

METROCARE SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Reference: Board Policy on Client Services 2.01

Effective Date: 10/23/2013

Subject: Administrative Procedure on Communicating
Information To Persons With Sensory and/or
Language Barriers 2.01.08

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Purpose:

To implement the Metrocare Services Board of Trustees policy on Client Services by describing the philosophy of a consumer focused service system, which is responsive to individuals with special communication needs due to sensory and/or language barriers.

Policy:

Recognizing that there are consumers of Metrocare Services who by reason of sensory or mobility impairments or language barriers have special communication needs; and recognizing the right and need of consumers to be informed, to participate in their treatment, and to have access to people outside of the Center; steps are taken as necessary to ensue effective communication to all consumers.

Metrocare trains direct-service employees, by means of annual training sessions, in their duties toward deaf consumers under the ADA. New direct-service employees are informed of these obligations as part of the hiring procedure.

Definitions:

- A. Business Coordinators: employees designated to answer questions and provide assistance to Center personnel, consumers, and companions seeking interpreters or auxiliary aids and services.
- B. Companion: 1) a person whom the consumer indicates should communicate with Center personnel about the consumer; participate in any treatment decision; play a role in communicating the consumer's needs, condition, history, or symptoms to Center personnel; or help the consumer act on the information, advice, or instructions provided by Center personnel; or 2) a person legally authorized to make health care decisions on behalf of the consumer; or 3) such other person with whom the Center would ordinarily and regularly communicate concerning the consumer's medical condition.
- C. Interpreter: "sign language interpreter," "foreign language interpreter," or other "interpreter," or someone qualified to interpret within the meaning of the ADA and any state licensing requirements for interpreters.

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Assessment of Individual Needs:

- A. The individual needs of a consumer, and any companion of the consumer participating in treatment discussions and decision-making, will be assessed upon arrival at the Center.
- B. As part of this initial assessment, Center staff will determine whether the consumer, and any family member or friend of the consumer participating in treatment discussions and decision – making, is a person who has a:
 1. Hearing impairment
 2. Visual impairment
 3. Speech impairment
 4. Limited English proficiency
- C. For consumers who are deaf and/or whose primary language is sign language, interpreter services may be preferred as knowledge of English or written English may be difficult to assess and is frequently limited.
 1. If a determination is made that the consumer or the consumer’s companion has a hearing impairment, and as soon as the consumer’s condition reasonably allows, a “Notice to Deaf and Hearing Impaired Patients” form (See Attachment A) should be provided to the person who is deaf to ascertain his/her communication needs. A completed form will be kept in the consumer’s medical record. A qualified interpreter will be provided.
 2. If a determination is made that the patient or the consumer or the consumer’s companion has a visual impairment, staff will communicate the content of written materials concerning benefits, services, waivers of rights, and consent to treatment forms by reading them out loud to the visually impaired person.
 3. If a determination is made that the consumer or the consumer’s companion has a speech impairment, writing materials (paper and pen) will be made available or, as appropriate, digital media devices will be used to accommodate individuals in order to facilitate effective communications of information concerning benefits, services, waivers of rights, and consent to treatment forms.
 4. If a determination is made that the consumer or the consumer’s companion has limited English proficiency, a qualified interpreter will be provided. If an interpreter for a

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particular language is not available locally, an interpreter will be provided through a telephonic interpreter service.

APPROPRIATE SITUATIONS FOR PROVIDING AN INTERPRETER:

- A. Discussion of a consumer's symptoms and medical condition, medications and medical history.
- B. Explaining and describing medical conditions, tests, treatment options, medications, and other procedures.
- C. Providing a diagnosis, prognosis, or recommendation for treatment.
- D. Obtaining informed consent for treatment.
- E. Communicating with a consumer during treatment and testing procedures.
- F. Providing instructions for medications, post-treatment activities, and follow-up treatments.
- G. Providing group or individual therapy, or counseling for consumers and companions.
- H. Discussing complex billing or insurance matters.

INTERPRETER QUALIFICATIONS:

Any interpreter used must be able to interpret competently, accurately, and impartially. If state licensure or certification is available, then the interpreter must be a licensed or certified interpreter. The interpreter must be familiar with any specialized vocabulary used and must be able to interpret medical terms and concepts.

PROCEDURE FOR CONTACTING AN INTERPRETER:

- A. If the determination is made that the consumer or the consumer's companion requires the services of an interpreter, Center personnel will contact an interpreter or a company that provides interpreter services and will make arrangements for the interpreter to assist in communication with the consumer or the consumer's companion.

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B. The sources of interpreters include:

1. Employees who have volunteered to be (and are qualified to be) interpreters. Human Resources will maintain a list of qualified employee interpreters.
2. Interpreters and interpreter services contracted with Metrocare to provide services. (See Attachment B)

APPROVED: _____


John W. Burruss, MD
Chief Executive Officer

DATE APPROVED: _____

10/25/2013

**METROCARE SERVICES
NOTICE OF SERVICES FOR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PERSONS**

Our employees want to communicate effectively with you and your family members. Please fill out this paper and return it to the Front Desk staff person. All of the services listed below are free of charge to you.

1. Would a sign language interpreter help us communicate effectively with you?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. Are there any other services/auxiliary aids that you believe would help us better communicate with you?

Signature

Date

A copy of our policy for effective communications with deaf and hard-of-hearing persons is available without any charge upon request. Please initial here if you would like a copy of this policy: _____

**METROCARE SERVICES
INTERPRETATION SERVICES**

- Deaf Action Center
- Language Line Services
- Vietnamese Language Services