

**Allegheny County Department of Human Services/Office of Behavioral Health
Bureau of Adult Mental Health Services**

Program Monitoring

The Department of Human Services Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) is the County's public office responsible for providing Allegheny County residents who have mental illness and/or substance use disorders with a coordinated, community-focused system of high quality and cost-effective services, programs and opportunities.

OBH Organization

Bureau of Adult Mental Health Services
Bureau of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services

Standards

OBH program regulations and standards are defined by the Pa. Department of Justice, Office of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS); and the Department of Health, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

Tools and Approach

When conducting on-site, program-monitoring visits, OBH Bureaus utilize individualized monitoring forms and checklists appropriate 1) to evaluate the full scope of work the provider is expected to perform and 2) to show compliance with the appropriate State agency.

Important Aspects of Monitoring

Reviewing Current Programs

- **Licensing Reviews:** Program Monitors conduct annual licensing reviews of those providers that are licensed in conjunction with the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). These reviews first determine if the provider is acting in accordance to licensing regulations, areas of strengths of the provider are discerned as well as areas for improvement. If a provider is in violation of a regulation a formal deficiency may be issued and the provider will need to provide a formal corrective action plan. If there are many areas of deficiency a provider may be issued a six-month or probationary license to provide the opportunity for correction. Program monitors assist the provider with implementing the corrective action plans.

- **Blended Case Management:** Program Monitors formally review Blended Service Coordination (case management) programs at least annually. If the program is

acting in accordance with regulations then a Certificate of Approval will be issued by OMHSAS.

- Fidelity Reviews: Program Monitors work in conjunction with Allegheny Health Choices and Community Care Behavioral Health, to conduct fidelity reviews of Community Treatment Teams. CTTs are community-based teams that include a psychiatrist, nurses, therapists, vocational specialists, drug and alcohol specialists and case managers who work with up to 100 people with severe mental illness per team. These reviews provide feedback to the teams that identify where teams are and are not acting in accordance with the model. Evidence-based studies indicate that if teams act in accordance with the model then outcomes are most positive for consumers and efficiency is improved for the teams.

Program Quality Improvement

- Participation: Program Monitors attend regular meetings with case management teams and residential providers to ensure quality services that are recovery-oriented are being provided.
- Resources: Program Monitors assist providers and individuals by supplying resources and overall system knowledge for individuals with complex situations to ensure that all possible avenues are explored for a positive outcome.
- Ongoing Initiatives: Program Monitors are involved in many initiatives that are working toward improving services for individuals that are receiving mental health services. Examples include, increasing peer supports, supporting peer initiatives, improving services for veterans, support during disasters, increasing crisis services, increasing housing opportunities, increasing employment opportunities and providing training opportunities to increase knowledge in specialized areas.
- Unusual Incident Reports: Agencies provide verbal and written information regarding incidents involving injury, death, suicide attempt, suicide, abuse, medical errors or other significant, unusual events. Program Monitors follow up on each report to ensure protocols were followed to maintain consumer safety and proactive steps occurred for the best possible outcome of the situation. Unusual Incident Reports are also a way of being able to discern if there are trends occurring that require technical assistance for a particular provider.
- Root Cause Analysis: An individual provider conducts a Root Cause Analysis when a sentinel event (i.e. a suicide, homicide, or abuse of an individual) occurs. This is a formalized process that 1) examines the services provided to the individual to 2) determine if there were any breakdowns in the services that could have possibly led to a different outcome for the individual. The outcome of this review is then reviewed by OBH, Community Care Behavioral Health, and Allegheny Health Choices. Further suggestions, if needed are made and the results are then translated into areas to strive for overall system improvement.
- Consumer Action and Response Team (CART) - CART is contracted with the OBH through the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI). Employees of this agency are self-identified consumers of the mental health system or family members. Each agency contracted with the OBH is required to have individuals

that utilize the services of that agency be interviewed by CART annually at a minimum. Strengths and areas for improvement are explored with those interviewed. Program Monitors review responses and request corrective actions steps from providers if there are areas of concern.

DHS/Provider Relations

- Technical Assistance - Program Monitors provide technical assistance to agencies in the areas of interpreting regulations, system process questions, improving quality of care, recovery initiatives and correcting areas of deficiencies.
- Concerns/ Complaints - Program Monitors assist individuals with concerns/ complaints they may have about a particular provider or the mental health system. Program Monitors work in conjunction with both the provider and the individual to provide a satisfactory outcome for all involved.
- Single Point of Accountability – A five-year initiative currently being implemented. This is designed so that services an individual is receiving are coordinated among all entities involved with the individual. The individual's Service Coordinator (case manager) will have the primary responsibility for ensuring that this occurs