

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
Behavioral Health Services**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

**Subject: Service Delivery Practice Guidelines  
(MHP and DMC-ODS)**


**Policy Number: 3324**

**Date Effective: 12/15/2020**

**Pages: 2**

**Replaces: new**

**Responsible for Updating:  
Quality Improvement**

**Approval:**   
Behavioral Health Director

12-15-2020  
Date

**BACKGROUND:**

Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is committed to high quality and effective client care, resulting in client satisfaction and improved recovery. As a designated Mental Health Plan (MHP) and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) pilot county, BHS and contracted community-based organizations (CBO) partners utilize evidence-based practice guideline resources for clinical service delivery. Guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations for the assessment and treatment of behavioral health disorders intended to guide decisions.

The use of practice guidelines, such as those available through reputable organizations like ASAM, APA and SAMHSA, as well as the BHS policies and manuals, is critical in the delivery of Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) collaborative treatment services. Although not exclusive, these industry leaders provide practice guidelines on their websites to support the advancement of behavioral health care and treatment outcomes.

- **ASAM:** The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) is a professional medical society that aims to increase access and improve the quality of addiction treatment, educate physicians and the public, support research and preventions, and promote the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction.
- **APA:** The American Psychological Association (APA) is a professional psychological association whose mission is to promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives.
- **SAMHSA:** The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SMHSA) is the agency with the US Depart. Of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) programs and providers within the MHP or DMC-ODS network to assure that the utilization of Practice Guidelines meet the requirements identified in this policy.

**PURPOSE:**

Adhering to the requirements identified below regarding Practice Guidelines, as well as associated BHS policies and service delivery contract items, the MHP and DMC-ODS network provider ensures:

- appropriately use and monitoring of funds;
- include all partners in plan development, including consumers and their families;
- have standards related to quality, access, and coordination of services;
- have equitable access to care;
- have and follow eligibility criteria;
- offer continuity of care;
- provide services in appropriate locations and languages;
- provide culturally competent and age-appropriate services; and
- monitor the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of services

**POLICY:**

In accordance with 42 C.F.R. § 438.236(b); CCR, Title 9, § 1810.326; W&I Code 14684; MHP Contract, Ex. A, Att. 5; and DMC-ODS Contract, Ex A, Section II E.9, BHS and its Contractors will adopt and maintain Practice Guidelines that ensure treatment and services are provided in collaboration with the client.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. BHS and its Contractors shall maintain Practice Guidelines that meet the following requirements:
  - a) Are based on valid and reliable clinical evidence or a consensus of health care professionals in the applicable field;
  - b) Consider the needs of the beneficiaries;
  - c) Are adopted in consultation with contracting health care professionals; and
  - d) Are reviewed and updated periodically as appropriate
2. BHS and its Contractors shall disseminate the guidelines to all affected providers and, upon request, to beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries.
3. BHS and its Contractors shall take steps to assure that decisions for utilization management, beneficiary education, coverage of services, and any other areas to which the guidelines apply shall be consistent with these guidelines.

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**PRIOR VERSIONS:** new

**REFERENCES:**

Welfare & Institutions Code 14684; MHP Contract, Ex. A, Att. 5; DMC-ODS Contract, Ex A, Section II E.9; 42 C.F.R. § 438.236(b); CCR, Title 9, § 1810.326