Billing Administration

The accounting and administrative work that is needed to support school-based mental health is significant. Despite heavy caseloads, CarePartners staff stated that clinicians are more overwhelmed by the administrative procedures — like completing paperwork for insurance authorization requests and documentation needed for billing services — than they are by service provision. At Aspire, clinicians are responsible for submitting requests for insurance authorization for students’ services, which takes away from their time to provide services. Aspire reported an increase in the frequency of authorizations required from insurance and an increase in the length of time it takes insurance providers to grant the authorization. Authorizations last only three months and take 15 or more minutes to complete.

The providers approach billing duties in different ways. At Aspire, an accounting department in-house largely handles accounting responsibilities, though the clinicians are tasked with handling insurance authorizations. Likewise, at CarePartners, in-house administrative staff review notes for codes and accuracy before sending it to their contracted billing agency; this takes an estimated 25 to 30 hours per week. At View Point, a clerical employee is tasked with billing through a Quality Assurance department, and a computer system bills automatically when documentation is completed.