 and made a request for reasonable accommodation for an American Sign Language (ASL) and CART interpreter (130 CMR 610.015(B); Exhibits 2 & 3). The denial of a request for prior authorization is valid grounds for appeal (130 CMR 610.032).

Notice of the hearing was sent to the parties on September 22, 2025 (Exhibit 4).

Action Taken by CCA

CCA denied the appellant's prior authorization request for psychotherapy services.

Issue

Was CCA correct in denying the appellant's prior authorization request?

¹ Commonwealth Care Alliance is a MassHealth ICO managed care contractor as defined by regulations at 130 CMR 610.004 and described in regulations at 130 CMR 508.000.

Summary of Evidence

A representative from CCA testified that, on August 15, 2025, the appellant's request for weekly outpatient therapy with [REDACTED] was denied because the therapist is not an in-network provider and he does not accept Medicare or MassHealth. She stated that CCA did cover 90 days of therapy visits to [REDACTED] under continuity of care. CCA paid for the full cost of those visits.

The CCA representative referred to the CCA One Care Member Handbook, p. 38, which states that CCA cannot pay a provider who is not eligible to participate in Medicare or MassHealth. If you use such a provider, you must pay the full cost of services you get. Also, the provider must tell the CCA member if they are not eligible to participate in Medicare or MassHealth (Exhibit 5).

The CCA representative indicated that there are in-network psychotherapists in the area that are accepting new patients and that an ASL interpreter would be provided to the appellant (Exhibit 1).

The appellant testified that [REDACTED] is the only psychotherapist in the area who is fluent in sign language. She does not want to use a sign language interpreter with another provider because an interpreter would not be able to effectively communicate her problems to the therapist. She explained that ASL interpreters are not trained to interpret mental health issues.

Findings of Fact

Based on a preponderance of the evidence, I find the following:

1. On August 15, 2025, CCA denied the appellant's request for weekly outpatient therapy with [REDACTED] (Exhibit 1).
2. The therapist is not an in-network provider and does not accept Medicare or MassHealth (Exhibit 1).
3. The appellant is deaf and is requesting psychotherapy visits to [REDACTED] because he is fluent in ASL (testimony).
4. There are in-network psychotherapists in the area that are accepting new patients and that an ASL interpreter would be provided to the appellant (Exhibit 1).
5. According to the CCA One Care Member Handbook, p. 38, CCA cannot pay a provider who is not eligible to participate in Medicare or MassHealth (Exhibit 5).

Analysis and Conclusions of Law

CCA is a MassHealth integrated care organization contractor (ICO) as defined by regulations at 130 CMR 610.004 and described in regulations at 130 CMR 508.000. The appellant is a member of the CCA, who submitted a request for prior authorization for psychotherapy. This request was denied on the basis that it was not a covered service.

130 CMR 508.007 (C) Obtaining Services When Enrolled in an ICO. When a member is enrolled in an ICO in accordance with the requirements under 130 CMR 508.007(A), the ICO will authorize, arrange, integrate, and coordinate the provision of all covered services for the member. Upon enrollment, the ICO is required to provide evidence of its coverage, the range of available covered services, what to do for emergency conditions and urgent care needs, and how to obtain access to specialty, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports.

In this case, I have found that on August 15, 2025, CCA denied the appellant's request for weekly outpatient therapy with [REDACTED]. According to the notice, there are several in-network psychotherapists in the area that are accepting new patients.

The appellant is deaf and is requesting psychotherapy visits to [REDACTED] because unlike other psychotherapists, he is fluent in ASL. Unfortunately, [REDACTED] is not an in-network provider and does not accept Medicare or MassHealth. According to its rules, CCA cannot pay a provider who is not eligible to participate in Medicare or MassHealth. A member who chooses to go to such a provider must pay the full cost of their services.

In accordance with the limitations of 130 CMR 508.007 and the CCA handbook, CCA was correct in its denial of the appellant's requested psychotherapy visits to [REDACTED].

The appeal is therefore denied.

Order for CCA

None.

Notification of Your Right to Appeal to Court

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to appeal to Court in accordance with Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws. To appeal, you must file a complaint with the Superior Court for the county where you reside, or Suffolk County Superior Court, within 30 days of your receipt of this decision.

Stanley Kallianidis
Hearing Officer
Board of Hearings

cc:

Commonwealth Care Alliance
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