

Effective Date: 5/19/2020

Review Date: 5/19/2020

Revised Date: 05/07/2020

North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization, LLC

Section 1700 – Crisis Services: Scope of Crisis Services

Authorizing Source: HCA Contract

Approved by: Executive Director Date: 05/19/2020

Signature:

POLICY # 1733.00

SUBJECT: CRISIS SERVICES GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE

This policy addresses North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Service Organizations (North Sound BH-ASO) contractual requirements for Crisis Services in Snohomish, Skagit, Island, San Juan and Whatcom Counties.

DEFINITIONS

Crisis means a behavioral health crisis, defined as a turning point, or a time, a stage, or an event, whose outcome includes a distinct possibility of an undesirable outcome.

Crisis Services (Behavioral Health) means providing evaluation and short-term treatment and other services to Individuals with an emergent mental health condition or are intoxicated or incapacitated due to substance use and when there is an immediate threat to the Individual's health or safety.

Stabilization Services means services provided to Individuals who are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis. These services are provided in the person's home, or another home-like setting, or a setting which provides safety for the individual and the agency staff member. Stabilization Services may be provided prior to an Intake Evaluation for behavioral health services.

POLICY

Crisis System General Requirements

1. North Sound BH-ASO maintains a regional behavioral health crisis system that meets the following general requirements:
 - a. Crisis Services will be available to all individuals who present with a need for Crisis Services in Snohomish, Island, Skagit, San Juan and Whatcom Counties.
 - b. Crisis Services will be provided in accordance with Chapters 71.05 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and 71.34 RCW.
 - c. Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) services will include all services and administrative functions required for the evaluation of involuntary detention or involuntary treatment of Individuals in accordance with Chapter 71.05 RCW, RCW 71.24.300 and RCW 71.34.
2. **Crisis Services will be delivered in a manner that is consistent with the following:**
 - a. Stabilize individuals as quickly as possible and assist them in returning to a level of functioning that no longer qualifies them for Crisis Services. Stabilization Services will be provided in accordance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-341-0915.

- b. Provide solution-focused, person-centered and recovery-oriented interventions designed to avoid unnecessary hospitalization, incarceration, institutionalization or out of home placement.
- c. Coordinate closely with the regional Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), community court system First Responders, criminal justice system, inpatient/residential service providers, and outpatient behavioral health providers to operate a seamless crisis system and acute care system that is connected to the full continuum of health services.
- d. Engage the Individual in the development and implementation of crisis prevention plans to reduce unnecessary crisis system utilization and maintain the Individual's stability.
- e. Develop and implement strategies to assess and improve the crisis system over time.

Crisis System Staffing Requirements

1. North Sound BH-ASO establishes staffing requirements for all of its contracted crisis services providers in accordance with WAC 246-341. These include the requirement that each staff member working with an individual receiving crisis services must:
 - a. Be clinically supervised by a mental health professional (MHP) or licensed by the Department of Health (DOH).
 - b. Receive annual violence prevention training on the safety and violence prevention topics described in RCW 49.19.030. The staff member's personnel record must document the training.
 - c. Have the ability to consult with one of the following (who has at least one (1) years' experience in the direct treatment of individuals who have a behavioral health condition):
 - i. a Psychiatrist;
 - ii. a Physician;
 - iii. a Physician Assistant; or
 - iv. an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) who has prescriptive authority.
2. North Sound BH-ASO complies with Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) qualification requirements in accordance with Chapters 71.05 and 71.34 RCW and will incorporate the statewide DCR Protocols, listed on the Health Care Authority (HCA) website, into the practice of their DCRs.
3. North Sound BH-ASO contracts with Behavioral Health Agencies (BHA) to have clinicians available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week who have expertise in behavioral health issues pertaining to children and families.
4. North Sound BH-ASO ensures that there is at least one (1) certified Substance Use Disorder Professional (SUDP) with experience conducting behavioral health crisis support for consultation by phone or on site during regular business hours.
5. North Sound BH-ASO ensures that there is at least one (1) certified Peer Counselor (CPC) with experience conducting behavioral health crisis support for consultation by phone or on site during regular Business Hours.
6. North Sound BH-ASO has established policies and procedures for crisis and ITA services that implement the following requirements:
 - a. No DCR or crisis worker will be required to respond to a private home or other private location to stabilize or treat a person in crisis, or to evaluate a person for potential detention under the state's ITA, unless a second trained individual accompanies them.
 - b. The clinical team supervisor, on-call supervisor, or the individual professional, will determine the need for a second individual to accompany them based on a risk assessment for potential violence

- c. The second individual who responds may be a First Responder, a MHP, SUDP, or a behavioral health provider who has received training required in RCW 49.19 030.
- d. No retaliation will be taken against an individual who, following consultation with the clinical team or supervisor, refuses to go to a private home or other private location alone.
- e. North Sound BH-ASO will have a written plan to provide training, behavioral health staff back-up, information sharing, and communication for crisis staff who respond to private homes or other private locations.
- f. Every DCR dispatched on a crisis visit will have prompt access to information about an Individual's history of dangerousness or potential dangerousness documented in crisis plans or commitment records and is available without unduly delaying a crisis response.
- g. North Sound BH-ASO contracted BHAs provide a wireless telephone or comparable device for the purpose of emergency communications described in RCW 71.05.710 to every DCR or crisis worker, who participates in home visits to provide Crisis Services.

Crisis System Operational Requirements

1. With the exception of stabilization services, Crisis Services will be available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
 - a. Mobile crisis outreach will respond within two (2) hours of the referral to an emergent crisis and within twenty-four (24) hours for referral to an urgent crisis.
 - b. Include family members, significant others, and other relevant treatment providers, as necessary, to provide support to the individual in crisis.
2. North Sound BH-ASO provides a toll-free crisis line that is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to provide crisis intervention and triage services, including screening and referral to a network of providers and community resources.
 - a. The toll-free crisis line will be a separate number from North Sound BH-ASO's customer service line.
3. Individuals have access to crisis services without full completion of intake evaluations and/or other screening and assessment processes. Telephone crisis support services are provided in accordance with WAC 246-341-0905 and crisis outreach services will be provided in accordance with WAC 246-341-0910.
4. A written protocol is in place for the transportation of an individual in a safe and timely manner, when necessary.
5. North Sound BH-ASO maintains established registration processes for non-Medicaid individuals utilizing crisis services to maintain demographic and clinical information and establish a medical record/tracking system to manage their crisis care, referrals, and utilization.
 - a. North Sound BH-ASO's delegate 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*.
6. North Sound BH-ASO has established protocols for providing information about and referral to other available services and resources for individuals who do not meet criteria for Medicaid or General Funds State/Federal Block Grant (GFS/FBG) services (e.g., homeless shelters, domestic violence programs, Alcoholics Anonymous).

7. North Sound BH-ASO will comply with record content and documentation requirements in accordance with WAC 246-341-0900-0915. North Sound BH-ASO ensures that Crisis Service providers document calls, services, and outcomes.
 - a. Documentation of a crisis service must include the following, as applicable to the crisis service provided:
 - i. A brief summary of each crisis service encounter, including the date, time and duration of the encounter;
 - ii. The names of the participants; and
 - iii. A follow-up plan including any referrals for services, available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
 - b. All crisis stabilization response contacts will be documented, including identification of the staff person(s) who respond.

Crisis System Services

1. North Sound BH-ASO will make the following services available to all individuals in North Sound BH-ASO's Service Area:
 - a. Crisis Triage and Intervention to determine the urgency of the needs and identify the supports and services necessary to meet those needs. Dispatch mobile crisis or connect the individual to services. For individuals enrolled with an MCO, assist in connecting the individual with current or prior service providers. Crisis Services may be provided prior to completion of an Intake Evaluation. Services will be provided by or under the supervision of a MHP. North Sound BH-ASO must provide twenty-four (24) hour a day, seven (7) day a week crisis services to individuals who are within North Sound BH-ASO's Service Area and report they are experiencing a crisis. There must be sufficient staff available, including a DCR, to respond to requests for Crisis Services.
 - b. Behavioral Health ITA services will be provided in accordance with WAC 246-341-0810. North Sound BH-ASO will also reimburse the county for court costs associated with ITA and will provide for evaluation and treatment services as ordered by the court for individuals who are not eligible for Medicaid. Individuals who are not eligible for Medicaid may be billed directly for services in accordance with Section 10 of the BH-ASO contract. North Sound BH ASO contracted crisis service providers may not deny the provision of Crisis Services, Behavioral Health ITA Services, Evaluation and Treatment (E&T), or Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization services, to a consumer due to the consumer's ability to pay.
 - c. When a DCR submits a No Bed Report due to the lack of an Involuntary treatment bed, a MHP will follow up with the person until such time as the person no longer meets criteria for involuntary detention and can be sent home with a safety plan, or an involuntary bed becomes available.
2. Services provided in Involuntary Treatment facilities such as E&T facilities and Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization facilities, licensed and certified by DOH. These facilities must have adequate staff to provide a safe and secure environment for the staff, patients and the community. The facilities will provide evaluation and treatment such as to provide positive results and limit the duration of involuntary treatment until the person can be discharged back to their home community to continue their treatment without the loss of their civil liberties. The treatment shall be evidence-based practices to include Pharmacological services, psycho-social classes, withdrawal management as

needed, discharge planning, and warm handoff to secondary treatment including any less restrictive alternative care.

3. North Sound BH-ASO will provide the following services to Individuals who meet eligibility requirements defined in HCA North Sound BH-ASO Contract, but who do not qualify for Medicaid, when medically necessary, and based on available resources:
 - a. Crisis Stabilization Services includes short-term (up to fourteen (14) days per episode) face-to-face assistance with life skills training and understanding of medication effects and follow up services. Services are provided in the person's own home, or another home-like setting, or a setting which provides safety for the individual experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Crisis stabilization is often referred to as hospital diversion, typically managed by specific programs, apart from initial/emergent Stabilization Services, and available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
 - b. SUD Crisis Services including short term stabilization, a general assessment of the individual's condition, an interview for therapeutic purposes, and arranging transportation home or to an approved facility for intoxicated or incapacitated individuals on the streets or in other public places. Services may be provided by telephone, in person, in a facility or in the field. Services may or may not lead to ongoing treatment.
 - c. Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization services provided in a facility licensed by DOH and certified to provide evaluation and treatment services to individuals detained by the DCR for SUD ITA. Appropriate care for persons with a history of SUD who have been found to meet criteria for involuntary treatment includes: Evaluation and assessment, provided by certified chemical dependency professionals; acute or subacute detoxification services; SUD treatment; and discharge assistance provided by certified chemical dependency professionals, including facilitating transitions to appropriate voluntary or involuntary inpatient services or to Least Restrictive Alternative (LRA) as appropriate for the individual and meets the rules provided in WAC 246-341-1104..
 - d. Peer-to-Peer Warm Line Services are available to callers with routine concerns who could benefit from or who request to speak to a peer for support and help de-escalating emerging crises. Warm line staff may be peer volunteers who provide emotional support, comfort, and information to callers living with a behavioral health condition.
 - e. Peer support services are intended to augment and not supplement other necessary mental health services.
 - i. In addition to meeting the general requirements for crisis services in WAC 246-341-0900, an agency certified to provide crisis peer support services must:
 1. Ensure services are provided by a person recognized by the authority as a peer counselor, as defined in WAC 246-341-0200, under the supervision of a mental health professional.
 2. Ensure services provided by a peer counselor are within the scope of the peer counselor's training and credential.
 3. Ensure that a peer counselor responding to a crisis is accompanied by a mental health professional.
 4. Ensure that any staff member who engages in home visits is provided with a wireless telephone, or comparable device, for the purpose of emergency communication.

5. Ensure peer counselors receive annual training that is relevant to their unique working environment.

Coordination with External Entities

1. North Sound BH-ASO collaborates with HCA and MCOs operating in the North Sound Regional Service Area (RSA) to develop and implement strategies to coordinate care with community behavioral health providers for Individuals with a history of frequent crisis system utilization. Coordination of care strategies will seek to reduce utilization of Crisis Services.
2. North Sound BH-ASO will contract with HCA MCOs operating in the North Sound RSA to establish protocols related to the provision of behavioral health Crisis Services and Ombuds services by North Sound BH-ASO to the MCOs' Medicaid enrollees.
3. North Sound BH-ASO will, in partnership with the MCOs operating in the North Sound RSA, develop protocols to engage and collaborate with First Responders and other partners within the criminal justice system to coordinate the discharge and transition of incarcerated adults and Transition Age Youth (TAY) with serious mental illness (SMI) for the continuation of prescribed medications and other BH services prior to re-entry to the community.

Tribal Coordination for Crisis and Involuntary Commitment Evaluation Services

1. North Sound BH-ASO will submit to HCA's Tribal Liaison an annual plan for providing crisis and ITA evaluation on Tribal Lands within each RSA (see North Sound BH-ASO Policy #6003.00 *Coordination Plan with Tribal Authorities*).
2. The plan will be developed in partnership with the affected Tribal entities within the RSA.
3. The plan will identify a procedure and timeframe for evaluating the plan's efficacy and a procedure and timeframe for reviewing or modifying the plan to the satisfaction of all parties.
4. If North Sound BH-ASO and the Tribal entity are not able to develop a plan or the tribe does not respond to the request, HCA will work with both the Tribes and North Sound BH-ASO to reach an understanding.
5. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the HCA government-to-government relationship with Washington Tribes.
6. The North Sound BH-ASO will attempt to develop individual plan agreements with each of the 8 North Sound Tribes.
7. The plan will include a procedure for crisis responders and non-Tribal DCRs to access Tribal lands to provide services including crisis response and ITA evaluations. The plan will also include the following:
 - a. Any notifications and authority needed to provide services for evening, holiday, and weekend access to Tribal lands if different than business hours.
 - b. A process to notify Tribal authorities when Crisis Services are provided on Tribal land, especially on weekends, holidays, and after business hours and must identify who is notified and timeframe for the notification.
 - c. A description of how crisis responders will coordinate with Tribal Behavioral Health providers and others identified in the plan and how service coordination and debriefing with any Tribal Behavioral health providers will occur after a Crisis Service has been provided.
 - d. The process when a DCR and Tribal Behavioral health providers determine whether to detain or not for Involuntary Commitment.
 - e. If ITA evaluations cannot be conducted on Tribal land, the plan will specify how and by whom individuals will be transported to non-Tribal lands for ITA evaluations and detentions, and to a licensed evaluation and treatment facility.

- f. Specify where individuals will be held and under what authority if no E&T or secure withdrawal management and stabilization beds are available.

Tribal Designated Crisis Responders

1. North Sound BH-ASO will assist and designate at least one (1) person from each Tribe within the North Sound RSA as a Tribal Designated Crisis Responder, subject to the following requirements:
 - a. The potential Tribal DCR must meet all the requirements as a DCR in accordance with RCW 71.05.020, 71.24.025 and 71.34.020;
 - b. The request for designation of a potential Tribal DCR person must be made in writing to North Sound BH-ASO from the Tribal Authority;
 - c. Upon written request from all the affected Tribes, Tribes may elect to share Tribal DCRs;
 - d. The decision-making authority of the DCR must be independent of the North Sound BH-ASO and the Tribal Authority.
2. North Sound BH-ASO will enable any Tribal DCR to shadow with and receive on-the-job training from a DCR employed by a DCR provider agency that is contracted with North Sound BH-ASO. North Sound BH-ASO will actively engage and include Tribal DCRs in the regional work on Crisis Services collaborative groups, trainings, and policy impacts within their RSA and as provided to other crisis and DCR service providers.
3. In the event the North Sound BH-ASO and Tribal Authority are unable to reach agreement on a methodology to designate a Tribal DCR, including hiring, funding and operational processes, written documentation must be provided to the HCA contract manager.
4. Documentation must include names of those participating in the planning, discussions from both parties and barriers or issues that remain unresolved. HCA will work with North Sound BH-ASO and Tribal Authority to attempt to resolve issues and provide technical assistance where needed. This may include a facilitate executive level meeting between North Sound BH-ASO and Tribal Authority.

ATTACHMENTS

None