

**HIV Health Services Planning Council
Sacramento TGA**

SERVICE STANDARDS

Subject: Mental Health Services

No.: SSC 14

Date Approved: 12/13/06

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Consistent with funded Service Priorities established by the Sacramento TGA HIV Health Services Council the following Mental Health Services Standard will apply to all Ryan White contracted vendors that provide mental health services.

Descriptions:

Ryan White-funded Mental Health Services consist of group and individual counseling sessions for HIV infected or affected adults, children and families provided by psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers or other qualified individuals.

Policies:

1. Ryan White funding is to be used for HIV/AIDS medical care including and for psycho-social and support services designed to significantly improve client access and adherence to such services. In the case of Mental Health services, Ryan White funding may also pay for grief/bereavement services for family/significant others. As such, any non-grief/bereavement Mental Health services which are provided with Ryan White funding (“RW Agencies”) will be fully integrated with each client’s medical care.

Mental Health services that are provided by agencies and paid for through Ryan White funding will be part of a comprehensive medical care plan that promotes the optimal state of health for the afflicted individual.

2. Ryan White funding is to be expended in a cost effective, equitable manner based upon client need verification. Referral to mental health services is accomplished through medical case management providers, or by self-referral. Payment for mental health services through Ryan White funding are authorized only in circumstances where client eligibility is validated and no other payment guarantor has been identified.

3. In accordance with the above:

A. If it is determined that a client is eligible for Ryan White mental health funded services, the following guidelines will apply:

- i. Any Ryan White medical case manager or service provider may refer an eligible client to appropriate mental health service provider for Mental Health (psychiatric, psychological, etc.) assessment. The referring Medical Case Manager must ensure follow up communication with the client to determine if the client needs additional assistance with the referral.

- ii. Assessment will be completed by the treating Mental Health provider in up to three (3) one (1) hour sessions.
 - iii. Following assessment, the treating provider will develop a Treatment Plan, with the goal of enabling the client to access or remain in medical care.
 - iv. Psychiatric treatment plans will contain current listing of client HIV/AIDS drug regimen.
 - v. If the Mental Health treating provider is not a licensed therapist, the treating provider will consult with a licensed therapist on an ongoing basis regarding the Psychiatric Treatment Plan.
 - vi. All psychiatric prescriptions will be provided in close communication with medical service providers to ensure appropriate prescription of mental health medications after considering potential interaction with client's HIV/AIDS drug regimen.
 - vii. With written permission (signed Ryan White Release of Information Authorization form) of a Mental Health client, a multidisciplinary (Pharmacy, Psychology, Medical, Medical Case Management) review of the client's care plan will occur at least annually to determine necessity/efficacy of continued Mental Health treatment versus other available options.
- B. A client may be seen for crisis intervention services if the client presents with dangerous behaviors, regardless of the cause (e.g. HIV-based, dual diagnosis issues, etc.) or upon the referral of a health care provider requesting diagnostic clarification or immediate intervention for as long as deemed necessary to maintain the safety of the client or others.
- C. Dually-Diagnosed individuals will be treated using the most client-appropriate course of treatment (e.g., Family Therapy, Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavior Change Therapy, Gestalt, etc.). Mental Health service shall not be denied based on current substance use.
- D. Ryan White Mental health services will be provided by professionals knowledgeable about HIV and people living with HIV (PLWH), as well as:
- i. Pediatrics when treating pediatric PLWH;
 - ii. Other special client related issues/needs, as appropriate
 - iii. Medication interactions and contraindications
- E. Services for family and significant others of PLWH may be necessary to support clients in managing their health and improving compliance with medical treatment regimens. Services for family and significant others are offered:
- i. On a time-limited/goal focused basis, generally regarding education, support of, or care for the individual living with HIV;
 - ii. In situations of grief/bereavement:
 - a. Existing clients will be offered treatment for a limited term (based on the client's plan of care) until another resource is located;

- b. As determined appropriate by a licensed mental health provider, new clients will be treated for a limited term (based on the client's plan of care) until another resource is located.
 - F. Group sessions may be offered as part of, or as an alternative to, individual treatment plans. Referrals shall be made available to clients seeking group services when slots are not available in the existing group.
 - G. All providers of mental health services will comply with Board of Behavioral Sciences treatment regulations.
4. RW Agencies may at any time submit to the RW Fiscal Agent requests for interpretation of these or any other Services Standards adopted by the HIV Health Services Planning Council, based on the unique healthcare needs of a client or on unique barriers to accessing healthcare services which may be experienced by a client.
 5. RW Agencies shall provide a means by which Medical Case Managers can obtain in-servicing and on-call advice related to client medical and other healthcare needs.
 6. Coordination with other components of the Ryan White system of care is critical.
 7. All Ryan White providers of mental health services must have an internal grievance process in place. Each client must receive a copy of the agency's grievance policy and a signed copy of the grievance policy must be maintained in the clients' file. Information about how to access this process must be posted conspicuously in public areas of the agency. It must include provisions for informing clients of its existence, and how to begin the process. Clients also have the right to file a grievance with appropriate state licensing agencies (i.e. Board of Behavioral Sciences).
 8. All Ryan White providers of mental health services must have a quality assurance program and plan in place that is in compliance with the TGA Quality Management / Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and requirements set forth by the Quality Management Manager of the Fiscal Administrative Agent.

Adopted: 
Kane Ortega, Chair

Date: 1/26/11