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North Sound Mental Health Administration

Section 4500 – Consumer Affairs: Quality Review Team

Authorizing Source:

Cancels:

See Also:

Responsible Staff: Consumer Affairs Coordinator

Approved by: Board of Directors

Motion #: 05-046

Date: 7/14/2005

POLICY #4517.00

SUBJECT: QUALITY REVIEW TEAM

PURPOSE

The North Sound Mental Health Administration (“NSMHA”) sets out this policy governing the provision of Quality Review Team (QRT) services.

POLICY

North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA) QRT Mission

The QRT mission is to:

1. Gather, analyze and report information from consumers, family members and organizations within and allied with the NSMHA.
2. Review and improve the quality of services provided.
3. Advocate for compassionate, respectful and confidential mental health services in compliance with state guidance.
4. Fairly and independently review the performance of the NSMHA and its providers.
5. Evaluate system-wide customer service issues using objective indicators of consumer outcomes in rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration back into society.
6. Measure if treatment is consumer focused and directed.
7. Measure if treatment is age and culturally appropriate.
8. Measure whether treatment incorporates strength-based collaboration with family and community.
9. Measure the quality of care provided.
10. Measure the availability of hospitalization alternatives.
11. Measure the adequacy of cross-system linkages and coordination with such allied agencies as schools, hospitals, jails and shelters.
12. Measure the range of treatment options.
13. Measure the continuity of care to ensure it meets the needs of the whole person and provides seamless access to services.
14. Provide regular reports, at least annually, to the NSMHA Board of Directors, Advisory Board and quality management committees to emphasize client issues and concerns.

Administrative Responsibilities

QRT administrative responsibilities include:

1. Stay current on knowledge of the RCWs, WACs, contracts, Clinical Eligibility and Care Standards and similar documents that provide the legal basis of providers’ obligations and clients’ rights.
2. Collect, analyze and act on Washington Institute (WIMIRT) surveys of service recipients and family members.

3. Review and update the QRT survey tool on an annual basis for validity and reliability.
4. Conduct focused reviews of NSMHA and allied systems and services. Focused reviews shall be performed at least once per biennium of providers and the NSMHA. Reports will include strengths, concerns, findings and recommendations. Reporting will reflect quality of physical safety, emotional safety, the extent of development of alternatives to hospitalization, cross-system coordination, the range of treatment options and the degree to which services are consumer focused/directed and are age and culturally appropriate.
5. Inform consumers, family members, jails, shelters, schools, allied systems and the community about mental health services.
6. Attend meetings (advocating for clients) of the NSMHA Advisory Board and Board of Directors. Sit on the Internal Quality Management Committee (IQMC), Quality Management Oversight Committee, (QMOC), Critical Incident Review Committee (CIRC), and other committees as appropriate. Prepare data and documents for these boards and committees as necessary.
7. Present regular QRT reports to the IQMC, Quality Management Committee, QMOC, Advisory Board and Board of Directors. Submit copies to the Mental Health Division and local advocacy organizations.

Authority of the QRT

WAC 388-865 prescribes authority for QRT services and levies responsibilities on the NSMHA to support the QRT. Additionally, Attachments XIV and XV, Associated Provider Network Contract, deal with QRT issues.

The QRT shall have and maintain unencumbered access to contracted providers, allied service providers, cross-system sources and consumers to evaluate systemic issues of consumer welfare. The QRT will provide direct feedback from these consumers and agencies to the NSMHA regarding the quality of mental health services.

In accordance with WAC 388-865-0282, the QRT has the authority to:

1. Enter and monitor any agency providing services to the NSMHA including hospitals, evaluation and treatment facilities and contracted providers.
2. Meet with interested persons and family members, providers and allied service providers.
3. Work with interested consumers, providers, the NSMHA and DSHS or applicable organizations to resolve problems identified.
4. Make its own decisions regarding the scheduling of visits, surveys, assessments, outreach, conclusions, recommendations and reporting, while following the provisions of this policy.
5. Request corrective action by the NSMHA or appropriate agency when findings and areas of concern are identified. The agency will respond to QRT requests within 30 days with reasonable explanation and plan of action, including specific written procedures and time frame for resolution if appropriate.
6. Meet with persons who represent the age and ethnic diversity of the NSMHA region to:
 - a. Determine the accessibility of services.
 - b. Determine if services adequately address consumers' needs based on consumers' perception of services using standard WIMIRT interview protocol approved by the MHD.

FUNCTIONAL INDEPENDENCE, ANTI-RETALIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Functional Independence

QRTs are functionally independent from the NSMHA, in accordance with NSMHA Policy 4504, Functional Independence. Additionally QRTs are entirely independent from public mental health service providers. The policy enables QRTs to perform their duties with functional independence and without fear of retaliation. The policy provides definition to functional independence and establishes the parameters of responsibilities for all concerned.

Anti-Retaliation Policy

NSMHA Policy 4502 sets forth anti-retaliation guidance.

Dispute Resolution Process

If there is a dispute with the NSMHA, Attachment XV of the Associated Provider Network Contract describes the Dispute Resolution Process.

DUTY TO REPORT – DUTY TO WARN

The QRT must “report and warn” to protect the health, safety and well being of clients and associates. If a client makes a statement regarding harm to self or others, the following procedure applies:

1. Reality test the statement. If it meets the test, inform the client that you will report it.
2. Determine who to report it to. Consult with the QRT supervisor if necessary.
3. Report it and debrief the supervisor.

Clearly document any incidence of abuse or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Report such situations to the appropriate authorities responsible for investigating them, such as the Health Department or DSHS Adult or Child Protective Services. Inform the client that outside assistance is being sought. The timing and detail of such notice needs to be sensitive to the condition and needs of the client.

QRT ETHICS POLICY

This policy is designed to define ethical behavior expected of the QRT. It is intended to support RCW ethical standards.

These standards seek to meet expectations of public opinion and expectation. They do not attempt to exhaust the moral and ethical values that guide the QRT actions. They help create a working environment that promotes honesty and integrity in providing professional QRT services.

1. The QRT will treat every client and organization it deals with fairly, equally and with courtesy and respect. It will not dispense special favors or privileges to anyone for any reason.
2. The QRT will avoid the appearance of improper influence and refrain from receiving, soliciting or accepting gifts, gratuities or anything of value. The QRT will not accept favors or special benefits. The QRT will not accept gifts or items of value from clients except for official donations made to the NSMHA. In some cases to refuse a gift will greatly offend the client. In these cases the QRT should thank the client graciously but make it clear that gifts present an awkward situation and gifts will be turned over to the NSMHA for use within the public mental health program.

3. The QRT won't attempt to influence others in the performance of their duties in any inappropriate or improper ways.
4. The QRT won't use NSMHA property for private purposes or purposes other than those authorized or permissible.
5. The QRT won't use NSMHA resources for political purposes or to influence the outcome of a ballot election or initiative. This prohibition includes political party activities, campaigning, distribution or display of campaign material, and fund raising. On their own time, the QRT has constitutional rights to engage in partisan political activities.
6. The QRT won't intentionally act outside the scope of their authority, nor allow the perception.
7. The QRT will respect the privacy of clients by refraining from contacting them except for legitimate QRT responsibilities.
8. The QRT won't use obscene, profane, disrespectful or inappropriate language or behavior in the presence of clients.
9. The QRT won't use any information obtained in the course of employment for personal gain.
10. The QRT won't seek co-employment from a service provider.
11. The QRT won't give legal or medical advice or perform case management or therapy.
12. The QRT won't transport clients in their personal vehicles.
13. The QRT won't host clients when meeting them in restaurants.
14. The QRT won't ever be "friends" with clients.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The QRT will use NSMHA brochures and other educational materials to conduct community outreach. The QRT will interact with consumers and agencies without concern for age or demographics and will provide equal service to children, adults and seniors of all race, religion and sexual preference.

Through outreach, The QRT makes its services more visible and accessible to consumers, family members and the community. Collaboration with other organizations results in mutually beneficial advocacy partnerships. The QRT will outreach to such organizations as community assistance agencies, jails, chemical dependency organizations, Division of Developmental Disabilities, NAMI, seniors organizations, hospitals and Tribes.

Distribute posters, business cards, handouts, flyers, brochures, pens, calendars and anything else available pertinent and helpful, to service providers, residences, support programs, crisis centers, evaluation and treatment centers, and other mental health oriented organizations.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an extremely important issue to the QRT. Individual clients must receive confidentiality at all times. Confidentiality of information is important to the quality management process. The QRT must be entirely familiar with the NSMHA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Training Manual and NSMHA privacy policies and procedures. These cover mandatory confidentiality requirements.

DATA REPORTING

The QRT will provide reports regularly to the IQMC, QMC, QMOC, NSMHA Advisory Board and Board of Directors, the MHD and local advocacy groups. The QRT input will be an important contribution to the overall NSMHA Quality Management Program.

Current QRT files are stored in the QRT office. Prior year files are stored at InfoCare, the NSMHA records storage facility in Bellingham.

ATTACHMENTS

None