

## **Provider Update: Mental Health Services for Victims of Violent Crime**

### ***Serving Our Communities by Providing Mental Health Services to Victims of Crime***

The California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board commends the many licensed psychologists who help victims of crime within every community in California. Every victim of crime receiving valuable psychological treatment wins, and every psychologist wins by receiving compensation from the Victim Compensation Program (VCP) for the services rendered. The services provided by psychologists are a key factor in helping victims of violent crime put their lives back together.

We recognize the dedication that motivates providers to work with crime victims in the community. The VCP is committed to facilitate the ease with which busy psychologists can contribute to the community by offering services to crime victims while being fairly compensated through the VCP. To assist those psychologists who would like to take advantage of this opportunity to give back to their community, we are launching new efforts to engage in personal outreach to support crime victim providers. The Victim Compensation Program is offering Provider Information Forums throughout California. Program staff will come to your city to meet with your group of psychologists, provide an overview of the Program, resolve issues and answer questions. To request a Provider Information Forum in your area, please contact Janice Patton, VCP Manager at 916-491-3521 or at [janice.patton@vcgcb.ca.gov](mailto:janice.patton@vcgcb.ca.gov).

Fast and efficient payments to providers of mental health services for crime victims is a top priority of the VCP. To this end, our claims management system continues to be refined to ensure an expedient turn around time on provider bill processing and payment. We appreciate the patience and understanding of the psychologists who may have experienced delays in payments in recent months while we have worked to incorporate some impressive state-of-the-art features that will enable our system to provide quick and easy service to all of the valued providers who serve victims. One of these exciting features automatically identifies those bills that qualify for payment and moves them on to be paid through the State Controller's Office within days of receipt. Currently being developed is an exciting enhancement that will allow providers to check bill status online. Much progress has been made in realizing our goal of ensuring that psychologists are well served by the VCP as they contribute to the community by making their professional services available to crime victims.

While the online access to the VCP system is being refined and tested, providers can receive information on bill status by completing an [Application and Bill Status Request Form](#) which can be accessed on the VCGCB website at [www.vcgcb.ca.gov](http://www.vcgcb.ca.gov). This form will help providers obtain expedited information about the status of multiple bills.

Two new administrative measures have recently been implemented by the VCP to make the process easier for psychologists to work with the program. The first measure is that we are now asking that all bills be submitted on standard forms. Bills submitted by psychologists on the standard forms will ensure that the bills are processed as quickly as possible for payment through our automated claims system. Bills submitted on non-standard forms may experience unnecessary delays. We are therefore asking that all mental health providers submit their bills for services provided to crime victims on the

standard *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) 1500* form. This form can be downloaded from [www.vcgcb.ca.gov](http://www.vcgcb.ca.gov). The second measure is that the program will no longer require mental health professionals to submit a treatment plan in order to continue to provide services to victims. The program still requires that a treatment plan be maintained by the treating licensee but no longer is the plan required to be submitted to the program in order to continue to provide the 40 sessions allowed for primary victims. We will send more information about this to all psychologists on our mailing list in a separate letter.

To personally assist any psychologist with issues relating to working with the VCP in helping crime victims, we have assigned a new Provider Ombudsman, Robin Foemmel Bie, who can answer any questions or address any concerns regarding provider payments. Robin can be reached at 916-491-3759 or at [robin.foemmelbie@vcgcb.ca.gov](mailto:robin.foemmelbie@vcgcb.ca.gov).

Again, thank you to all of the psychologists that serve victims of crime. You play a vital role in helping your community by helping crime victims take back their lives.