SSA IntranetNumber: 229

CalWORKs Public Health Nurses

Approved: Signature on file Date: 04/05 (R06/12)

POLICY

The Social Services Agency (SSA) maintains a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA) for the provision of public health nursing services. Public health nurses (PHN) are registered nurses who possess a bachelor's degree and a public health certificate with an emphasis in community health. PHNs are collocated at each Regional office and work collaboratively with Regional staff, HCA Behavioral Health Services staff, and other SSA partners. Open dialogue between all parties provides the best opportunity to proactively identify and resolve barriers that may prevent an individual from successfully participating in assigned Welfare-to-Work (WTW) activities. This policy contains guidelines to be used when referring a WTW participant for PHN services.

ISW/CM RESPONSIBILITIES

Initial Services Workers (ISW) and Case Managers (CM) may evaluate the appropriateness of a PHN referral at Appraisal, or at any other point during participation in WTW to ensure appropriate support is offered to the family. The HCA Public Health Nursing CalWORKs/WTW brochure provides general information about PHN services and should be offered to individuals who are interested in, or who may benefit from, PHN services.

Staff will complete the CalWORKs Specialized Public Health Nursing Referral F063-30-251, and use the comments section to provide as much information as possible about the participant's known health issue(s).

Referrals should be forwarded as an e-mail attachment to the SPHN Outlook mailbox. Most referrals are assigned to PHNs in the Region where the referral was generated but based on expertise, workload, and language they may be assigned to PHNs at another Regional office. A confidential report providing general information about the participant's situation will be completed by the PHN and forwarded to the assigned ISW/CM via a password-protected email; the password will be sent separately. Upon receipt of the report the worker will forward it for imaging into OnBase and delete the email to protect the participant's personal identifying information. The report may not be released to third parties without the participant's authorization.

Staff should notify the PHN immediately when an individual becomes exempt from, or is otherwise no longer participating in, the WTW program.

All client contacts will be documented by the ISW/CM in CalWIN case comments.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE (PHN) RESPONSIBILITIES

PHNs act as a resource to WTW staff, and assist families in identifying and securing treatment for a variety of health-related issues. Services provided by PHNs include, but are not limited to:

- Whole-family health assessments completed during office or home visits.
- Assistance in securing primary health care through CalOPTIMA,
- Coordination of care, including referrals to community resources,
- Ongoing family outreach and health education,
- Assistance and advocacy with the medical exemption process, including SSI applications,
- Referrals to appropriate resources for early detection of developmental disabilities in young children (age 0-5), and assessment of potential physical and neurodevelopment disabilities in children of all ages, and
- Attendance at Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to provide professional advice and guidance.

The PHN will determine the need for initial and subsequent home visits.

A report providing general information about the participant's situation will be forwarded to the assigned ISW/CM via a password-protected email; the password will be sent separately. Note: For new referrals, if the PHN is unable to establish contact with the client, and/or complete an initial nursing assessment, the referring worker will be notified via email. If the family's file is subsequently closed because the PHN was unable to complete an initial nursing assessment, documentation of outreach efforts will be forwarded to the ISW/CM for imaging into the case

All client contacts will be documented by the PHN in CalWIN case comments.

REFERRALS

Referrals will only be accepted on behalf of mandatory or voluntary WTW participants, except in emergent situations. Acceptance of PHN services is voluntary.

When a PHN is invited to attend an MDT meeting the referral should be sent in advance of the scheduled meeting to allow the nurse sufficient time to complete an initial assessment of the family. In emergent situations when a referral is not completed before the meeting one must be sent as soon as possible afterward.

Referrals may be made for WTW participants who have been sanctioned, or for those who are at risk of sanction, as PHN intervention may provide critical support necessary to re-engage the individual in WTW activities.

PHNs are authorized to access a child's immunization status or current immunization records through the California Immunization Registry (CAIR). Referrals completed for this purpose should state "immunization record" in the "Reason for Referral" section, and include the:

- child's complete name and date of birth, and
- mother's complete name.

Use of the referral form should not preclude staff from consulting informally with co-located PHNs when advice is needed regarding possible health-related issues that may interfere with an individual's successful participation in WTW activities.

