



Circles of Care

Policies and Procedures

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Revised By

Psychiatric Telemedicine

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the Circles of Care procedure for psychiatric telemedicine, an interactive video system which is used in some Circles of Care offices for the purpose of providing convenient psychiatric services to persons served in geographically remote areas.

Policy

Psychiatric telemedicine is allowed by DFPS State Standards, and Medicaid approved telemedicine appointments meet the requirements for initial and follow-up psychotropic medication appointments; core providers are specifically given permission to consent to such appointments when they become Medical Consenters for the children in their care. Psychiatric telemedicine appointments are held every 90 days, or more often as needed, at each necessary branch location. Appointments are scheduled as follows:

1. The psychiatric telemedicine provider supplies Circles of Care with an appointment date.
2. Circles of Care confirms, reschedules, or changes the appointment date within an appropriate timeframe.
3. Circles of Care completes a Telemedicine Schedule Form which includes the names all children referred for the appointment and provides this form to the psychiatric telemedicine provider.
4. Telemedicine Intake and Consent forms are completed by the child's Medical Consenter (foster parent) and are securely emailed to the psychiatric telemedicine provider.
5. The day of the appointment, a designated Circles of Care employee measures and records the child's vital signs including height, weight, blood pressure, and pulse obtained from a digital blood pressure cuff. Vitals information is recorded on the Telemedicine Vitals Form and securely emailed to the psychiatric telemedicine provider.

Psychiatric telemedicine appointments are held at Circles of Care branch locations in secure and private offices to ensure confidentiality and HIPPA compliance. Audio or video recording and

photography during an appointment period are strictly prohibited. The child is accompanied by a Circles of Care employee who acts as a facilitator and is a Licensed Child Placing Agency Administrator or is a Licensed Professional Counselor or a Licensed Master Social Worker.

At the beginning of the appointment, the facilitator introduces the child to the telemedicine provider, a licensed psychiatrist or the psychiatrist's physician assistant. The appointment consists of two parts:

1. Psychiatrist's/physician assistant's interview with the child. The facilitator remains with the child to provide assistance as needed.
2. Psychiatrist's/physician assistant's interview with the child and their foster parent. The facilitator remains in the appointment to provide assistance as needed.

Upon completion of the interviews and receipt of the child's vitals, the telemedicine provider supplies Circles of Care with their notes and recommendations from the appointment via secure email. Any prescriptions are called into a pharmacy of the foster parent's choice. Foster parents are provided with the telephone number of the psychiatrist should they have any questions or concerns.

Record Retention

Notes and recommendations from the psychiatric telemedicine provider are maintained in the child's physical file and uploaded into the child's electronic file on the Circles of Care client management system. These records are kept locked and confidential.

Minimum Technological Requirements

Circles of Care contracts with a private IT provider to support technological requirements including setup for secured desktop and laptop computers, maintenance, troubleshooting, and technical support. Employees are responsible for reporting errors or issues with technology immediately to ensure prompt resolution. Other requirements for psychiatric telemedicine include:

- The most recent version of Adobe Flash
- The most recent browser versions of Firefox or Internet Explorer
- Operational bandwidth of 384 kbps or higher
- Adequate audio and visual clarity and a field of view which is functionally equivalent to an evaluation performed in person

See Also: **Email System and Usage**

Confidentiality

Technology Plan