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Date: October 12, 2020

To: Coordinated care organizations
Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities

From: Chelsea Holcomb, Director, Child and Family Behavioral Health
David Inbody, CCO Operations Director

Subject: Certification of Need for Services for children's Subacute treatment, effective January 1, 2020

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is writing to clarify that the Certification of Need for Services (CONS) is required for **all** admissions to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs), including children receiving Subacute treatment, effective January 1, 2020.

- As specified in [42 C.F.R. Part 441, Subpart D](#), all PRTF residents must meet all CONS requirements.
- This need must be certified by a physician at the time of admission or, if any individual applies for assistance while in a residential facility, before the Medicaid agency authorizes payment.
- Emergency admissions, such as a subacute admission, must be certified by the PRTF team responsible for creating the plan of care. Emergency CONS must be completed within 14 days.
- Non-emergency admissions must be certified by an **independent** team as identified in [§441.152](#). The independent team must include a physician that has competence in diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, preferably child psychiatry, and has knowledge of the individual's situation. The team can be either community team referring the youth for level of care or the CCO providing the prior authorization.
- These requirements apply to the entire certified provider/supplier and to all patients/residents being served by the certified entity, regardless of payment source unless the regulations state otherwise.

Why is this happening?

After review of federal PRTF regulations, OHA determined that all children in PRTF programs must have a CONS for their admission, including children receiving Subacute treatment. Prior to January 2020, OHA did not require the CONS for children receiving Subacute treatment.

What should you do?

CCOs should immediately update their processes and communicate the changes to their provider network and internal staff. CCOs should confirm that providers and staff are aware of and will adhere to the federal requirements for CONS for Subacute and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Service admissions.

CCOs and PRTFs should ensure the CONS document includes the following statements:

1. Community resources do not meet the treatment needs of the youth;
2. The youth's presenting psychiatric condition requires services on an inpatient basis under the direction of a physician; and

NEW – Certification of Need for Services (CONS) for children’s Subacute treatment

3. The services can reasonably be expected to improve the youth’s condition or prevent further regression.

For Secure Children’s Inpatient Program (SCIP) and Secure Adolescent Inpatient Program (SAIP) admissions, please use the request [process](#) and [form](#) on the CCO Contract Forms [web page](#). OHA has ensured that its vendor, Comagine Health is aware of and will adhere to the CONS requirements for children who are not enrolled in CCOs and for SCIP and SAIP admissions.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

- Shannon Karsten at (503) 358-8290 or shannon.karsten@dhsoha.state.or.us, or
- Carrie Wouda at (503) 269-1146 or carrie.wouda@dhsoha.state.or.us.

Thank you for your continued support of the Oregon Health Plan and the services you provide to our members.