

**Western Highlands Network
Communication Bulletin #53
January 18, 2007**

Consumer Follow-up Policy & Procedures

Purpose: To insure that consumers referred to providers in the Western Highlands Network are **provided** services needed to attain treatment outcomes, maintain safety for the consumer and the community, and to promote the delivery of Evidence Based Practices.

Policy: Western Highlands Network (WHN) is mandated to assure that consumers receive:

1. Clinically appropriate services and follow-up efforts to insure safety for the consumer and the community.
2. Services that promote positive treatment outcomes.
3. Services based on Evidence Based Practices.

As such, reasonable efforts are to be made to ensure that consumers who do not keep their initial evaluation/diagnostic assessment appointments receive appropriate and timely follow-up. WHN will monitor the delivery of services with random event checks of consumer contact and retrospective reviews of consumer's records to assure provider compliance and quality of care.

Procedure: Consumers who are referred from Access receive one of the four following designations:

1. Hospital Discharge
2. Emergent
3. Urgent
4. Routine

Minimum Follow-up requirements if a consumer misses an appointment for Evaluation/Diagnostic Assessment:

Hospital Discharges: All Consumers discharged from inpatient care must be seen face to **face** within 5 working days of discharge. This applies to consumers placed on Out Patient Commitment (OPC) as well.

Reasonable effort for follow-up is defined as documentation of at least one of the following within 1 week of the initial missed appointment:

- (1) a visit with the consumer in his/her home or
- (2) a rescheduled office appointment that the individual keeps or
- (3) a phone conversation with the individual about the services being offered; the individual agrees to a specific date/time for his/her next appointment within 1 week of phone call.
- (4) if the consumer declines an appointment and is not OPC, the clinician performs a current risk assessment and takes action, if indicated, based on this determination.

Emergent: Reasonable effort for this group is defined as one of the following to occur immediately:

- (1) a petition for involuntary commitment or
- (2) a referral for Mobile Crisis Services or
- (3) a visit with the consumer in his/her home or
- (4) a phone conversation with the individual in which a comprehensive safety assessment is completed, and appropriate action taken based on this determination.

Urgent: Reasonable effort for follow-up for this group is defined as one of the following

within 24 hours of the initial missed appointment:

- (1) a visit with the consumer in his/her home or
- (2) a rescheduled office appointment that the individual keeps or
- (3) a phone conversation with the individual in which a comprehensive safety assessment is completed, and appropriate action taken based on this determination.

Routine: Reasonable effort for follow-up for this group is defined as one of the following within 1 week of the initial missed appointment:

- (1) a rescheduled office appointment that the individual keeps or
- (2) a phone conversation with the individual which confirms the individual's current safety status and discusses the services being offered or
- (3) at least one attempt to contact the individual at his or her last known address.

For consumers on OPC, the WHN OPC follow-up procedure should be followed. See Communication Bulletin # 45.