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North Sound Behavioral Health Organization

Section 1500 – Clinical: Choice or Change of Mental Health Care Provider (MHCP)

Authorizing Source: WAC 388-877A-0460, 388-877-0600,

Cancels:

See Also:

Providers must comply with this policy and may develop individualized implementation guidelines as needed

Responsible Staff: Deputy Director

Approved by: Executive Director

Signature:

Date: 6/21/2018

POLICY #1511.00

SUBJECT: CHOICE OR CHANGE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER (BHP)

PURPOSE

To ensure each individual receiving behavioral health services in North Sound Behavioral Health Organization (North Sound BHO), has a choice in his/her Behavioral Health Provider (BHP).

POLICY

At any time during services, individuals, parents of individuals under the age of 13 and legal guardians of individuals of all ages, shall be able to select a primary clinician from the available Behavioral Health Agency (BHA) staff within the North Sound BHO network.

If the individual does not make a choice, the BHA must assign a Behavioral Health Professional (BHP) no later than 14 business days following the request for services. North Sound BHO encourages BHAs to assign individuals to primary clinicians who are anticipated to provide services to the individual throughout the authorization period.

The provider must notify the individual they may change primary clinicians at any time for any reason. Any change of a primary clinician may be made with documented justification at the individual's request by:

1. Notifying the BHA of his/her request for a change; and
2. Identifying the reason for the desired change.

If an individual's request to change their BHP is denied or whose request for a specific BHP is not honored, the individual may pursue a grievance with the BHA or North Sound BHO. Individuals who have exhausted the grievance system at the BHA/BHO level and remain unsatisfied with the result may then request an administrative (fair) hearing (Policy 1002). Individuals may contact Ombuds services for assistance with the grievance system processes, including administrative (fair) hearing.

Should a change in BHP result from a BHA or clinician decision (e.g., clinician resigning or taking a leave of absence, clinician being reassigned), the BHA shall ensure the individual and treatment team (which may include family members, other natural supports and/or other system staff) are informed of the change.

North Sound BHO requires that children and their parents/caregivers/families are served at the same BHA whenever possible, if the family so chooses, and that adolescent individuals reaching the age of majority are provided continuity of care without service disruptions or mandatory changes in BHA or BHP.

If an individual requests a change in BHP, the BHA cannot guarantee the individual will have the same day and time reserved for services. This includes group days and times and individual session days and times.

PROCEDURE

Individual seeking change of BHP

1. When an individual requests a change in BHP, he/she is asked to communicate this desire to the current BHP or the BHP's supervisor. Individuals may request a specific BHP during this process.
2. The individual will be notified within 10 days of the name of the new BHP or why a new or requested BHP is not being assigned.
3. The current BHP's supervisor or designee will arrange for the first appointment with the new BHP.
4. If the individual's change in BHP is due to a grievance, this will be noted in the BHAs grievance system record for the individual.
5. Changes in BHP will be entered into the BHA's information management system within 10 days of the change.

BHP resigns or is on a leave of absence

1. If a BHP resigns or will be going on a leave of absence, the BHP, supervisor, or designee will ensure the individual is aware of the new BHP before that provider's departure. In the event the new BHP is not known, the supervisor or designee will serve as the BHP until a replacement is assigned. Individuals may request a specific provider during this process.
2. If a BHP will be on an extended leave from the office (greater than 10 business days), that provider will notify the individual and all members of their treatment teams to discuss continuity of care if clinically appropriate/necessary based on the individual's assessed current level of risk. If that provider is the only member from the agency serving the individual, he/she will also offer a meeting to external team members. If an individual has another agency staff on his/her treatment team, a meeting offer is not required.
3. During the BHP's absence, any member of the treatment team can ask for a team meeting if he/she feels it is appropriate/necessary.

4. Changes in BHP will be entered into the BHA's information management system within 10 days of the change.

BHA decides to reassign BHP

1. If a change in BHP is not by the individual's choice, the individual will be notified within 10 days by the BHP, supervisor, or designee as to whom the new BHP will be. Individuals may request a specific provider during this process.
2. The current BHP, supervisor, or designee will arrange for the first appointment with the new BHP.
3. In the event the new BHP is not known, the supervisor or designee will serve in the BHP role until a replacement is assigned.
4. Changes in primary clinician will be entered into the BHA's information management system within 10 days of the change.

ATTACHMENTS

None