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## **North Sound Mental Health Administration**

Section 1500 – Clinical: Access to Housing and Consumer Choice in Housing

Authorizing Source: **NSMHA**

Cancels:

See Also:

Providers must “comply with” this policy

Responsible Staff: Quality Manager

Approved by: Executive Director

Date: 10/27/2008

Signature:

### **POLICY #1524.00**

### **SUBJECT: ACCESS TO HOUSING AND CONSUMER CHOICE IN HOUSING**

#### **PURPOSE**

The North Sound Mental Health Administration (NSMHA) seeks to ensure that:

1. Consumers are able to obtain safe, affordable and independent housing (including the option of living with family) and the supports necessary to live in that housing.
2. Consumers are able to live in places where their housing and community access needs are met, and met in ways appropriate to each consumer’s age, language and culture.
3. All consumers are free to choose the housing they want from the range of housing available to them.

#### **POLICY**

To the extent allowed by available funding and funding requirements, NSMHA and its contractors will actively promote consumer access to, and choice in, safe and affordable housing and housing support services appropriate to each consumer’s age, culture, language and unique needs. NSMHA and its contractors will strive to develop a range of residential treatment and housing support services that will promote recovery and maximum independence with an emphasis on supporting consumers in their own home or wherever they live in the community.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. NSMHA and its contractors will make available residential treatment and housing support services consistent with WAC 388-865 and NSMHA Clinical Eligibility and Care Standards for Mental Health Services.
2. Contracted providers will participate in their county’s Continuums of Care Planning for Housing to support the prioritization and development of housing for people with mental illness.
3. Contracted providers will participate with NSMHA in planning and developing a complete range of residential treatment and housing support services. Contracted providers are strongly encouraged to establish ongoing, supportive relationships with landlords in their communities in order to expand the amount of housing available to consumers and to prevent consumers from losing their housing. NSMHA and its contractors will develop and maintain a housing resource list.
4. Contracted providers shall assess and, as needed, re-assess consumers’ housing and housing-support needs and then prescribe needed services and supports in each consumer’s treatment plan. Contracted providers shall assist consumers in finding and obtaining appropriate housing and any housing supports they need in order to succeed at living in such housing.
5. Contracted providers who offer services to children will provide services to families of eligible children and to eligible consumers who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless as

defined in Public Law 100-77, through outreach, engagement and coordination or linkage of services with shelter and housing when necessary.

6. Housing and housing support services will emphasize least restrictive, permanent housing appropriate to the age, cultural, linguistic, and residential/housing needs of each service recipient. Residential treatment programs will be considered housing through which consumers' transition to permanent supportive housing.
7. Contracted providers will actively promote consumer access to and choice in safe and affordable housing that supports consumers' access to the community.
8. Contracted providers will provide timely residential placement or in-home supports, where necessary, within NSMHA Service Area to meet a consumer's special needs.
9. Contracted providers will maintain separation whenever possible between providers of housing and providers of mental health services. While housing support staff and mental health treatment staff will need to coordinate their services at times, contracted providers are encouraged to keep treatment functions as separate as possible from housing and housing support functions by having different staff provide each service.
10. A service recipient's housing will not be dependent on his/her willingness to participate in mental health services, unless such participation is required by source(s) of housing subsidy funding.
11. Consumers who are homeless shall be provided mental health services and, when appropriate, contractors will engage consumers who are homeless through outreach.
12. Housing support services shall be evidence-based. Contractors are urged to provide housing and residential services that are consistent with the "Best Practices" described in the NSMHA Housing Plan.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1524.01 – NSMHA Board of Directors Housing Opportunities Principles