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Owner: Michele Vasconcellos: Director,
 Customer Service
Policy Area: Customer Service
References: [NCQA UM3](#)

Communication Using the Teletype Device, & Michigan Relay Service or Other Communication Devices

POLICY

It is the policy of the DWMHA that individuals who are deaf, hearing impaired or others with communication needs shall have access to the DWMHA using the Michigan Relay Service, teletype devices (TTY) and other communication devices.

PURPOSE

This policy ensures that procedures are in place to accommodate individuals who have communication limitations, or impairments and the use of auxiliary aids, services, alternative formats, and other reasonable accommodations.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to the DWMHA Staff, contractual staff, Managers of Comprehensive Provider Networks (MCPNs), direct contractors and subcontractors, and the Access Center. This policy pertains to those served including adults and children with I/DD, SMI/SEI, SED and/or SUD diagnoses.

KEY WORDS

1. Augmentative Communication
2. Contractor
3. Deaf
4. Michigan Relay Service
5. Telephone Deaf Device (TTY)

STANDARDS

1. Contractors shall develop policies and procedures which ensures all services, programs, or activities shall be accessible and usable to individuals with hearing impairments.
2. DWMHA shall take appropriate steps to ensure communication with individuals with disabilities is as

effective as communication with others in health programs and activities. Auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities may include:

- a. Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting
 - b. Note takers
 - c. Open and closed captioning
 - d. Written materials
 - e. Computer-aided transcription services
 - f. Telecommunications devices for deaf persons (voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems), text telephones (TTYs), videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices
 - g. Qualified readers, taped texts or audio recordings
 - h. Screen reader software, large print, braille materials or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or have low vision
 - i. Physical accessibility of newly constructed or altered facility, in compliance with the 2010 Americans with Disability Acts standards for Accessible Design.
3. DWMHA shall ensure all programs and activities provided through electronic and information technology be accessible for all individuals with disabilities unless doing so would result in undue financial and administrative burdens or a fundamental alteration in the nature of the health programs or activities.
 4. TTY will be located at the main reception desk, or the reception desk in the Office of Recipient Rights.
 5. Staff assigned to the TTY device shall have primary responsibility for answering and responding to incoming calls and messages then forwarding messages to the appropriate staff.
 6. Outbound calls to hearing impaired person are to be:
 - a. Connected via calling Michigan Relay (711), providing the area code and phone number of the enrolled member to be contacted.
 - b. Upon receipt of a call from Michigan Relay, assigned staff is to be alerted so they may be advised of the message for TTY follow-up.
 7. The DWMHA shall:
 - a. Ensure reception and information desk staff are provided with initial training within 30 days of hire and provided technical assistance as necessary to support the ongoing TTY operations.
 - b. Ensure a trained staff person is available to provide technical assistance for the reception and information desk staff until the new staff has been formally trained.
 - c. Facilitate training on the use of the TTY for DWMHA staff and others as needed.
 - d. Ensure equipment is maintained and tested on regular basis.
 8. The Michigan Relay Service and other alternate forms of communication, including the use of an augmentative communication specialist, will also be used to communicate with individuals who are deaf, hearing impaired or who do not use verbal communication, as deemed appropriate. Additional assistance will be provided if a deaf or hard of hearing member does not have access to a TTY phone. Secure email communication will be provided, if necessary.
 9. Information regarding how to access services is in the Member Handbook.

QUALITY ASSURANCE/IMPROVEMENT

The DWMHA shall review and monitor contractor adherence to this policy as one element in its network management program, and as one element of the QAPIP Goals and Objectives.

The quality improvement programs of MCPNs, their subcontractors and direct contractors must include measures for both the monitoring of and the continuous improvement of the programs or processes described in this policy.

COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE LAWS

DWMHA staff, MCPNs, contractors and subcontractors are bound by all applicable local, State and Federal laws, rules, regulations and policies, all Federal waiver requirements, State and County contractual requirements, policies, and administrative directives, as amended.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

1. Medicaid Provider Manual
2. Michigan Mental Health Code, PA 258 of 1974, as amended. Suitable services; treatment environment; setting; right; MCL 330.1708
3. Michigan Department of Community Health, Community Mental Health Service Provider Managed Specialty Supports and Services Contract, Section 3.12, Compliance with Civil Rights, 1998-2002
4. Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42, U.S.C. 2000s et.seq
5. Title II, Americans with Disability Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336
6. Michigan Department of Community Health, Application for Participation, 1/03/02
7. Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act: New requirements for non-discrimination.

RELATED POLICIES

Accommodations for Individuals with Visual and Mobility Impairments.

RELATED DEPARTMENTS

Administration, Claims Management, Clinical Practice Improvement, Compliance, Customer Service, Information Technology, Integrated Health Care, Legal, Managed Care Operations, Management & Budget, Personnel, Purchasing, Quality Improvement, Utilization Management, Recipient Rights, Substance Use Disorders

CLINICAL POLICY

NO

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL POLICY

EXTERNAL

Attachments:

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Approver	Date
Ronald Hocking: Chief Operating Officer	06/2017
Dana Lasenby: Deputy Chief Operating Officer	05/2017
Allison Smith: Project Manager, PMP	05/2017
Kip Kliber: Director, Recipient Rights	05/2017
Julia Kyle: Director of Integrated Care	05/2017
Lorraine Taylor-Muhammad: Director, Managed Care Operations	04/2017
William Sabado	04/2017
Rolf Lowe: Assistant General Counsel/HIPAA Privacy Officer	04/2017
Stacie Durant: CFO Management & Budget	04/2017
crystal Palmer: Director, Children's Initiatives	04/2017
Jody Connally: Director, Human Resources	04/2017
Mary Allix	04/2017
Darlene Owens: Director, Substance Use Disorders, Initiatives	04/2017
Corine Mann: Chief Strategic Officer/Quality Improvement	04/2017
tracey Lee: Director Claims Management	04/2017
Bessie Tetteh: CIO	04/2017
Maha Sulaiman	04/2017
Sarah Sharp: Consultant	04/2017
Diana Hallifield: Consultant	03/2017
Michele Vasconcellos: Director, Customer Service	03/2017