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North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization, LLC

Section 1700 – Crisis Services: Integrated Crisis Response System (ICRS) Toll-Free Crisis Line

Authorizing Source: HCA Contract

Approved by: Executive Director

Date:

Signature:

POLICY # 1731.00

SUBJECT: INTEGRATED CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM (ICRS) TOLL-FREE CRISIS LINE

PURPOSE

To outline the scope of services for the Toll-Free Crisis Line and to provide the North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (North Sound BH-ASO) scope of regional oversight responsibilities and quality improvement (QI) activities to ensure adherence to requirements for Toll-Free Crisis Line services. The North Sound BH-ASO maintains internal quality oversight activities of all policies, procedures and clinical reviews to ensure crisis services are compliant with Health Care Authority (HCA), Revised Code of Washington (RCW), clinical guidelines and best practices.

POLICY

The North Sound BH-ASO will provide a 24-hour a day, 7 days a week, Toll-Free Crisis Line to provide crisis intervention and triage services, including screening and referral to a network of providers and community resources. The North Sound BH-ASO delegates this function to the Volunteers of America Care Crisis Response Service (VOA CCRS).

1. VOA CCRS provides a Toll-Free Crisis Line service for individuals and families in distress and seeking assistance with crisis situations. VOA CCRS's triage and referral services include:
 - a. Making behavioral health referrals to the community;
 - b. Having access to language bank interpreters and Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) equipment;
 - c. Ensuring referral to age and culturally appropriate services and specialists;
 - d. Scheduling crisis appointments;
 - e. Provision and documentation of telephone stabilization and intervention contacts per DOH for individuals;
 - f. Ensuring timely and consistent crisis response;
 - g. Providing telephone consultation, intervention and stabilization for individuals/family members/natural supports as appropriate and within limits of confidentiality;
 - h. Determining when face-to-face services are needed, both voluntary and involuntary and dispatching a Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) or Crisis Prevention and Intervention Team (CPIT);
 - i. Having written protocols for the referrals of individuals to a voluntary or involuntary treatment facility 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including arrangements to contacting the DCR or CPIT;
 - j. Tracking and documenting the outcome of face-to-face services and seeing if further services are warranted;
 - k. Deciding when cross-system services are needed;

- l. Working closely with law enforcement, when appropriate;
 - m. Consulting with detoxification providers, licensed care facilities, hospitals and other community providers;
 - n. Troubleshooting cross-system referrals in which there is a difference of opinion of appropriate services or system response;
 - o. Providing telephone follow-up with individuals after hours as part of an individual crisis; and
 - p. Providing communication and coordination with behavioral health care providers, when indicated.
2. VOA CCRS provides a Toll-Free Provider Triage line for professionals wishing to speak with someone at the Crisis Line. The VOA CCRS Triage Clinician has the responsibility of deciding when face-to-face evaluation and/or stabilization services are needed and dispatch the CPIT/DCR staff to a community location outside of the provider's office.

PROCEDURES

1. Behavioral Healthcare Telephone Access Standards

VOA CCRS collects and analyzes data to measure its performance against its behavioral healthcare telephone access standards. VOA CCRS's access standards are:

- a. Telephones are answered by a live voice within 30 seconds;
- b. Telephone abandonment rates are within 5 percent;
- c. Call volumes are monitored closely; and
- d. Trends for the above data are closely monitored.

2. Eligibility

For crisis services provided in the North Sound BH-ASO, VOA CCRS will conduct eligibility verification for individuals who are receiving services or who want to receive services to determine financial eligibility. Please refer to North Sound BH-ASO Policy #3045.00 Eligibility Verification.

3. Access to Staff

VOA CCRS provides the following communication services for members and practitioners:

- a. VOA CCRS staff are available at least eight (8) hours a day during normal business hours for inbound collect or toll-free calls regarding Utilization Management (UM) issues;
- b. VOA CCRS staff can receive inbound communication regarding UM issues after normal business hours;
- c. VOA CCRS staff are identified by name, title and organization name when initiating or returning calls regarding UM issues;
- d. VOA CCRS has TDD/TTY services for members who need them; and
- e. VOA CCRS has Language assistance for members to discuss UM issues.

4. Triage and Referral Guidelines

VOA CCRS have established, clinically based triage and referral policies and protocols that are in keeping with North Sound BH-ASO's oversight to ensure VOA CCRS can assess need, determine the appropriate level of service and connect individuals who have crisis behavioral healthcare needs in an expedited manner.

VOA CCRS's protocols for behavioral crisis triage and referral are:

- a. Address all relevant behavioral health and substance abuse situations;
- b. Address the urgency of an individual's clinical circumstances, including crisis situations and emergencies; and
- c. Define appropriate care settings for treatment based on the urgency of clinical circumstances and treatment resources.
- d. In addition, VOA CCRS maintains an internal system to review and revise protocols.
- e. Having licensed behavioral healthcare practitioners available to make triage and referral decisions that require clinical judgment (e.g., assessing a member's potential for self-harm following a traumatic event and determining the appropriate level and intensity of care).

5. **ICRS Supervision and Oversight**

VOA CCRS has appropriate supervision and oversight for the triage and referral decisions made. Staff who make clinical decisions are supervised by a licensed master's level practitioner with five (5) years of post-master's degree.

- a. VOA CCRS fully participates in North Sound BH-ASO's Regional ICRS Quality Management Oversight Committee and all ICRS subcommittees and workgroups, responsible for establishing crisis policies, procedures and documented protocols that are used by contractors to ensure documentation of VOA CCRS and all other crisis services to include crisis intervention outcome and referral information.
- b. VOA CCRS is expected to ensure compliance with the North Sound BH-ASO's Consumer Information System (CIS) policies for encounter data submissions and to submit routine utilization deliverables to be included in quality committee activities.
- c. North Sound BH-ASO's Medical Director provides active oversight over all ICRS activities, including policy and protocols for access services, triage and referral protocols and supervision. North Sound BH-ASO reports these Quality Activities to its Internal Quality Management Committee (IQMC):
 - i. North Sound BH-ASO is responsible to conduct annual reporting of all oversight activities, which are annually reviewed, or as needed, by the IQMC committee;
 - ii. Recommendations for actions to be taken for continuous QI will be documented and any recommendation for QI projects will be conducted in accordance with the North Sound BH-ASO Quality Management Plan.
- d. North Sound BH-ASO will provide annual clinical audit/reviews to ensure adherence to HCA-BH ASO contract requirements, and relevant WAC and RCW standards utilizing current related audit/reviews.
- e. North Sound BH-ASO and VOA CCRS will have a delegation agreement that is:
 - i. Mutually agreed upon;
 - ii. Describes the delegated activities and the responsibilities of North Sound BH-ASO and VOA CCRS;
 - iii. Requires at least semi-annual reporting by VOA CCRS to North Sound BH-ASO;
 - iv. Describes the process by which North Sound BH-ASO evaluates VOA CCRS's performance; and
 - v. Describes the remedies available to North Sound BH-ASO if the VOA CCRS does not fulfill its obligations, including revocation of the delegation agreement.
- f. Provision of Member Data to VOA CCRS:

- i. Member experience data, if applicable will be shared; and
- ii. Clinical performance data will be shared.

g. Provisions for Protected Health Information (PHI):

All provisions for PHI will be managed in accordance with contractual agreements and business associate agreements with VOA CCRS.

h. Review of the UM Program:

- i. North Sound BH-ASO will provide annual reviews of VOA CCRS's Quality Assurance program;
- ii. North Sound BH-ASO will annually audit complex case management files against HCA's standards for each year that delegation has been in effect, if applicable;
- iii. North Sound BH-ASO will annually evaluate VOA CCRS's performance against HCA's standards for delegated activities; and
- iv. North Sound BH-ASO will semi-annually evaluate regular reports from VOA CCRS.
- v. North Sound BH-ASO will implement remedial action as outlined in Policy 1017.00.

ATTACHMENTS

None