

LICENSING ALERT

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Deputy Secretary for Quality Assurance

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Division of Drug and Alcohol Program Licensing
Licensing Alert 3-97

Distinction Between Outpatient and Partial Hospitalization Services

REVISED

As of January 1, 1997, facilities treating publicly funded drug and alcohol clients began utilizing the Pennsylvania Client Placement Criteria (PCPC), an assessment tool developed by the Department of Health, Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs (ODAP).

Since this placement tool defines partial hospitalization as the provision of a minimum of ten hours of service per week (in contrast to the 7½ hours or more per week defined in the 1987 Policy and Procedure), we are revising the definition via this Licensing Alert to provide consistency in defining this service.

Please note that although the PCPC includes an intensive outpatient level of service, this level of service is not specifically recognized in Department licensing regulations and will be licensed as outpatient activity. The following definitions should be used to determine whether your facility provides partial hospitalization services or outpatient services:

Outpatient activity - the provision of counseling or psychotherapeutic services on a regular and predetermined schedule. The client resides outside the facility.

Generally, the client receives 1-2 hours of individual or group counseling per week for an indefinite period of time. However, a client could receive up to but not including 10 hours of counseling and/or psychotherapeutic services per week and still be considered an outpatient client.

Partial Hospitalization - the provision of psychiatric, psychological, social and other therapies on a planned and regularly scheduled basis. Partial hospitalization is designed for those clients who would benefit from more intensive services than are offered in outpatient treatment facilities, but who do not require 24 hour inpatient care.

Partial programs offer a wider range of services than do outpatient programs. In addition to individual and group therapy, these services could include client education/discussion groups, psychological and social work and other ancillary services. Generally, clients receive services three to five days a week for a three to four week period. Total service hours are a minimum of ten per week.

In the event that you have been providing partial hospitalization services as defined above and have previously been licensed as an outpatient facility or have been providing outpatient services and have previously been licensed as a partial hospitalization facility, a letter notifying us of this change of activity should be sent to the Division of Drug and Alcohol Program Licensing, 132 Kline Plaza, Suite A, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17104.

Please note that even without prior application or notification from a facility, if Licensing staff determine during an on-site inspection that a licensable service is being provided, the facility may be held accountable at that time for compliance with the applicable standard(s).

If you have any questions, please contact the Division of Drug and Alcohol Program Licensing at (717) 783-8675.