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Clark County Regional Support Network Policy Statement

Policy No.: CR02
Policy Title: CCRSN Funded Mental Health Ombuds Service
Effective Date: July 1, 2002

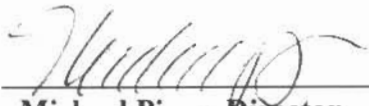
Policy: The CCRSN provides for a Mental Health Ombuds service that ensures the rights of State funded and Medicaid eligible mental health consumers are respected and services are responsive to their needs. In addition, the CCRSN provides unencumbered access to and maintains the independence of the Mental Health Ombuds Service as set forth in the references cited in this document.

Reference: WAC 388-865-0250; Washington Mental Health Division CCRSN Interlocal Agreement; RCW 71.05, 71.24, and 70.02, Clark County Department of Community Services Policy and Procedure 005: Sub-recipient and Contractor Monitoring; 45 CFR HIPPA.

Procedure:

1. The CCRSN shall ensure that the Mental Health Ombuds is functionally independent of CCRSN and providers by:
 - a) Contracting with an independent contractor to provide the Mental Health Ombuds service;
 - b) Maintaining a separation of duties in the complaint and grievance process regarding complaints filed with the Mental Health Ombuds and those filed with CCRSN;
 - c) Facilitating access to a separate, independent, toll-free phone line.
 - d) Facilitating access to service sites and records relating to the consumer with appropriate releases so to reach out to consumers, and resolve complaints and/or grievances.
2. The Mental Health Ombuds shall be a current consumer of the mental health system, past consumer or family member.
3. The Mental Health Ombuds shall:
 - a) Be responsive to the age and demographic character of the region and assist and advocate for consumers in resolving complaints and grievances at the lowest possible level;
 - b) Receive and investigate consumer, family member, and other interested party complaints;
 - c) Be accessible to consumers, including a toll-free, independent phone line for access;
 - d) Receive training and adhere to confidentiality consistent with the WAC, RCW, and HIPAA as referenced in this document;
 - e) Be available to investigate, advocate and assist the consumer through the grievance and administrative hearing processes;
 - f) Involve other persons, at the consumer's request;
 - g) If necessary, continue to assist the consumer through the fair hearing processes;
 - h) Coordinate and collaborate with allied systems' to improve the effectiveness of advocacy and to reduce duplication of effort for shared consumers;

- i) Provide information on grievance experience to the CCRSN and MHD quality management process; and
 - j) Provide reports and formalized recommendations at least biennially to the MHD and CCRSN advisory and governing boards, Quality Review Team (QRT), local consumer and family advocacy groups, and provider network.
4. The CCRSN shall monitor the contract with the Mental Health Ombuds in a way that does not compromise the independence and integrity of the Ombuds function as required by WAC, and referenced above. Contract monitoring will be conducted in accordance with Policy DCS 005.
 5. The CCRSN Enrollee and Stakeholder Affairs Manager, shall provide consultation and support for the Mental Health Ombuds by meeting face-to-face at a minimum of one time per month.
 6. The Mental Health Ombuds is a member of the CCRSN Quality Management Committee and will participate on other CCRSN committees, including the, Enrollee and Stakeholder Committee and the QRT.
 7. The Mental Health Ombuds will submit a monthly report to the CCRSN and QRT and reports quarterly to the Mental Health Advisory Board, Quality Management Committee, and Enrollee and Stakeholder Affairs Committee to include complaints and grievances in a format that allows for an unduplicated total count to be incorporated into the CCRSN data reported to the Washington MHD.
 8. The CCRSN will ensure contracted providers cooperate fully with the Mental Health Ombuds in the performance of his or her duties and that no retaliation occurs from the performance of such duties.

Approved By:  Date: 5 26 06
Michael Piper, Director
Clark County
Department of Community Services