



Administration issues new mental health coverage rules.

The [New York Times](#) (1/30, A14, Pear) reported the Obama Administration "issued [new rules](#)...that promise to improve insurance coverage of mental healthcare for more than 140 million people insured through their jobs." Under the rules that go into effect July 1, "employers and group health plans cannot provide less coverage for mental healthcare than for the treatment of physical conditions like cancer and heart disease."

The [AP](#) (1/30) reported that the new rules prohibit "separate annual deductibles for mental health treatment" and higher "copayments for visiting a psychiatrist or social worker." The measure "also prohibits health plans from setting limits on number of visits or hospital days for mental health problems that are different from any such limitations on treatment for medical problems."

[CQ HealthBeat](#) (1/30, Norman, subscription required) reported that HHS Secretary Sebelius said, "The rules we are issuing today will, for the first time, help assure that those diagnosed with these debilitating and sometimes life-threatening disorders will not suffer needless or arbitrary limits on their care. ... I applaud the long-standing and bipartisan effort that made these important new protections possible."

[Modern Healthcare](#) (1/29, Zigmond) reported, "The rule applies to group plans of 50 or more people and divides benefits into the following six categories: inpatient, in-network; inpatient, out-of-network; outpatient, in-network; outpatient, out-of-network; emergency care; and prescription drugs."

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