

**Western Highlands Network
Communication Bulletin #77
Communication with Primary Care Physicians
March 18, 2008**

WHN has been working closely with Access II Care of WNC for several years to promote communication between primary care providers and the MH/DD/SA provider communities. A Community Support Provider - Primary Care Provider Workgroup has been developed as part of the current joint venture between AIIC, MAHEC, and WHN. This ICARE grant which focuses on the treatment of individuals with serious mental illness who are also experiencing significant, chronic physical health problems. In order for primary care providers to deliver appropriate and timely medical care to patients who are concurrently receiving both mental health and health care, the primary care community has identified the information listed below to be critical to its mission. The Workgroup has recommended to WHN that this essential MH/DD/SA information be transmitted to the appropriate primary care provider within 30 days following intake, and at least annually thereafter.

These data elements and the corresponding communication tool was developed in part by October Road, Mental Health Association of NC, RHA, and Families Together and approved by the primary care physicians participating in Access II Care's Medical Management Meetings.

These data elements are:

- ✍ Mental Health Diagnoses
- ✍ Current Medications & Prescriber's Name
- ✍ Relevant Lab work
- ✍ Name of Contact Professional Staff person and Contact Info.

The Workgroup has also determined that the physical health information listed below should routinely be available to the prescriber(s) of psychotropic medication for each patient receiving specialty MH/DD/SA services.

These data elements are:

- ✍ Updated Problem/Medical Diagnoses List
- ✍ Updated Medication List
- ✍ Allergy List.

Additional specific physical health information should be requested, when needed, from the primary care provider.

The attached communication tool, recommended by the Workgroup, pulls these data elements together. This document is designed so you can cut and paste the attached document onto your letterhead.

As you are aware, it is now required that community support providers identify and outreach to primary care providers. This sample tool is designed to meet these requirements. While WHN has been monitoring liaison between CS and Primary Care for some time, with the development of this tool, WHN will make documentation of this liaison process a point of emphasis.

We encourage your feedback whether this tool promotes appropriate and efficient sharing of essential medical information. Christine Kudlate, Adult Mental Health Provider Specialist at Western Highlands, will be glad to receive feedback (until July 15, 2008). In addition, during this time Access II Care will be asking for physician comment. With the opinions WHN and AIIC receive from CS and PCP we will reevaluate this tool for implementation.

April Conner, Behavioral Health Initiative Coordinator with Access II Care, has been invited to our next Mental Health Provider meeting on April 3rd to discuss this communication tool.