

Physician Consultation Services Procedure

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Background Physician Consultation Services are designed to assist Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) physicians, who are treating substance use disorder (SUD) clients, with seeking expert advice on designing treatment plans for specific services, including those rendered under the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS). Physician Consultation Services are available to DBH and contract agency DMC physicians within the DMC-ODS continuum of care within San Bernardino County.

Purpose To provide Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Substance Use Disorder and Recovery Services (SUDRS) and contract agency DMC physicians with written guidelines regarding consultation services.

Definition(s) **Addiction Specialists:** Addiction medicine physicians and addiction psychiatrists that demonstrate by education, experience, and examination the requisite knowledge and skills to provide prevention, screening, intervention, and treatment for substance use and addiction. In addition, addiction specialists can recognize and treat the psychiatric and physical complications of addiction. Addiction Specialists are subspecialty board certified in addiction medicine by one of the following organizations:

- American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM);
- American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN);
- American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM), or
- Certificate of Added Qualification in Addiction Medicine conferred by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA).

Consultant Physician: DBH Addiction Specialists provide Physician Consultation Services to DBH and contract agencies' DMC Physicians.

Physician Consultation: A correspondence between physicians in which a Referring Physician is seeking advice, opinion, or recommendation regarding the evaluation and/or management of a specific issue from a Consultant Physician.

Referring Physician: The DMC Physician who is requesting Physician Consultation Services.

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Eligibility Requests

Referring Physicians within the DMC-ODS continuum of care who seek consultation are responsible for initiating the request. Physician Consultation requests are intended for **physicians only** and must not be initiated by non-physicians or patients.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality shall be adhered to throughout the Physician Consultation process by following:

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 42, Part 2, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Register, Final Rule (42 CFR Part 2);
 - DBH Information Notice 18-02: Updated Authorization to Release Protected Health Information (PHI) Policy, Procedure and Form;
 - DBH Authorization to Release PHI Policy (COM0912), and
 - DBH Authorization to Release PHI Procedure (COM0912-1).
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Physician Consultation Requests

All Physician Consultation requests are monitored by designated SUDRS administration clerical staff. All consultation requests must to be submitted to DBH - SUDRS via fax at (909) 501 – 0800 and must include:

- A clear and concise clinical question to be answered by the consultant;
- Any relevant history, and
- Clinical details that help to inform and provide context for the concern/question.

The advice offered through DBH Physician Consultation Services is limited to addiction expertise. These consultations are to support DMC physicians with complex cases, and may address medication selection, dosing, side effect management, medication adherence, potential interactions, or level of care considerations.

Designated DBH physicians will utilize the information provided by the Referring Physician to provide recommendations focused on the question/concern of the requestor. In some complex cases, and at the discretion of DBH, the question asked by the Referring Physician may be posed to other addiction specialists to elicit alternative clinical opinions and/or ideas.

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Physician Consultation Requests, continued

In conjunction with the Consulting Physician's expert opinion, Referring Physician will then utilize their own judgement and other considerations (e.g., patient preferences, family concerns, other comorbid health conditions and/or psychosocial factors) to provide comprehensive and patient-centered treatment that is informed by the consultation.

Consulting Physicians will provide recommendations, but will not provide direct treatment unless extenuating circumstances are present.

Inappropriate Consultation Requests

DBH Physician Consultation Services requests are strictly limited to routine consultation requests. Emergent and urgent consultation needs shall be directed to more appropriate resources, such as Emergency Department or Psychiatric Emergency Services.

Consultation requests that are non-clinical in nature, administrative or more appropriate for other designated DBH staff are not included in this process. For example, if a physician has a question regarding Drug Medi-Cal eligibility, service availability, or policies and procedures related to SUD treatment, these questions shall be directed to appropriate DBH staff.

If it is determined that a consultation request is inappropriate, the Referring Physician shall be notified of this determination and provided an explanation for the decision.

Physician Consultation Referral

When a DMC physician determines additional advice, opinion, or recommendation is needed from an Addiction Specialist, DMC physician will obtain the Physician Consultation Referral form from the DBH Departmental Forms webpage. The following chart outlines the flow of form completion:

Stage	Responsible Party	Action Taken
1.	Referring Physician	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtain Physician Consultation Referral form (SUDRS023) from the DBH Website 2. Complete Sections I, II & III 3. Submit completed referral and Authorization for Release of Protected Health Information (PHI) (COM001) via fax to the SUDRS Med Fax Folder at (909) 501-0800 in accordance with the DBH Sending Confidential Information by Facsimile Policy (COM0901).

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Physician
Consultation
Referral,
continued

Stage	Responsible Party	Action Taken
2.	Office Assistant (OA)	<p>Retrieve fax and review referral for completeness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the form is determined incomplete: • Contact Referring Physician and explain why form is incomplete and request a completed form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Return referral via fax and include explanation of return and request a completed form be faxed. • If the form is determined complete: • Disseminate to the on-call DBH Addiction Specialist (<i>refer to calendar rotation</i>), and • Notify on-call DBH Addiction Specialist of receipt of Physician Consultation referral via e-mail and phone.
3.	Consulting Physician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive Physician Consultation Referral; • Review Sections I, II & III; • Contact Referring Physician and provide recommendations; • Document Physician Consultation services by completing Section IV of the Physician Consultation Referral, and • Return completed form to Referring Physician via fax to the SUDRS Med Fax Folder at (909) 501-0800 and title the fax; "Completed Physician Consultation Referral Form (SUDRS023)". <p>Note: Physician Consultation responses will be completed within two (2) DBH working days.</p>
4.	Office Assistant (OA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrieve and forward completed referral to the Referring Physician by following the DBH Sending Confidential Information by Facsimile Policy (COM0901). • Update and complete the Physician Consultation Referral Log.

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Physician Consultation Referral, continued

Stage	Responsible Party	Action Taken
5.	Referring Physician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive completed Physician Consultation Referral; • Review recommendations; • Place referral in client file, and • Document services provided (see Physician Consultation Documentation section).

Physician Consultation Referral Tracking

All Physician Consultation Referrals received and completed will be tracked by SUDRS OA staff as follows:

When	Then
Referral is received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter referral receipt information in the Physician Consultation referral log including date/time received, and • Save the SUDRS023 in the "Received" folder using the format of "client last name, first name, date of referral": e.g. Smith_Joan_1-28-19 received.
Referral process is completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter referral completion information date referral returned to Referring Physician on the Physician Consultation referral log spreadsheet. • Scan and save SUDRS023 in "Completed" folder using format of "client last name, first name, date of referral": e.g. Smith_Joan_1-28-19 completed.

Note: Incoming referrals received after 4 p.m. will be logged at the beginning of the next business day.

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Physician Consultation Documentation

Documentation requirements for services provided as a result of a physician consultation service are the same as with any other treatment scenarios and as follows:

When	Then
Referring Physician utilizes the DBH Physician Consultation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referring Physician is responsible for including thorough documentation of the client encounter and the role of the Physician Consultation Service in informing that encounter.
Consulting Physician provides Physician Consultation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physician will document the services by completing section IV of the Physician Consultation Referral Form.

Progress Note

When a progress note is needed, it must be completed within seven (7) calendar days by the Referring Physician, and must include:

- Client's name;
- Purpose of the service;
- Date;
- Start and end times of each service, and
- Identify if services were provided face-to-face or by telephone.

Note: The progress note shall use language that is clear and comprehensible to non-physician LPHA and AOD counselors.

Billing

Physician Consultation Services:

- May only be billed by and reimbursed to DMC Referring Physicians;
- Have two (2) procedure codes available for use:
 - A Medi-Cal billable procedure code that applies only to clients currently enrolled in DMC, and
 - A Non Medi-Cal billable procedure code that may be used for clients who **are not** enrolled in DMC;
- Are a fifteen (15) minute unit of service that is billed in minutes between one (1) minute and four hundred eighty (480) minutes, and
- Shall be documented as described in the *Progress Note* section above.

Note: DBH designated Consulting Physicians may **not** submit claims for reimbursement for these services.

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Physician Consultation Services Procedure, Continued

Related Policy or Procedure

The referenced policies and procedures can be located in the [DBH Standard Practice Manual](#):

- Authorization to Release Protected Health Information Policy (COM0912)
 - Authorization to Release Protected Health Information Procedure (COM0912-1)
 - Sending Confidential Information by Facsimile Policy (COM0901)
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Reference

- Department of Health Care Services Revenue Agreement for Substance Use Disorder Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System
 - Drug Medi-Cal Billing Manual
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