



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
STANDARD PRACTICE

NO 13-5.10
C. Daniels and PAGE 1 OF 2
BY N. Belen EFFECTIVE 11/1/93

DEPARTMENT MENTAL HEALTH

SUBJECT

MEDICATION SUPPORT GROUPS

APPROVED

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James McReynolds, Director

(Revised 6/94)

I. PURPOSE

To establish Department standards and guidelines for providing medication support services to adult consumers in a group format.

II. POLICY

Each Department clinic which offers medication support services will make available the services within a group format following the guidelines below.

III. DEFINITIONS

The Medication Support Group is defined as a combination of medication support and mental health services provided in a group setting focusing on medications issues.

IV. STAFFING

The psychiatrist (M.D.) is qualified to provide the full scope of medication support services. The RN or LPT may provide medication support services with the exception of prescribing. The mental health services component will be provided by the Clinical Therapist.

The Medication Support Group will be run by the M.D. with a Clinical Therapist. This will ensure that therapeutic issues are monitored along with medication issues and that each consumer's service plan will be monitored according to medication and therapeutic needs. In clinics with a staff RN or LPT, medication support services (administration, dispensing, monitoring, education) may be provided as part of the Medication Support Group Service.

V. SERVICE ELIGIBILITY

This service is generally recommended for those "chronic" consumers who have received ongoing medications and are stable. Other consumers will be considered for the Medication Support Group as appropriate. The psychiatrist (M.D.) will determine those consumers who are appropriate for participation in the Medications Support Groups according to the following criteria:

(Rev. 6/94 by C. Daniels & N. Belen)

1. the consumer meets program's target population criteria, and
2. is in need of ongoing medications, support and monitoring, and
3. is referred by Clinical Therapist, DMH Case Manager, Clinic Supervisor, or psychiatrist (M.D.), and
4. the consumer is in need of a lower level of care.

VI. BILLING

The psychiatrist's (M.D.'s) Medication Support Group time will be billed as Medication Support according to existing billing guidelines. Clinic RN or LPT staff may bill time spent supporting Medication Support Group functions as medication support according to existing billing guidelines.

Clinical Therapist Medication Support Group time will be billed as mental health services according to existing billing guidelines.

VII. AVAILABILITY OF MEDICATION SUPPORT GROUPS

Clinics will offer at least one Medication Support Group per week. Consumers may be scheduled according to the requirements of their prescription schedule or type of medication and severity.

VIII. GROUP PROCESS

Each consumer will be encouraged to express their concerns regarding their medications, their symptoms, and their response to current medications. This sharing among group members is intended to benefit all group members. The psychiatrist (M.D.) will serve as the Medication Support Group leader and the Clinical Therapist will facilitate the therapeutic process within the group. During this process, the psychiatrist (M.D.) will write prescriptions as each consumer discusses his/her condition/treatment. If injections are required, the psychiatrist (M.D.) will administer unless RN or LPT staff is available. Whenever indicated, the psychiatrist (M.D.) may "pull out" an individual consumer for one to one intervention.

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