

Policy: It shall be the policy of the Division to contact consumers who fail to appear without notice (no show) for medication clinic and outpatient appointments.

Purpose: This policy is to minimize the negative impact of missed appointments on safety and treatment, and to ensure continuity of care for all Division consumers.

No Division Agency Consumer who has run out of medication will be turned away from a Clinic site without enough medication to last until that consumer can be seen by their treating physician. Decisions regarding the dispensing of medications are clinical and in all cases involve the clinical nursing and medical staff.

I. CONTACT PROCEDURES:

- A. It is recommended that nursing staff in medication clinics contact the consumer(s) the day prior to their scheduled appointment. If the consumer presents as unstable, the nurse will recommend that the consumer come in sooner as a walk-in, go to the Emergency Room, or initiate a health/welfare check with appropriate law enforcement agency.
- B. A notation will be made in the electronic medical record (EMR) of the consumer's "no show" status, and any subsequent follow-up phone calls shall also be documented in the EMR with outcome noted.
- C. Consumers identified as "riskful" (with a LOCUS score of four (4) or higher) i.e., a high, immediate probability of engaging in dangerous behavior due to suicidal symptoms, psychosis with dangerous behavior or lack of medication, shall be contacted by telephone within (1) hour of the missed appointment. If contact is not made a wellness check shall be requested.
- D. A no-show letter will be sent within five (5) working days of a missed appointment if previous contact attempts have been unsuccessful. The letter should indicate concern for treatment progress and encourage the consumer to contact the agency to reschedule their appointment. The letter shall indicate that if the consumer does not contact the medication clinic within ten (10) days, the consumer will run the risk of being closed to service and will need to contact the Psychiatric Ambulatory Services (PAS) for future service. If a consumer's case is closed and contacts the clinic within thirty (30) days, closure can be rescinded and the consumer can be reopened to services in the medication clinic.
- E. If a consumer misses two (2) consecutive appointments, has not responded to a no show letter, is without a current appointment, and has not been seen in more than ninety (90) days, the consumer's case will be closed.

- F. A consumer referred to the medication clinic (waiting list), who is not yet opened to service, will be sent a letter encouraging them to contact the clinic to reschedule their nursing appointment within ten (10) days or be closed to the medication clinic and referred back to PAS for any future needs. If contact is made after the consumer's case is closed to the medication clinic but within thirty days of closure, the consumer may be reopened to the waiting list for an appointment, or receive services as a walk-in.
- G. The Administrator of each agency is to develop a method to monitor no show/cancellation rates. This data is reported periodically by program evaluation personnel within the Division outcome measures.

II. PHARMACY PROCEDURES - MHDS PHARMACIES and RURAL CLINICS:

- A. Prescriptions are maintained in the MHDS agency pharmacies for all patients from appointment to appointment dates. Thus, the end date of each prescription is coded as the next appointment date. This allows the pharmacy staff to participate in a multi-disciplinary fashion in following the clinical progress of the patients.
- B. It is the responsibility of the pharmacist to establish the exact reason why the patient is out of medications, and make appropriate decisions based on the findings including contacting and referral to Clinic staff.
- C. If the patient is out of medications and is only a few days away from their next scheduled clinic appointment, the pharmacist shall contact the medication clinic and obtain authorization to dispense additional medications up to the medication clinic appointment date. In an emergency, the pharmacist can dispense these additional medications for a few days supply and make notations on pharmacy records to reflect the occurrence. The pharmacist shall convey to the medication clinic staff such emergency medication provision as soon as possible. This will insure that the patient's medical records are updated accordingly. This will also insure that the patient is not left without medications for weekends, holidays and other eventualities.
- D. If the patient is out of medications and did not make it to the previous medication clinic appointment as evidenced by the end date reflected in Item A above, the pharmacist shall proceed as follows:
 - 1. Explain to the patient why there are no active refills in pharmacy record.
 - 2. Refer the patient to the medication clinic to reestablish appointment date and generate a new prescription for the pharmacy.
 - 3. Pharmacy shall fill the prescriptions accordingly.

- E. For consumers at the Rural Clinics, the following procedures shall apply:
1. The nurse shall explain to the patient why there are no refills remaining.
 2. The physician will be contacted by the nurse (by phone if not at the Rural site for approval of additional medications).
 3. When applicable, drug samples shall be utilized to provide enough medications until the patient's prescriptions can be reestablished.
 4. In the absence of drug samples, emergency prescriptions shall be called in to a local pharmacy to provide needed medications, until the patient's prescriptions and appointment dates can be reestablished.
- F. Each Division agency shall develop specific written procedures to implement the provisions of this policy or shall incorporate this policy into the agency policy manual.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Brando". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The name "Carol" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Brando" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The signature ends with a large, sweeping flourish that loops back under the word "Brando".

Administrator

Effective Date: 10/6/98
Date Revised: 5/9/03, 7/24/03, 11/14/03; 6/29/07
Date Approved by MHDS Commission: