

Effective Date: 9/4/2019

Review Date: 9/4/2019

Revised Date: 9/4/2019

## **North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization, LLC**

Section 1700 – Integrated Crisis Response Services (ICRS): ICRS Outreach Safety Screening for Dispatching for Behavioral Health Crisis

Authorizing Source: North Sound BH-ASO and ICRS Management, RCW 71.05.700 and 71.05.715, WAC 246-341-0900 -905, -910, -0915, -0920 and -0810, DCR protocols, WAC 246-341-0510, 0515

Approved by: Executive Director      Date: 9/4/2019      Signature:

### **POLICY # 1702.00**

#### **SUBJECT: ICRS OUTREACH SAFETY SCREENING FOR DISPATCHING FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS**

#### **PURPOSE**

To ensure best practice that a standardized safety screening is conducted for by Intergrated Crisis Response System (ICRS) providers in the delivery of the Toll Free Crisis Line, Crisis Intervention and Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) investigation services.

#### **POLICY**

Mobile Crisis Outreach providers will follow and maintain safety protocols as described in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 71.05, Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-341-0910, Health Care Authority (HCA) Designated Crisis Response (DCR) Protocols and have participated in safety and violence prevention training described in RCW 49.19.030.

North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization's (North Sound BH-ASO) Delegate will have the responsibility of deciding when crisis outreach and/or evaluation is needed and dispatch Mobile Crisis Outreach staff to a community location. Mobile Crisis Outreach providers may not decline a referral but decides if backup or other provisions are needed to mitigate risk.

If the Mobile Crisis Outreach providers receive a direct Law Enforcement referral for dispatch, staff are required to conduct a safety screening for risk and contact North Sound BH-ASO's Delegate to check on any relevant history as described in Policy 1727.00 Mobile Crisis Outreach.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. Safety Screening
  - a. If the caller is an immediate risk to self or others and unable to maintain safety for up to two (2) hours, 911 must be called to initiate law enforcement response.
  - b. If the risk is elevated, but not immediate, a more thorough risk assessment must be completed. Depending on the clinical assessment, degree of risk and the individual's needs, the individual will be referred to the appropriate services, which may include 911, hospital emergency department, Triage/Crisis Center, crisis appointment, or other community services. If the individual is able to maintain safety, per assessment of risk with the use of the safety screening assessment tool, a crisis outreach may be considered.
  - c. North Sound BH-ASO's Delegate and Mobile Crisis Outreach staff must determine (based upon evaluated risk) how and where to see the individual.

- d. Ongoing safety screening by MOT and DCR staff shall continue to occur during the crisis outreach.
- e. Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will re-contact North Sound BH-ASO's Delegate regarding changes in dispatch due to elevated risk concerns.
  - i. Upon outreach to an unstaffed location, Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will continue to perform an ongoing risk assessment.
    - 1. MOT or DCR staff must assess risk factors, which can include:
      - a) Location;
      - b) Access to weapons;
      - c) History (i.e., watch);
      - d) Volatility;
      - e) Consistency of known information;
      - f) Ability to summon assistance if needed (i.e., cell phone coverage);
      - g) Time of dispatch;
      - h) Gender;
      - i) Age;
      - j) Presence of others at the location;
      - k) History of ICRS contacts;
      - l) Presence of animals; and/or
      - m) Presence of drugs and/or alcohol.
    - ii. Options to consider to increase safety include:
      - 1. Arranging for family members or significant others to be present;
      - 2. Moving the location of the outreach to a safer community setting;
      - 3. Arranging for law enforcement to escort MOT or DCR staff; and/or
      - 4. Conducting the outreach with a second ICRS staff person for additional safety.

## 2. Substance Use Indicated

- a. If the caller's judgment is significantly impaired and they are a risk to themselves or others and are unable to maintain safety, 911 must be called to initiate law enforcement response.
- b. When alcohol or drugs are present, MOT/DCR staff may provide outreach services, after completing a safety screening assessment, but must consider the risk factors noted above. North Sound BH-ASO's Delegate staff must agree if an outreach is appropriate.
- c. If the outreach is not appropriate, arrangements can be made for the individual in crisis to go to a staffed location, the hospital emergency department, or Triage/Crisis Center.

## 3. Private Locations

- a. No Mobile Crisis Outreach staff shall be required to respond alone to a private home or other private location to stabilize or treat an individual in crisis, or to evaluate an individual for potential detention under the state's involuntary treatment act.
- b. When determined to be necessary for safety, clinical staff who provide outreach to individuals shall engage the use of a second person to accompany them. The second person can be another agency clinical staff, law enforcement officer, or other first responder, such as fire or ambulance personnel.

- c. If risk cannot be assessed, clinical staff shall consider other outreach options or arrange to see the individual at a staffed location.
4. Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will be provided with wireless phones and participate in annual safety training.
5. Mobile Crisis Outreach staff will have a plan for training, staff back-up, information sharing and communication for a staff member who responds to a crisis in a private home or a non-public setting.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1702.01 ICRS Outreach Safety Screening for Dispatch Screening Form