



Frequently Asked Questions about the Future of the DC Community Services Agency (DC CSA)

Part Three
October 27, 2008

These questions are consumer-focused.

1. Will DC CSA consumers be assigned to other mental health providers or will I have a choice?

You have a choice just as you do now. There will be no abrupt change in how and where a DC CSA consumer gets services. And, you have the right to choose your mental health provider. DMH will hold a number of meetings with DC CSA consumers to ensure they understand their rights through the transition process. They will receive information about each mental health provider and its services to determine the best fit.

2. What if I do not like my new mental health provider?

You can change. A consumer has the right to change mental health providers at any time for any reason.

3. Will the new mental health provider have an office that addresses consumers' complaints and grievances?

To protect the rights of consumers and ensure their full participation, the DMH has an Office of Consumer and Family Affairs which is responsible for resolving all complaints and grievances for all mental health providers—including the DC CSA. Further, DMH is responsible for monitoring, licensing and regulating private providers, and the Office of Accountability will have stepped up oversight during the first years of implementation.

4. Does the private mental health provider network have the capacity to serve all the consumers now seen by the DC CSA?

The private providers offer the same services as the DC CSA and serve consumers with Medicaid and those who are uninsured. DMH is working with the private provider network to ensure the capacity to absorb all consumers now receiving services through the DC CSA. And, DMH has formed a workgroup to identify all DC CSA consumers to ensure that they are linked to a new provider of their choice.

5. What is the current capacity in the private provider network to provide ACT services?

There are currently two private agencies providing ACT services to approximately 200 consumers—Family Preservation and Pathways to Housing. DMH expects other providers will become certified to provide ACT services so that we can expand capacity.

6. This is a major change not only in mental health provider but also in relationships and support networks for all consumers at the DC CSA. What contingency plans are being made to help consumers in crisis during the transition?

There will be no abrupt change in how and where a consumer gets services. DMH is committed to a thoughtful, measured transition where the consumer is involved every step of the way in deciding on a new provider. There will be a number of forums and other communications through which DMH plans to keep consumers informed of the transition plans and inform consumers about other service providers. DMH has established workgroups to oversee consumer transfers to minimize any disruption in services and to track consumers to ensure they are linked appropriately to their chosen providers. If necessary, crisis services are available through the Access Helpline, CPEP, and our new mobile crisis teams.

7. Will changing mental health provider affect the housing or rental assistance I receive from DMH?

No. A change in your mental health provider will not affect eligibility for housing or rental assistance. This information will be included as part of the consumer transition to a new provider.

8. How can you ensure that current treatment plans are not in jeopardy? Can I keep the same case manager and the same therapist so that there will be no interruption in my treatment and services?

Before you stop receiving services from DC CSA, DMH will make sure that you have selected and are linked to a new provider of your choice. The information in your treatment plan will be transferred to the new provider. Given that you will be selecting a new provider, you most likely will have a new case manager and therapist. As much as possible, your current case manager and therapist will work with you to make sure that you are comfortable with your new support team.