

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT PROVIDERS

FLEX BED CLARIFICATION

The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs has determined there is a need to remove barriers to treatment access and to assist facilities in their efforts to effectively utilize physical plant and human resources to best meet the needs of individuals entering residential treatment.

With this goal in mind, DDAP has decided a facility may be permitted, upon request and approval by DDAP, to utilize empty beds in one activity to conduct services provided in the other activity, otherwise referred to as 'flex beds'.

This process only applies to a facility already licensed to provide both Residential Detoxification (hospital or nonhospital) and Residential Rehabilitation (hospital or nonhospital) at the same location. This process does not apply to any non-residential treatment activities.

The Department assigns each treatment activity with a specific capacity limit. Residential Detoxification and Residential Rehabilitation Activities are assigned capacities based on the number of beds in a facility in relation to the required square footage in each room.

Prior to the 'flex bed' approach, when a facility had several empty beds in one activity, but was overflowing in the other, the facility was required to remain within the capacity granted by the Department for that activity and would need to refer the patients elsewhere or turn them away from treatment.

The 'flex bed' approach will allow the facility to place additional individuals in empty beds of the other licensed activity. For example, a facility in need of an additional detoxification bed would be allowed to utilize an empty residential bed, thus more fully utilizing the available beds. The reverse would also be permitted. For personnel purposes, facilities may utilize counselors as primary care staff on the detox unit when utilizing the additional detox beds, however, staff from detox must meet staffing regulations to qualify for residential program (i.e. an LPN qualifies as detox primary care staff, however does not meet qualifications as primary care staff in residential programs). This approach may assist facilities from turning clients away from treatment or needing to refer them elsewhere.

COVID-19 RESOURCES



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FLEX BED CLARIFICATION CONTINUED

A facility must submit an exception request to be considered for approval to flex beds between the residential detoxification and residential rehabilitation activities. Please refer to [Licensing Alert 4-97](#) on the Department of Drug and Alcohol Program web page at www.ddap.pa.gov for specific instructions on how to submit an exception request. Further clarification regarding 'Licensed Capacity' can be found at [Licensing Alert 1-94](#).

Facilities approved to flex beds will be subject to a review of that approval during the annual licensing inspections or other on site reviews. When a facility finds it is constantly utilizing a set number of beds in excess of the approved capacity for any particular activity, the facility is encouraged to submit a capacity increase request for that activity.

Any questions should be directed to the DDAP Program Licensure Division at RA-licensuredivision@pa.gov.