

Researchers: Robust billing and coding system needed for psychedelic therapies

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When psychedelic therapies begin to gain regulatory approval, they will

need to be incorporated into the medical billing and coding system in a way that ensures equitable patient access. A new article that presents a robust medical billing and coding strategy is published in the inaugural issue of *Psychedelic Medicine*.

Brian Barnett, from the Cleveland Clinic, coauthored the article titled "Psychedelic Medicine's Future Depends on Proactive Development of a Robust Medical Billing and Coding Strategy." The authors note that investigational psychedelic therapies are likely to begin gaining regulatory approval as [medical treatments](#) in the U.S. within the next 2 years.

If approved, equitable patient access will depend on the incorporation of these novel treatments into the medical billing and [coding system](#). The authors propose that the development of de novo billing codes is the best approach for addressing psychedelic therapy reimbursement concerns. Several factors make [psychedelic](#) therapy, "particularly vulnerable to development of billing codes that undervalue the complexity of its delivery," state the authors.

Also in the premier issue of *Psychedelic Medicine*, Meghan Hibicke, Hannah Kramer, and Charles Nichols, from LSU Health Sciences Center, used adult female rats subjected to adolescent chronic restraint stress (aCRS) to investigate the effects of psilocybin on forced swim test and object pattern separation behaviors 5 weeks after a single administration.

The aCRS paradigm uses mild developmental stress to elicit depressive-like characteristics that persist for many weeks after the final stress event. The forced swim test challenges rats with inescapable adversity. Antidepressants selectively increase active coping in the forced swim test. Impaired pattern separation is another characteristic of depression. Antidepressants rescue cognitive function relevant to pattern separation.

"A single dose of psilocybin produced long-lasting normalization of pattern separation and forced swim test activities in aCRS rats, but without persistent increases in mRNA of a panel of genes relevant to synaptic density across several brain regions," concluded the investigators. "Although there is considerable evidence that psychedelics initiate an acute period of synaptic plasticity, our results may indicate the functional plasticity, not structural plasticity, underlies the persistent antidepressant-like effects of psilocybin in our model."

More information: Brian S. Barnett et al, Psychedelic Medicine's Future Depends on Proactive Development of a Robust Medical Billing and Coding Strategy, *Psychedelic Medicine* (2023). [DOI: 10.1089/psymed.2022.0005](https://doi.org/10.1089/psymed.2022.0005)

Meghan Hibicke et al, A Single Administration of Psilocybin Persistently Rescues Cognitive Deficits Caused by Adolescent Chronic Restraint Stress Without Long-Term Changes in Synaptic Protein Gene Expression in a Rat Experimental System with Translational Relevance to Depression, *Psychedelic Medicine* (2023). [DOI: 10.1089/psymed.2022.0012](https://doi.org/10.1089/psymed.2022.0012)

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