

# North Sound Mental Health Administration

Regional Support Network for Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties

117 North First Street, Suite 8 • Mount Vernon, WA 98273 • 360.416.7013  
800.684.3555 • Fax 360.416.7017 • TTY 360.419.9008 • Email [nsmha@nsmha.org](mailto:nsmha@nsmha.org) • Web Site <http://nsmha.org>

NSMHA Contract Memorandum 2010-023

Date: December 22, 2010

To: Tom Sebastian, CEO, Compass Health  
Donna Konicki, Bridgeways  
Michael Watson, Lake Whatcom RTC  
Dean Wight, Whatcom Counseling and Psychiatric Center  
Rod Elin, Catholic Community Services Northwest  
Claudia D'Allegrì, Sea Mar  
Ken Stark, Snohomish County Human Services Director  
Phil Smith, Volunteers of America  
Richard Sprague, Interfaith  
Sue Closser, CEO, Sunrise Services  
ADSA  
AAA

From: Greg Long, Deputy Director

Subject: Restrictions on Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) Coverage by the North Sound Mental Health Administration

Please advise your staff of the following change.

The North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA) regrets to inform you that we are forced to strictly adhere to its contractual obligations to fund MPC Services only when the "need for MPC services is based solely due to a psychiatric disability" (*RSN State Mental Health Contract section 9.3.2*). NSMHA had been exceeding this requirement when it made clinical and practical sense in individualizing care for specific individuals. This change is brought about by successive funding reductions, the last of which exceeded \$8.6 million a year starting November 1, 2010.

The only exception to this policy will be when a person cannot be placed out of a hospital without an increased MPC payment and when the MPC cost to NSMHA exceeds the cost of a hospital stay. These payments will be time limited aimed at allowing the individual to receive more intensive care while they adjust to living in a new and less restrictive living situation. These payments will be reviewed at one, three or six months depending on the individual case.

MPC requests received after December 1, 2010 will be referred to the NSMHA Medical Director if NSMHA reviewers feel the MPC request is not based upon a solely psychiatric disability. If the NSMHA Medical Director concurs and determines that the MPC request is not based upon a solely psychiatric disability, NSMHA reviewers will send notification to the requesting source that NSMHA will be denying payment. For those individuals receiving payments prior to December 1, 2010 and whose current MPC request is determined not to be based upon a solely psychiatric disability, payments shall be terminated as outlined below.

December 22, 2010

NSMHA will continue to pay the previously agreed upon MPC payment for up to three (3) months so that contingency planning to secure alternative funding and/or services for the client may be initiated. In cases where the NSMHA decision to rescind MPC payment is disputed by the requesting entity, NSMHA will continue to pay the previously agreed upon payment amount while the dispute is processed and/or resolved per conditions outlined in the Medicaid Personal Care Protocol between Aging and Disability Administration (ADSA), Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and NSMHA.

Please continue to send requests for MPC Services to NSMHA, with the knowledge that the stricter standards will be followed. Your assistance in responding rapidly to requests for information will assure that these requests can be processed expeditiously, which is crucial to the individual.

MPC Protocols are currently being updated and will be on the NSMHA website by February 1, 2011.

cc: Cindy Ainsley, Bridgeways  
Heather Fennell, Compass Health  
Kathy McNaughton, Catholic Community Services  
Kay Burbidge, Lake Whatcom  
Pamala Benjamin, Whatcom Counseling and Psychiatric Center  
Pat Morris, Volunteers of America  
David Small, Sea Mar  
Anne Larson, Interfaith  
Rebecca Clark, Mental Health Program Coordinator Skagit County  
Barbara LaBrash, San Juan County Coordinator  
Anne Deacon, Whatcom County Coordinator  
Jackie Henderson, Island County Coordinator  
Susan Schoeld, Snohomish County Coordinator  
Contract File