



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services



Commissioner's Policy Statement and Implementing Procedures

SUBJECT:	Health and Wellness
P & P NUMBER:	Chapter 6.40
APPROVED:	Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Commissioner Date: 10/15/2015
EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 15, 2015 <i>Miriam Delphin-Rittmon</i>
REVISED:	3/5/2014
REFERENCES:	See Commissioner's Policy Statement Chapter 6.14, Promoting a Recovery-Oriented System of Care http://cpr.bu.edu/resources/newletter/wellness-recovery-pledge
FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS:	

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to recognize the promotion of physical health and wellness as a priority of the service system of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). Research has demonstrated that persons with chronic behavioral health disorders have on average a life expectancy that is 25 years shorter than that of the general population. To help improve the life expectancy of people in recovery, the DMHAS has a responsibility to offer a holistic approach to health and wellness that integrates physical and mental healthcare and is consistent with the recovery model and the guiding principles of the DMHAS service system.

POLICY: The DMHAS shall promote whenever possible, practices that encourage wellness, health promotion, prevention, self-management, and coordinated care related to the behavioral and physical health needs of the individuals served in our system.

PROCEDURE:

Wellness is relevant to all consumers. The DMHAS collaborates with consumers to encourage engagement in healthy lifestyles and the adoption of strategies that improve the health outcomes of people with serious mental illness. A wellness-focused practice enhances health behaviors that significantly decrease physical health risks, promote optimal health and help people attain good mental and physical health as a personal resource for recovery. The key components of a multidimensional approach to holistic healthcare and wellness include:

1. Prevention: DMHAS should provide education and empower clients to make informed choices in order to take proactive steps that enable them to achieve optimal health. The DMHAS encourages and facilitates access to the following wellness-oriented services:
 - Smoking Cessation support and resources, including groups, individual counseling, as well as availability of pharmacologic support for reducing or eliminating tobacco use.
 - Nutrition education and nutritional information in DMHAS settings where food is served.
 - Exercise and weight loss education based upon the principles of rehabilitation and recovery emphasizing creating readiness for healthy changes, the development of new lifestyle skills, and increasing social support for healthy changes.
 - Evidence-based practices offering psycho-education and illness management strategies to improve self-management of psychiatric symptoms and medical problems and support individuals achieving their wellness and recovery goals.
2. Health Promotion: Health promotion shall encourage routine and yearly health screenings for medical conditions. The DMHAS in conjunction with physical health care providers shall facilitate and support consumers accessing routine screening for chronic medical conditions (diabetes, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and obesity) in order to identify disease early in its course and prevent complications.
3. Self-Management: Education and strategies for self-management of on-going behavioral or physical health conditions should be offered enhanced health promotion skills in the domains of physical activity, nutrition, illness management, and health literacy. The development of self-management strategies to address health and wellness issues shall be based upon consumer strengths, choice and personal preferences.
4. Coordinated Care: The DMHAS should partner with physical health providers in behavioral and primary care settings to provide for a coordinated approach to consumers physical and behavioral health needs and to ensure on-going medical care for medical conditions. With the consumer's consent, the name and contact information for primary care providers shall be included in the medical record. The DMHAS should aim to increase client engagement in primary care, and to decrease the utilization of emergency rooms as a routine source of care.
5. The DMHAS Education and Training Division will encourage staff to participate and access educational offerings designed to offer a holistic approach to treatment and rehabilitation in order to improve the overall health and wellness of people with serious mental illness in the DMHAS system.