


ISSUE DATE July 24, 2018	EFFECTIVE DATE July 24, 2018	NUMBER 00-18-03
SUBJECT Health Care Quality Units		BY  Nancy R. Thaler, Deputy Secretary for Developmental Programs

SCOPE:

Individuals with Intellectual Disability and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) or Autism Families
 Providers of Consolidated, Person/Family Directed Support, Community Living and Adult Autism Waivers, including Supports Coordination
 Providers of Base-Funded services
 Providers of Targeted Support Management
 Administrative Entities (AEs)
 County MH/ID Programs
 Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs)
 Private Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/ID)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide the functions of the Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs).

BACKGROUND:

In 1997, ODP created a statewide program to promote capacity building within the Intellectual Disability (ID) provider and health care communities to provide support for families, individuals,

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and providers to better navigate the health system and understand health conditions. To that end, ODP created funding through a lead Administrative Entity (County program) by geographical regions for eight Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs) across the commonwealth based on the small local model that existed in Philadelphia. The lead Administrative Entity and HCQU coordinate and implement the programs.

In creating the HCQUs, ODP underscored its commitment to maintain and improve the health of people with I/DD (Intellectual Disability and/or Developmental Disability) or autism living in Pennsylvania. ODP includes the HCQUs as a key component of the states' Home and Community Based Services quality management, risk management and mitigation, and training strategies. ODP ensures the HCQUs function and provide supports in a manner that is aligned with statewide goals and outcomes.

DISCUSSION:

The function of the HCQUs is to enhance the health and wellness of individuals with I/DD or autism through collaboration with providers of ID and autism services, Administrative Entities, Supports Coordinators/Targeted Support Managers and health care providers, raising awareness about community health resources and providing education for stakeholders about the physical health, behavioral health and wellness needs unique to the people they support. The HCQUs strive to improve access to appropriate physical and behavioral health care. The HCQUs are comprised of professionals with expertise in the areas of I/DD or autism and healthcare.

All HCQU activity is intended to minimize risk to individual health and wellbeing through proactive and preventive measures. The HCQUs do not provide crisis intervention services or direct healthcare services, write stakeholder policies and procedures, or conduct incident investigations. The HCQUs do not replace existing community resources. Each HCQU must comply with reporting requirements as per the direction of ODP.

HCQU Functions

1. Providing information, referral, training, and/or targeted support to community service providers and Supports Coordinators/Targeted Support Managers in areas such as:
 - Health and wellness, including good nutrition practices in food purchasing and food preparation, physical activity, fall prevention, personal care, sexuality, and mental health;
 - Risk identification and development of mitigation strategies in areas such as medication administration, medication side effects, dementia, dysphagia, bowel obstruction, aging, falls prevention, and safety needs; and
 - Targeted training and technical assistance identified through ODP or Administrative Entity oversight and monitoring.
2. Providing training for people with I/DD or autism to improve their capacity to maintain good health.

3. Providing training programs for families caring for individuals at home that includes classes, group sessions, or individual consultations, by request.
4. Collaborating with Administrative Entities by:
 - Supporting activity related to identified health concerns by providing education, technical assistance, and capacity building;
 - Providing assistance, guidance and support to Supports Coordination Organizations/Supports Coordination Agencies for health-related issues; and
 - Participating on the Administrative Entity quality councils.
5. Collaborating with community health service organizations to provide information, assistance with understanding the health needs of the ID/D and autism population, and to encourage capacity expansion.
6. Working in cooperation with ODP to build consistency in the role the HCQUs play throughout the commonwealth, to standardize practices, and to identify health-related issues that ODP should address. HCQUs will assist ODP in the Department of Human Services Medication Administration Program in supporting the content management, planning and training processes.

HCQU Structure

ODP recognizes the lead Administrative Entity through the regional consortium. Administrative Entities enter into a contractual relationship with a HCQU and are expected to evaluate the performance with a HCQU at all times. The Administrative Entities, in coordination with ODP, are expected to collaborate with HCQUs as appropriate to develop and implement priorities such as quality management activities and behavioral health.

The HCQU must have policies and procedures that organize and assign duties to promote and sustain individual operational efficiency. Safeguards are put into place to mitigate any potential conflict of interest with the parent company. The HCQU structure must accommodate the following functional categories:

1. Executive Management: responsibility for the overall operation, strategic planning, and leadership of the HCQU;
2. Physical and Behavioral Health Activity Coordination: supervision and coordination of activities related to physical and behavioral health issues;
3. Training Activity Coordination: the coordination of trainings, the review of training content for accuracy, and maintenance of training information;
4. Information Management: management and oversight activities related to information management and technology with data compatibility to meet participation in data analysis functions; and

5. Provision of HCQU functions: Clinical activities provided by licensed healthcare professionals.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Current Health Care Quality Units