

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Prepared by the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee June 2012

What should one keep in mind when accessing DMH services?

Important points to remember when accessing DMH services:

- Access to services depends on the availability of the particular service.
- Many services have waitlists.
- Short term services that address immediate needs may be provided while an eligibility application is pending.¹
- Individuals are prioritized for services based on the urgency of their need.
- Assignment of a case manager is not a prerequisite for receipt of any DMH services.
- All services are voluntary.²

What services does DMH offer its adult clients?

DMH funded community services for adults include:

- Community Based Flexible Supports (CBFS) (which can include residential services);
- Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT);
- Clubhouses;
- DMH Case Management Services;
- Respite Care;
- Recovery Learning Communities;
- Homeless Support Services.³

What adult services can transition age youth access?

Transition age youth can access DMH adult services such as CBFS, PACT teams, and clubhouse services.

What services does DMH offer its minor clients?

DMH offers its minor clients:

- inpatient services;
- residential services;⁴
- case management;⁵
- Individual and family flexible support services
- adolescent day treatment;⁶

- Young Adult Vocational Program;⁷
- after-school programs;
- short term residential services;⁸
- peer mentoring (recently available in Arlington, Westboro, Canton and Quincy areas)
- PhotoVoice (recently available in Framingham and Waltham);
- support groups; advisory boards.

What inpatient services does DMH offer to its minor clients?

DMH offers the following inpatient services to its minor clients:

- latency age and adolescent inpatient facilities
- Inpatient intensive residential treatment programs (IRTPs) serving youth ages 13-18. If a youth turns 19 while already in an IRTP, he or she may remain there until he or she has finished his or her course of treatment.⁹ Access is dictated by DMH regulation.¹⁰

Youth age 18 and older would receive inpatient services on adult inpatient psychiatric units run by or licensed by DMH.¹¹

What residential services does DMH offer to its minor clients?

DMH provides some residential services for children and adolescents who cannot live at home and require a therapeutic school program. There are residential options that serve:

- latency age youth (ages 6-12);
- adolescents (ages 13-18 or ages 15-20);
- transition age youth (ages 18-21); or
- young adults (ages 18-25) (these are group homes for young adults to develop independent living skills).

DMH currently funds a few supported housing slots specifically for older youth.

Depending on circumstances, DMH may pay for the residential component of a residential/educational placement such a placement while the school system pays for the education only component.

What are CBFS services for adults?

Community Based Flexible Supports (CBFS) are services to help DMH clients live as independently as possible in the community and pursue recovery from mental illness. In each geographic area of the state, DMH has contracted with vendors to provide CBFS services. These CBFS contractors are supposed to individualize the services for each client and to adjust the mix and intensity of CBFS services as the client moves toward recovery.¹²

Services include, but are not limited to, interventions and supports that manage psychiatric symptoms in the community, restore or maintain independent living in the community, restore or maintain daily living skills, promote wellness and the management of medical conditions, and assist clients to restore or maintain and utilize the skills necessary to undertake employment.¹³

What are PACT teams for adults and young adults?

PACT (Program for Assertive Community Treatment) teams are intensive case management and outreach to individuals who typically are resistant to engaging in treatment. The PACT program consists of a clinical team which works with each person. PACT is most appropriate for patients with certain diagnoses, such as schizophrenia.

The Southeastern Area of DMH has PACT teams that specifically target young adults.¹⁴

What is the DMH Transition Age Youth Initiative?

The DMH Transition Age-Youth Initiative, established by DMH in 2005, helps youth move from the children's mental health system to the adult and helps those aging out of the juvenile or foster care systems. The initiative provides age-appropriate services for 16 to 25-year-olds that assist with vocational rehabilitation, peer support, mental health treatment, job searching and family psycho-education. Transition-Age Youth programs are located in all six of the state's Mass. Mental Health Service Delivery areas.

What are Individual and Family Flexible Support Services for children?

DMH contracts with providers in each of its sites for Individual and Family Flexible Support Services for children authorized by DMH to receive such services.

Services to families provided under these contracts are sometimes referred to as home-based services or wrap around services.

Services may include:

- teaching behavior management skills;
- access to respite care (DMH has specific contracts for this service);
- parent aide services;
- homemaker and chore services;
- supports for siblings;
- consultation on advocacy strategies to assist the family in securing services from schools and other entities, (including appropriate mental health and support services for parents, as needed);
- resources for purchasing individualized services to address unique challenges faced by families.¹⁵

Home-based services may last for 3-6 months.¹⁶

What is the Young Adult Vocational Program?

The Young Adult Vocational Program is a day program to assist young adults age 16–25 in developing vocational training and employment.

DMH's supported education services provide a counselor who will meet with young adults who are pursuing college and assist them with their search and advocate with colleges for accommodations as needed.¹⁷

For older youth who have graduated or left school, DMH sponsors community-based programs that assist with achieving employment or educational objectives. DMH delivers these services to clients primarily by contracting with private vendors. One such program is provided by Community Support Clubhouses.

What are Community Support Clubhouses?

DMH's Community Support Clubhouses provide members with a range of career counseling, job search, training, support, and placement services for obtaining and maintaining permanent, supported, or transitional employment. Clubhouses also serve as multi-service centers for DMH clients and other persons with mental illness living in the community. In addition to the more traditional job development, training, and employment services offered, each clubhouse operates under a "work ordered day" philosophy. Clubhouses pursue a variety of jobs for members including integrated, independent employment. Although initially designed for adult clients, six clubhouses have significantly modified their programs to make them attractive to older adolescents.

What are short term residential services for adolescents?

Short term residential services provide a 45-day diagnostic program for adolescents in crisis who can not function at home.

What is peer mentoring for young adults?

Peer mentoring is a program where young adults who have either graduated from the DMH system or are making great gains within it act as role models to other young adults. Mentors organize social activities, provide general support, etc.

- Peer Mentoring Project -- contact Ray Thomas at 781-643-5093 (Arlington and Westboro areas)
- Peer Mentoring Project -- contact Adam Rogers at 617-774-6031 (Canton and Quincy areas).

What are support groups for parents?

DMH operates support groups for parents in each geographic area, including specific support groups for parents of young adults.

¹ 104 CMR 29.04(1)(g). These services are available for up to 60 days. During this period, the application shall be considered “pending.” 104 CMR 29.04(1)(g). *See also* <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dmh/services/application-process.doc> at 4.

² Project Interface, Accessing the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH), A Guide for Parents and Guardians on How and When to Access Services for Children, Adolescents and Young Adult, <http://msppinterface.org/guides/accessingDMH>.

³ *See* DMH, Inpatient Study Commission, Description of Services, <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/eohhs/inpatient-commission/description-of-services-5-13-09.rtf>.

⁴ Project Interface, Accessing the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH), A Guide for Parents and Guardians on How and When to Access Services for Children, Adolescents and Young Adult, <http://msppinterface.org/guides/accessingDMH>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ 104 CMR 27.04(2)(a).

¹⁰ 104 CMR 27.04(2)(b), (c), (d).

¹¹ In most instances, youth under age 19 may not be admitted to adult inpatient units run or licensed by DMH. 104 CMR 27.05(7). An exception exists when a judge of a court of competent jurisdiction has issued an order for the commitment of the individual to a mental health facility pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 123, §§ 15, 16, 17, or 18, or where the individual has been committed to the Department of Youth Services, and the Commissioner or designee has determined that one or both of the following factors exist:

1. placement of the individual on an adolescent inpatient unit would create a likelihood of serious harm to the individual or others; or
2. the individual is in need of stricter security than is available on an adolescent. 104 CMR 27.05(7)(a). Another exception is when admission is to the Commonwealth Research and Evaluation Unit at Erich Lindemann Mental Health Center, which may admit individuals under the age of 19 provided that the Units ensure appropriate separate physical space and programmatic services for them, as approved by the Commissioner. 104 CMR 27.05(7)(c).

¹² *See* DMH, Inpatient Study Commission, Description of Services, <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/eohhs/inpatient-commission/description-of-services-5-13-09.rtf>. For more information, see DMH web site at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dmh/community-based-flexible-supports.html>.

¹³ *See* DMH, Inpatient Study Commission, Description of Services, <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/eohhs/inpatient-commission/description-of-services-5-13-09.rtf>. For more information, see DMH web site at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dmh/community-based-flexible-supports.html>.

¹⁴ GAO, Young Adults with Serious Mental Illness: Some States and Federal Agencies Are Taking Steps to Address Their Transition Challenges (June 2008), <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08678.pdf>, at 33.

¹⁵ DMH, DMH Family Support Plan for FY'10, <http://www.mfofc.org/2010/dmh2010.pdf>, at 1-2.

¹⁶ Project Interface, Accessing the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH), A Guide for Parents and Guardians on How and When to Access Services for Children, Adolescents and Young Adult, <http://msppinterface.org/guides/accessingDMH>.

¹⁷ Project Interface, Accessing the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH), A Guide for Parents and Guardians on How and When to Access Services for Children, Adolescents and Young Adult, <http://msppinterface.org/guides/accessingDMH>.