

LANCASTER COUNTY DRUG AND ALCOHOL COMMISSION

Helping Others Get Help
For Alcohol and Other Drug Problems

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Rev: July 2019

For helpful information regarding alcohol and other drugs visit: www.compassmark.org

WHO SHOULD READ THIS?

Individuals or organizations that may need to refer a client into alcohol and/or drug treatment services in Lancaster County. This includes drug and alcohol treatment in a residential rehabilitation program (28 days or longer), a halfway house placement, a placement in intensive outpatient counseling, medication-assisted treatment (MAT), partial treatment or standard outpatient counseling.

Referral sources include mental health units, drug and alcohol facilities which do **not** have a current contract with the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Veteran Administration programs, government offices, medical professionals, nursing homes, police departments, lawyers, prisons, employers, probation and parole departments, family members, etc. Essentially, anyone can refer a person into the Lancaster D&A treatment system.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission, also known by its state name of Single County Authority (SCA), is a county government agency responsible for the provision of substance abuse disorder services in Lancaster County and the distribution of funding to support those services. Funding is used to:

- purchase prevention/education programs in the schools and community;
- pay for treatment for those Lancaster County citizens who do not have the ability to pay for treatment themselves.

Funding for these services is limited, due to the small size of the state and federal allocations.

TREATMENT SERVICES

A full range of treatment services is available, both within Lancaster County, and with contracted service providers outside the county. Specialized services are available for clients with children, pregnant women, mentally ill substance abusers, and Latino/Spanish speaking clients. Sign language interpreter services can be provided for outpatient counseling sessions. The Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission provides preferential treatment services to pregnant women, IV drug users (IDU), overdose survivors, and veterans.

Types of Treatment (Levels of Care)

Outpatient Treatment – Regularly scheduled counseling sessions, either individual or in a group with others, totaling no more than five hours per week.

Intensive Outpatient – Like outpatient, but takes place at least three days per week, up to ten hours per week.

Partial Hospitalization – For clients who would benefit from more structure than outpatient counseling, but who do not require 24 hour care. Longer term, more intensive counseling, at least three days per week, for a minimum of ten hours per week.

Short-term Residential Rehabilitation – Professionally directed 24 hour care, usually for one to three months duration. The client lives at the facility and participates in individual and group activities designed to “rehabilitate” the client back to a drug-free life.

Long-term Residential Rehabilitation – Like short-term residential rehab, but for a longer period of time. The client lives at the facility and the goal is “habilitation,” or acquiring basic skills needed for everyday life.

Medically-monitored Inpatient Detoxification – Also known as “non-hospital” detoxification. This service provides 24 hour care to clients during the period of time that the body is eliminating the intoxicating substance from the body. During this time, the client may experience withdrawal symptoms and may require counseling and support. The duration of this service is usually two to seven days and the client is then referred to residential rehabilitation, halfway house, or outpatient counseling.

Medically-managed Inpatient Detoxification – Like medically-monitored inpatient detox, but performed in a hospital setting. Used for clients who need more advanced medical care or who require medication for treatment of withdrawal symptoms.

Medically-managed Residential Rehabilitation – Like residential rehabilitation, but done in a hospital setting. This type of treatment is often used for clients who require psychiatric treatment and medications, or those who have other serious medical problems.

Halfway House – This service is often used to help clients make the transition from a residential rehab to living in society again. Clients live in a supportive, home-like setting and work on life skills and maintaining a drug-free life. Clients usually have jobs and attend support group meetings. Usually lasts three to six months.

Medication-assisted Treatment (MAT) – MAT is the use of medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies for the treatment of substance abuse disorders. A combination of medication and behavioral therapies is effective and can help some people to sustain recovery. Medications include Vivitrol, Suboxone, and methadone.

I. THE GOLDEN RULE:

If Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission funds are being requested to help the client pay for treatment, refer the client directly **to a Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol-contracted outpatient provider** (see page 8). **DO NOT send the client to any other drug and alcohol program if County Drug and Alcohol funds are being requested.**

A. How do clients "get into" the D&A system?

The contracted outpatient providers are the "gatekeepers" of the County Drug and Alcohol system. They have a state Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) license. The contracted outpatient provider conducts a drug and alcohol evaluation, level of care assessment, provides referral services into other modalities of treatment, and knows the details of the system to acquire County Drug and Alcohol Commission funds.

B. What if the person has Medical Assistance (HealthChoices)?

If the client currently has Medical Assistance (also known as Medicaid, MA, or HealthChoices) or is eligible for an MA card, he/she should be referred to a Lancaster County-contracted outpatient facility. These same outpatient clinics can also take the MA card to pay for the drug and alcohol treatment and they can assist the client in applying for MA if the client does not have an MA card.

C. What if the person has health insurance?

If the client has medical insurance which will cover the entire treatment service, the "Golden Rule" does not need to be followed. But many insurance companies do not pay for all services, e.g., very few companies reimburse for drug and alcohol halfway house services. If this is the case, and the client will eventually seek County Drug and Alcohol funds, then the above rule must be followed. Simply put, if even one dollar of County Drug and Alcohol funds will be involved, the client must be referred to a Lancaster County-contracted outpatient provider.

D. What if the person is a member of an HMO?

With Health Management Organizations (HMO), the client must be referred through their own HMO physician, in order for the HMO to reimburse the approved HMO treatment provider. County funding is not involved. Follow the HMO procedures and policies. If you do not follow the HMO or insurance company procedures and therefore you are denied treatment, the County D&A funding will **NOT** be available to you.

E. What if the person is in prison?

If a client is in the Lancaster County prison, he/she must first complete all legal obligations (in other words, serve out their sentence). Upon release, the client may make an appointment at an outpatient counselor for an evaluation and be eligible for funding. Inmates may also be referred by a judge or Lancaster County Adult Probation to the Door to Door Placement Project. Inmates who are eligible for the program have the opportunity to be placed directly from Lancaster County Prison to an appropriate rehab facility, have their Medicaid benefits activated the day they are released from prison, and have the RASE Project assist them throughout the process. A recovery specialist will also assist these participants as they transition from rehab back into the community.

F. What if the person is temporarily in an institution outside of Lancaster County?

If a client is in a facility outside of Lancaster County e.g., a state or county prison, a mental health unit, a detox unit, a D&A "rehab" program, etc., and the facility is not contracted with the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission, the client must be referred to a contracted outpatient program in Lancaster County for County D&A funding/services to be made available. For example, a person seeking services who is currently in a state or federal prison must first be released and then seen by a Lancaster contracted outpatient counselor in order for County D&A funds/services to be available. The Lancaster D&A counselor cannot go to the prison to interview (evaluate) the client, nor can the prison staff/counselor conduct the evaluation. Please see Section IV for the reasons behind this policy.

G. Does the person have to live in Lancaster County to receive funding?

In order to be eligible or considered for residential rehab placement, a client must live in Lancaster County for a minimum of twelve (12) months. For M.A. funded clients, this residency policy does not apply. There is no residency policy for outpatient treatment or detox. The outpatient counselor can explain the rules and help the client determine what he or she is eligible to receive.

II. EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

There are three exceptions to the Golden Rule. It does **NOT** apply to detox services, prevention services, or Student Assistance Program (SAP) services.

A. For detox admissions, have the client call White Deer Run Call Center, 866-769-6822, to set up detox; or Pennsylvania Adult and Teen Challenge at (844) 888-8085.

B. For Student Assistance Program services in the local school districts, call the SAP evaluators at PA Counseling (717-397-8081) or contact the guidance office at the school.

C. **For prevention/education services**, call Compass Mark at (717) 299-2831, or call the County Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program at (717) 299-8023, or visit www.compassmark.org/find-help/in-lancaster/.

III. WHY NOT REFER DIRECTLY?

There are several reasons why human service professionals or referral sources cannot directly refer clients into residential or partial treatment services utilizing Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol funds. But don't forget, anyone can directly call one of our contracted outpatient programs and schedule an evaluation. Reasons why a client cannot directly admit themselves into a rehab or partial program include:

A. An assessment must be completed by a state licensed facility (all contracted outpatient facilities are licensed).

B. Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission must have access to the client files to determine if the placement was appropriate. All contracted outpatient providers are monitored by the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission throughout the year, e.g., client data reviewed, site visits conducted, fiscal reviews, clinical reviews, telephone questioning, etc. This could not occur if the client is not first referred to a contracted outpatient program.

C. The contracted outpatient providers understand the County Drug and Alcohol system: the details, the legalities, the paperwork, the state/local policies, the availability of funding, etc.

D. The County receives a substantially reduced rate from the Drug and Alcohol-contracted providers. This allows for the purchase of additional client services. In other words, more people can receive help.

E. The need to maximize the dollar is great. Without this fiscal control through the outpatient providers, the annual treatment budget would be depleted in a very short period of time.

F. The preferred choice of treatment is the least restrictive and least expensive. This usually includes attendance at AA/NA meetings, support groups, and outpatient services. The client will be referred to other more restrictive, and expensive, modalities of treatment if outpatient therapy is not conducive to a drug-free life....budget permitting!

G. Although the D&A Commission seeks to make treatment as accessible as possible, we are limited in our outreach efforts, due to limited funds.

IV. THE BASICS

A. What happens when a person sees an outpatient counselor?

When the first contact is made with the contracted outpatient provider, the client's case is briefly discussed, including the client's financial/insurance situation. If it appears that County Drug and Alcohol Commission funds will be involved at any time, a liability form is completed at the outpatient clinic. The outpatient clinic staff, using documents supplied by the client and/or family, will complete the objective financial liability form during a 20-minute meeting. The amount the client must contribute for his/her treatment is calculated during this meeting. There is no charge to the client for this liability assessment. A client who is eligible for Medicaid (also known as Medical Assistance, MA, welfare card, or Access card) **must** apply for Medicaid before he or she is eligible for County D&A Commission funding.

B. What is a "liability"?

The liability is a sliding fee scale; the more the client makes, the more the client contributes to the drug and alcohol treatment services. A dollar amount is identified which the client must contribute for treatment services. The client is told the amount and given a copy of the liability assessment. The client then schedules a second meeting with the contracted outpatient provider, and the drug and alcohol evaluation continues.

Completing the liability form does not guarantee client funding into any treatment facility. It simply makes the client eligible for County Drug and Alcohol Commission funds. A client is **never eligible** for County Drug and Alcohol funds **unless a liability assessment is completed**, but the liability procedure **does not guarantee these funds**. It does guarantee another visit with the contracted outpatient provider, if the client agrees to abide by the liability determination and pay his/her assessed amount. It is not uncommon for the County to run out of D&A treatment funds.

The County Drug and Alcohol Commission funding is the "**payer of last resort.**" All other sources must first be utilized before county funds are considered. Other sources include Medical Assistance, Veterans Administration, insurance coverage, and private pay.

V. QUESTIONS

I still have a few questions. Who can I call?

If there are questions, please call:

Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission
(717) 299-8023