



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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January 31, 2008

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: **New Initiative: TAFDC – Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) Referrals**

Overview

Beginning February 1, 2008, DTA will partner with Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) and Clinical and Support Options (a service provider of MBHP) to give our clients with behavioral health symptoms such as, mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety additional access to screenings, assessments and support services. The goal of this initiative is to help these clients overcome barriers to meeting the work program requirement and become employable. This new initiative will initially be offered in the Springfield Liberty TAO through June 30, 2008. If successful, this initiative will be expanded to the Worcester TAO and then statewide.

Purpose of Memo

The purpose of this New Initiative Memo is to:

- identify appropriate referrals; and
 - inform TAO Staff about the vocational specialist's and the provider's responsibilities.
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**MBHP Referral
Criteria**

Currently, Springfield Liberty has a Resource Team in place. The Resource Team consists of a *Disability Specialist*, a *Disability Coordinator*, and a *Vocational Specialist* each with the expertise to coordinate disability and vocational services. This on-site Resource Team provides applicants and clients with the opportunity to meet with a Resource Team member who can provide an assessment of the applicant's or client's service needs, provide assistance with completing medical forms and provide a coordinated approach for the review of barriers to employment and a coordination of support services.

This new initiative affords the vocational specialist on the Resource Team the option of referring applicants and clients with mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety to Clinical and Support Options. The following are the groups of TAFDC applicants and clients who should be referred to Clinical and Support Options by the vocational specialist:

- applicants and clients requesting an exemption from work program requirements due to mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety; or
- applicants and clients who are seeking good cause for non-participation from work program requirements due to mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety.

An applicant or client should be referred to the vocational specialist by the AU Manager completing a Vocational Specialist Referral (Attachment A). The AU Manager must tell the applicant or recipient that he or she will be given an assessment by the vocational specialist to determine what services the applicant or client needs. While this is taking place, the applicant or client must be given good cause for failure to meet the work program requirement or given the "Meets Compliance" reason of "Temporary Health Problem" with an end date of one month from the referral date, as appropriate.

Vocational Specialist's Responsibilities

Once the vocational specialist receives the referral from the AU Manager, the vocational specialist will:

- complete a screening process to determine if the client meets the criteria for receiving services;
- refer the client to a specific point person or intake unit at Clinical and Support Options. The vocational specialist will maintain contact with Clinical and Support Options for coordination of services; and
- serve as liaison between the AU Manager and Clinical and Support Options, informing the AU Manager of the client's participation in a treatment plan.

Provider's Responsibilities

Clinical and Support Options will schedule an intake with the client – at the client's home, Clinical and Support Options' office or the Springfield Liberty TAO. At the time of intake the client and Clinical and Support Options will:

- determine what services the client needs;
 - refer the client to the appropriate services;
 - track the client's progress in his or her service plan;
 - collaborate and communicate with the vocational specialist during the course of the client's treatment; and
 - after several months of participation with Clinical and Support Options, give the client either a satisfaction survey or a post-screening tool to measure any clinical outcomes.
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**Follow Up
Procedures**

Once the client is referred to Clinical and Support Options, the vocational specialist will maintain contact with the provider to collaborate and coordinate services. If the client does not complete the service plan by the June 30, 2008 deadline, he or she will continue to receive services until completed.

Once Clinical and Support Options determines the appropriate services the client needs, the vocational specialist will tell the AU Manager that the client will continue to receive services. This information should be noted on the Narratives tab on BEACON. The client will then be required to meet his or her work program requirement. The AU Manager must change the Meets Compliance reason from "Temporary Health Problem" to "Participation" so the automatic work program tracking process can resume, if appropriate.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

Vocational Specialist Referral

To be completed by AU Manager:

Name of AU Manager: _____
Phone Number: _____
Client Name: _____
Client Phone Number: _____
Client Date of Birth: _____

Other Pertinent Information attached (if appropriate):

- Disability Supplement
- Good Cause Medical Statement form
- The applicant/client self-identified a mental health disability or has requested an exemption from the work program.
- Client is having difficulty meeting Work Program requirements.

Other pertinent information (completed by the AU Manager):

Please provide any additional information that would be helpful to the Vocational Specialist.