

NORTHCARE NETWORK

TITLE: Independent Facilitation of a
Person-Centered Plan
EFFECTIVE DATE: April 18, 2003

REVIEWED/REVISED:
8/6/03; 12/6/04; 1/22/07

PURPOSE and APPLICABILITY

The Michigan Department of Community Health established the consumer's right to seek help from a neutral person to facilitate their Person-Centered Plan (PCP). Optimally, consumers would develop their own PCP. However, when requested, the capacity for independent facilitation must be available. Consumers in the Upper Peninsula are able to access a trained volunteer independent facilitator through NorthCare Network's Member Services. This service is not available to consumers receiving short term outpatient services / medication only services / or substance abuse services.

DEFINITION

An Independent Facilitator (IF) is an individual who will facilitate the negotiation of a mutually responsible PCP between the consumer and the provider organization. A consumer engages a facilitator to ensure their needs are identified and adequate planning occurs. The facilitator ensures the consumer has a plan that addresses those issues that are important TO the consumer and those issues that are important FOR the consumer (e.g. health and safety concerns). The facilitator helps the consumer understand the process of person centered planning. The Independent Facilitator does not represent the consumer at a hearing or in a court of law.

PROCEDURES

- I. All persons receiving services will be informed about the option of having an Independent Facilitator conduct their PCP meeting.**
 - A. NorthCare and its Community Mental Health Service Providers (CMHSP) will provide education regarding independent facilitation to their consumers.
 1. The CMHSP will provide each individual accessing services information about PCP and with that material will be the information about the right to work with an independent facilitator.
 2. Information about Independent Facilitation will be available from NorthCare Member Services.
 3. The NorthCare Customer Handbook and the website contain information regarding accessing a local Independent Facilitator.
 4. Consumer educators and Member Services staff will be available to speak with consumer groups about PCP education including information about the option of having an independent facilitator.
 - B. The attributes of a successful Independent Facilitator:
 1. The ability to be objective.
 2. The ability to negotiate and the awareness of when a process is bogged down; how to disengage from unproductive negotiations.
 3. The ability to communicate with consumers and providers.

4. Group management skills.
 5. The ability to keep focused on the agenda –the consumer sets the agenda.
 6. A sense of humor.
 7. The ability to use a support network to cope with the difficulties of their tasks.
- C. The requirements to become an Independent Facilitator:
1. Become a volunteer of one of the five local CMHSPs and/or be a trained mediator at one of the Upper Peninsula Centers for Dispute Resolution. It is anticipated that if volunteers are not knowledgeable about mental illness, they are open to training in that field.
 2. Be at least 18 years old.
 3. Demonstrate competency by successfully completing a training Program as described below.
 4. May not be financially connected to the individual for whom the plan is being developed.

II How to become a volunteer-- Recruitment, Training & Expenses

- A. Recruitment will be coordinated by NorthCare Member Services
1. Working with the local CMHSP staff and local community and consumer groups (Drop Ins, vocational settings, member services committees, and Centers for Dispute Resolution), NorthCare will recruit volunteers to become trained Independent Facilitators.
 2. The potential Independent Facilitator volunteers will be asked to complete the necessary paperwork and training to become a volunteer of their local CMHSP if they are not a current mediator at a U.P. Dispute Resolution Center.
- B. The Training Program for Independent Facilitators
1. The initial training module
 - a. Trainings will be offered as necessary to ensure that an Independent Facilitator is available regardless of the geographical location in the Upper Peninsula.
 - b. Training will be individualized according to the volunteer's current level of knowledge and experience with PCP and the art of negotiation.
 - c. Training will require approximately 16 to 18 hours of specific training on various tools for facilitating the PCP process and on specific mediation skills and consumer rights.
 2. Ongoing training
 - a. Volunteers will be required to participate in a minimum of one training opportunity per year to remain on the active roster.
 1. The volunteers will be offered ongoing training opportunities as needed. They may attend their local CMHSP trainings on topics of interest as well as any specific updates on PCP or related topics.

2. Meetings coordinated by NorthCare will be available for support, networking and problem solving and advanced training with other volunteers and training staff.
 3. Facilitators may reach out for individual assistance at any time from NorthCare staff and their local CMHSP Member Services.
- b. Training accommodations will be made as needed for individual participants.
3. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the facilitators
 - a. After the PCP meeting, participants will be asked to complete an evaluation of the meeting process and the role of the facilitator.
 - b. The facilitator will be responsible for distributing the evaluation forms.
 - c. A meeting participant will be asked to gather the forms and place them in a prepaid, preaddressed envelope to send to NorthCare for review.
 - d. The information gathered will be used to improve the facilitator's skills and to address any unmet training needs.
- C. Expenses
1. The Independent Facilitators are volunteers. NorthCare and the CMHSPs recognize the expense of traveling to regional trainings and the value of their time commitment in facilitating PCP meetings. Therefore NorthCare will:
 - a. Pay mileage for attending the required initial trainings. Mileage sheets will be submitted to NorthCare for reimbursement.
 - b. Volunteers may submit an expense form for a \$25.00 stipend for each meeting necessary to complete the PCP. It is anticipated that the PCP process will require two (2) to three (3) meetings. The stipend will be paid when the necessary paperwork for the PCP is filed and when the evaluation forms have been received by NorthCare.
 - c. Volunteers may submit a \$35.00 travel stipend for each meeting if mileage is more than 50 miles round trip.

III The Tasks of the Independent Facilitator

- A. To define the PCP meeting details through a documented pre-planning process. This will usually entail an initial meeting between the consumer and the Independent Facilitator. A second meeting with CMHSP staff and the consumer and the IF may occur to complete the pre-planning. The details to be defined are:
 1. Identify the participants, time, and location for the PCP meeting.
 2. Identify who will record the meeting minutes (this should not be the Independent Facilitator.)
 3. Identify what issues the consumer wishes to discuss in the meeting.
 4. Identify what issues the consumer does not wish to discuss.
 5. Record the consumer's current hopes and dreams.
 6. Identify the services desired to obtain the stated hopes and dreams.
 7. Identify the barriers to obtaining the hopes and dreams.
 8. Identify health and safety issues.

9. With the consumer, prepare the list of invitees to the PCP meeting.
- B. Facilitating the PCP meeting
 1. Determine who is responsible for recording the meeting (usually the case manager or supports coordinator).
 2. Help the consumer and their support person(s) identify the treatment objectives, goals and plans to achieve the desired outcomes.
 3. Keep the meeting focused on the consumer's agenda and working toward consensus about goals and services.
 4. Recognize if the meeting has become unproductive and call for a break to let matters cool down. Reschedule the meeting if a cooperative environment cannot be established.
 5. At the end of the meeting, distribute the evaluation forms.
- C. Documentation of the PCP process
 1. The CMHSP staff responsible will submit the recorded goals and recommended services and follow through on the authorization process according to the local CMHSP policies.
 2. The consumer should receive a copy of the completed plan within 15 business days.
 3. If services are for some reason not authorized, the Independent Facilitator should be notified promptly and will work with the consumer and agency to find a compromise. Another planning meeting could be arranged.
 4. The Independent Facilitator submits paperwork as required.
 5. The consumer has the option of including the IF at the scheduled plan review.

IV Accessing an Independent Facilitator

- A. CMHSP staff will be responsible for educating consumers about this option for assistance and for helping initiate contact with NorthCare to arrange for an Independent Facilitator
- B. NorthCare Member Services will be responsible for maintaining a roster of trained volunteers.
 1. A consumer may contact NorthCare directly. Staff will explain the program and who is currently available. A consumer may choose an Independent Facilitator or NorthCare will help make a match. Staff would then contact the volunteer who would then contact the consumer and begin the process. If the match is successful, the Independent Facilitator will obtain a written release of information from the consumer to continue facilitating their plan. The release should be on the standard form utilized by the CMHSP providing services. The Independent Facilitator is responsible for sending a copy of the release to NorthCare Network. **If either the consumer or the volunteer is not satisfied with the match, Member services will arrange for another Independent Facilitator.**
 2. An advocate or family member of a consumer may also initiate contact with NorthCare in regards to the process in general. However an authorization to release information will be necessary to speak about a specific consumer's needs or desires.

3. A guardian or person with legal authority can request an IF on behalf of the person they are representing.
- C. The consumer will have access to information about this planning option directly on NorthCare's website. There will be information on the entire Person-Centered Planning process including how to obtain an Independent Facilitator.

REFERENCES

- ✓ Medicaid Managed Specialty Supports and Services Concurrent 1915(b)/(c) Waiver Program FY 03-04 (Attachment P3.4.1.1-10-01-02)