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North Sound Behavioral Health Organization

Section 1500 – Clinical: Mental Health Medication Management Transfers to Primary Care Providers

Authorizing Source: 42 CFR 438.208, North Sound BHO

Cancels:

See Also:

Providers must comply with this policy and individualized
implementation guidelines may be developed by BHAs.

Responsible Staff: Deputy Director

Approved by Executive Director

Signature:

Date: 7/20/2017

POLICY #1546.00

SUBJECT: MENTAL HEALTH MEDICATION MANAGEMENT TRANSFERS TO PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

PURPOSE

To provide coordinated medication management for individuals who do not require mental health specialty medication management.

POLICY

For individuals receiving mental health specialty medication management services from a Behavioral Health Agency (BHA), transfer to a Primary Care Provider (PCP) may be considered when:

1. The individual is on a stable medication regimen and there is no longer medical necessity for the specialty care of mental health medication management services at the BHA. A stable medication regimen includes:
 - a. Individuals without a complex medication regimen who have not had medication changes for a minimum of three months.
 - b. Individuals with a complex medication regimen and/or have multiple psychiatric diagnoses requiring mental health specialty medication expertise who have not had medication changes for a minimum of six months.

A complex regimen of medications includes, but is not limited to, prescription of two or more medications in the same class or three or more psychiatric medications.

2. The PCP becomes involved in making changes to medications currently prescribed by the BHA prescriber and will not agree to stop making changes to those medications, even though this lack of coordination may put the consumer at risk.

The BHA shall continue to coordinate and consult with the PCP throughout the transfer process as noted below (i.e., long enough to ensure that medication management services have been successfully transferred to the PCP as documented in the clinical record).

3. The individual requests transfer of medication management services to his or her PCP.

Transfer of medication management services to a PCP shall occur in a coordinated process as outlined in the Procedure section of this policy.

Mental health specialist prescribers shall continue to provide medication management services except as identified above or when there is no PCP willing to accept the transfer. In addition, an individual who only needs mental health specialty medication management services from the BHA will not be referred or transferred to a PCP unless in accordance with this policy.

PROCEDURE

1. For individuals who do not have a PCP, BHA staff shall refer and assist individuals in obtaining a PCP at the beginning of the treatment episode or as soon as the need is identified.
2. BHA staff shall request from the individual and send an Authorization for Release of Information (ROI) to the PCP at the individual's first ongoing appointment after intake or as soon as the individual establishes care with a PCP.
3. BHA staff shall contact the PCP once a need for mental health medication evaluation is identified to develop a plan for the medication evaluation and ongoing mental health medication management such as:
 - a. Collaboration with the PCP so the PCP will provide the medication evaluation and ongoing medication management or;
 - b. Collaboration with the PCP so the PCP will provide ongoing medication management after the initial medication evaluation at the BHA or;
 - c. Collaborating with the PCP so the PCP will provide ongoing medication management after medication services can be appropriately transferred from the BHA to PCP.
4. BHA staff shall communicate with the PCP throughout the individual's treatment episode including as outlined in North Sound BHO Policy #1517 Coordination of Care with External Health Care Providers.
5. When it is determined that the process for transferring medication management services to the PCP should begin, the following steps for coordinated transfer shall occur:
 - a. The transfer of medication prescribing responsibilities shall be discussed with the individual prior to a transfer. The individual's preference shall be considered. This discussion shall be documented in the clinical record.
 - i. The individual shall be informed verbally and in writing of their right to file a complaint or grievance in accordance with the current North Sound Behavioral Health Organization (North Sound BHO) policy.
 - ii. The clinical record shall document the rationale outlining the reasons the individual is being referred or transferred to a PCP.
 - b. Prior to the transfer of medication prescribing responsibilities, the PCP must agree to accept the referral or transfer of the individual. The clinical record shall document this understanding. If the PCP does not agree to accept this referral, the mental health specialist prescriber will continue managing the medications until an alternative arrangement can be developed.

- c. A plan shall be developed outlining what happens if the individual becomes unstable on medications and/or the PCP believes it would be better for the mental health specialist prescriber to consult or resume management of medications. The plan must:
 - i. Include appropriate steps for the individual to follow if this situation arises after the end of a treatment episode. If these steps are not included in the initial plan, the plan must be updated prior to closing of the treatment episode. It is encouraged that this plan be included in the transition summary for the individual.
 - ii. Be developed collaboratively between the individual/guardian, mental health specialist prescriber and PCP.
 - iii. Identify a mental health specialist prescriber at the transferring BHA who will be available to consult with the PCP accepting the transfer, if requested.
- d. Appropriate psychiatric and medication records will be sent to the PCP as permitted by appropriate ROIs.
- e. The BHA shall keep the individual's treatment episode open long enough after transfer of medication management services to the PCP to ensure medication management services have been successfully transferred to the PCP as documented in the clinical record.

ATTACHMENTS

None