

Washtenaw County Community Mental Health

Transfers and Discharge of Care – (policy)

Purpose

Practice guidelines for transferring care between programs or between levels of care and when discharging an individual from services.

Policy

- When a person is prepared for a move between programs or to a different level of care, great consideration should be made to the individual's desires and choices related to location of services, preference of providers, and the level of natural/community support in their life.
- There should be a significant period of time where the individual has demonstrated self-sufficiency and symptom management before transitioning to a lower level of care. Transition to a higher level of care should be considered when there has been an increase in symptoms, a reduction of self-management, major life stress/trauma that may require increased support, or loss of natural/community supports. Decisions regarding discharge of care should be considered when the following criteria are no longer met:
 - Serious mental illness” means a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder affecting an adult that exists or has existed within the past year for a period of time sufficient to meet diagnostic criteria specified in the most recent diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association and approved by the department and that has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits 1 or more major life activities. Serious mental illness includes dementia with delusions, dementia with depressed mood, and dementia with behavioral disturbance but does not include any other dementia unless the dementia occurs in conjunction with another diagnosable serious mental illness. The following disorders also are included only if they occur in conjunction with another diagnosable serious mental illness:
 - (a) A substance abuse disorder
 - (b) A developmental disorder
 - (c) A “V” code in the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders.
 - Developmental disability means either of the following:
 - (a) If applied to an individual older than 5 years of age, a severe, chronic condition that meets all of the following requirements:
 - (i) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or a combination of mental and physical impairments.
 - (ii) Is manifested before the individual is 22 years old.
 - (iii) Is likely to continue indefinitely.
 - (iv) Results in substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the following areas of major life activity:
 - (A) Self-care.
 - (B) Receptive and expressive language.
 - (C) Learning.
 - (D) Mobility.
 - (E) Self-direction.
 - (F) Capacity for independent living.
 - (G) Economic self-sufficiency.

(v) Reflects the individual's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic care, treatment, or other services that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

(b) If applied to a minor from birth to 5 years of age, a substantial developmental delay or a specific congenital or acquired condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental disability as defined in subdivision (a) if services are not provided.

- Serious emotional disturbance means a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder affecting a minor that exists or has existed during the past year for a period of time sufficient to meet diagnostic criteria specified in the most recent diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders published by the American psychiatric association and approved by the department and that has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits the minor's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities. The following disorders are included only if they occur in conjunction with another diagnosable serious emotional disturbance:
 - (a) A substance abuse disorder
 - (b) A developmental disorder
 - (c) "V" codes in the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders.
- The individual, guardian, family/supports should be involved in transition and discharge planning whenever possible.
- The individual's stage of change is considered at all points in time, with a focus of care on enhancing existing strengths of the individual and their supports/community.
- Input from all members of the clinical team shall be sought and taken into consideration when making a determination about level of care changes, transfers and discharges.

Standards and Values

- Outreach is an essential component of our service delivery system. Outreach allows the individual receiving services increased flexibility regarding location of care; increases cultural awareness of professionals delivering care; potentially increases adherence to care by reducing barriers such as lack of transportation, fixed office schedules, and stigma associated with buildings/locations of office based care.
- Respect for consumer choice and preferences will be honored during the transfer process.
- Consumer care will not be unnecessarily disrupted during the transfer process.
- Relationships between the consumer and clinicians will not be unnecessarily disrupted during the transfer process.

PROCEDURES

(see procedures manual)

REFERENCES

Mental Health Code
Medicaid Provider Manual
Consumer Appeals Policy

EXHIBITS

None