

Effective Date: 6/25/2007
Revised Date: 3/15/2018
Review Date: 3/15/2018

North Sound Behavioral Health Organization

Section 1500 – Clinical: Mental Health Specialist

Authorizing Source: PIHP Contract; Service Encounter Reporting Instructions

Cancels:

See Also:

Providers must comply with this policy and may develop

Individualized implementation guidelines as needed

Responsible Staff: Deputy Director

Executive Director's Signature:

Approved by: Executive Director

Date: 3/16/2018

POLICY #1558.00

SUBJECT: MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to identify and define Mental Health Specialist (MHS), differentiate Special Population evaluations from Special Population consultations and describe the role of MHS in those two (2) processes.

POLICY

When an individual is identified as being a member of a special population and screening to determine the appropriateness an individual for participation in a special program, project or treatment protocol, a face-to-face Special Populations evaluation is required. Currently, there are no special programs in the North Sound Region that require the use of Special Population Evaluations in screening individuals in or out. Special Populations consultations are utilized at the discretion of the primary clinician when cultural issues are raised by the individual during or after an intake assessment. These consultations must be completed by a Mental Health Professional (MHP) who is a MHS in the special population(s) with whom the individual identifies.

PROCEDURE

Upon completion of an intake assessment by a Behavioral Health Agency (BHA) MHP, an individual beginning an episode of mental health services is assigned to a primary clinician. If during the intake assessment the individual self-identifies as a member of a special population group and the assigned clinician determines their service efforts would be enhanced by a consultation from a MHS, the clinician will request a special population consultation with a MHS. The consultation can be conducted face-to-face or in a phone call between the clinician and the MHS. The MHS determines the level of the individual's identification with the special population, identifies cultural factors that should be considered in planning the delivery of services to the individual and renders treatment recommendations. These recommendations shall be subsequently addressed in the Recovery & Resiliency Plan (RRP) by the clinician and his/her treatment team colleagues. The MHS may participate in the first RRP Review and at subsequent Reviews when/if indicated by the MHS. Special Population groups include:

1. Children individuals;
2. Ethnic minority individuals;
3. Adult individuals with disabilities; and
4. Older (geriatric) adult individuals.

I. DEFINITIONS

"Adult" means a person on or after their 18th birthday. For persons eligible for the Medicaid program, adult means a person on or after his/her 21st birthday.

"Child" means a person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday. For persons eligible for the Medicaid program, child means a person who has not reached his/her 21st birthday.

"Individual" means a person who has applied for, is eligible for, or who has received mental health services. For a child, under the age of 13, or for a child age 13 or older whose parents or legal guardians are involved in the treatment plan, the definition of individual includes parents or legal guardians.

"Consultation" means the clinical review and development of recommendations regarding the job responsibilities, activities, or decisions of, clinical staff, contracted employees, volunteers, or students by persons with appropriate knowledge and experience to make recommendations.

"Cultural competence" means a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system or agency and enable that system or agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. A culturally competent system of care acknowledges and incorporates at all levels the importance of language and culture, assessment of cross-cultural relations, knowledge and acceptance of dynamics of cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge and adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs.

"Ethnic minority" or "racial/ethnic groups" means, for the purposes of this chapter, any of the following general population groups:

1. African American;
2. An American Indian or Alaskan native, which includes:
 - a. A person who is a member or considered to be a member in a federally recognized tribe;
 - b. A person determined eligible to be found Indian by the secretary of interior, and
 - c. An Eskimo, Aleut, or other Alaskan native.
 - d. A Canadian Indian, meaning a person of a treaty tribe, Metis community, or non-status Indian community from Canada.
 - e. An unenrolled Indian meaning a person considered Indian by a federally or non-federally recognized Indian tribe or off reservation Indian/Alaskan native community organization.
3. Asian/Pacific Islander; or
4. Hispanic.

"Mental Health Professional (MHP)" means:

1. A psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric nurse, or social worker as defined in RCW Chapters 71.05 and 71.34;

2. A person who is licensed by the Department of Health as a mental health counselor, mental health counselor associate, marriage and family therapist, or marriage and family therapist associate;
3. A person with a master's degree or further advanced degree in counseling or one (1) of the behavioral sciences from an accredited college or university who has at least two (2) years of experience in direct treatment of persons with mental illness or emotional disturbance, that was gained under the supervision of an MHP;
4. A person who meets the waiver criteria of RCW 71.24.260, which was granted prior to 1986;
5. A person who had an approved waiver to perform the duties of an MHP, that was requested by the behavioral health organization (BHO) and granted by the mental health division prior to July 1, 2001; or
6. A person who has been granted a time-limited exception of the minimum requirements of an MHP by the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR).

"Mental Health Specialist (MHS)" means:

1. A **"child MHS"** is defined as an MHP with the following education and experience:
 - a. A minimum of one hundred actual hours (not quarter or semester hours) of special training in child development and the treatment of children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and their families; and
 - b. The equivalent of one year of full-time experience in the treatment of seriously emotionally disturbed children and youth and their families under the supervision of a child mental health specialist.
2. A **"geriatric MHS"** is defined as an MHP who has the following education and experience:
 - a. A minimum of 100 actual hours (not quarter or semester hours) of specialized training devoted to the mental health problems and treatment of persons 60 years of age or older; and
 - b. The equivalent of 1 year of full-time experience in the treatment of persons 60 years of age or older, under the supervision of a geriatric MHS.
3. An **"ethnic minority MHS"** is defined as an MHP who has demonstrated cultural competence attained through major commitment, ongoing training, experience and/or specialization in serving ethnic minorities, including evidence of one (1) year of service specializing in serving the ethnic minority group under the supervision of an ethnic minority MHS; and
 - a. Evidence of support from the ethnic minority community attesting to the person's commitment to that community; or
 - b. A minimum of 100 actual hours (not quarter or semester hours) of specialized training devoted to ethnic minority issues and treatment of ethnic minority individuals.

4. A "**disability MHS**" is defined as an MHP with special expertise in working with an identified disability group. For purposes of this chapter only, "**disabled**" means an individual with a disability other than a mental illness, including a developmental disability, serious physical handicap, or sensory impairment.
 - a. If the individual is deaf, the specialist must be an MHP with:
 - i. Knowledge about the deaf culture and psychosocial problems faced by people who are deaf; and
 - ii. Ability to communicate fluently in the preferred language system of the individual.
 - b. The specialist for individuals with developmental disabilities must be an MHP who:
 - i. Has at least one (1) years' experience working with people with developmental disabilities; or
 - ii. Is a developmental disability professional as defined in RCW 71.05.020.
5. "**Older person**" means an adult who is 60 years of age or older.

ATTACHMENTS

None