

APS Healthcare

Medical necessity criteria for acute inpatient psychiatric hospitalization for adult, child, or adolescent

Acute inpatient psychiatric hospitalization is defined as the highest intensity of medical and nursing services provided within a structured environment providing 24-hour skilled nursing and medical care. Full and immediate access to ancillary medical care must be available for those programs not housed within general medical centers.

All of the following are required to meet the medical necessity criteria:

1. The patient must have been diagnosed with a psychiatric illness by a licensed mental health professional.
2. Symptoms of the illness must be in accord with those described in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Edition IV (DSM-IV)
3. One or more of the following must be present:
 - a. Patient presents with suicidal ideation and intention, which represents significant risk of harm, medically significant self-mutilation, and/or a recent lethal attempt to harm self, such that 24-hour/day hospitalization and observation are necessary for the patient's safety.
 - b. Patient presents with a recent history of grossly disruptive/delusional and/or violent behavior representing clear and present danger of serious harm to others.
 - c. The patient's psychiatric condition severely impairs his/her basic functional capacity as evidenced by disorganized, uncontrolled thinking/behavior that represents a genuine and proximal risk of danger to self such that 24-hour/day nursing and medical treatment is required.
 - d. Diagnosis and/or treatment is/are clearly unsafe or impossible to be provided in an ambulatory setting and can only be accomplished with 24 hour intensive nursing and medical care.